Attendance Policy

St Cuthbert's RC High School

Policy Level	Trust/Statutory	Ref No	
		Approved date	
Responsibility	Performance	Next review date	Autumn 2025
Published location	Trust Website		
Version number	Date Issued	Author	JD

Contents

1. Aims

Our mission at STOC, as a Catholic Academy Trust, is to *Make Christ Known* and ensure we are making lives better for our communities, our children and young people and all of our stakeholders. We have a duty as a Catholic school to follow the Church's teaching care for the poor and educate those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged. There is a duty to make the person of Jesus Christ known and loved, and to place Him and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre. This includes promoting:

- The Search for Excellence
- The Uniqueness of the Individual
- The Education of the Whole Person
- Moral Principles

Our mission as a school is to: 'The Lord God requires of us that we should help others whenever we can, always make the right choices and be the best that we can be in everything that we do'.

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 August 2024)](#) through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Ensuring school is welcoming and safe, and all children feel heard and respected.

> Ensuring all staff understand 'Attendance is everyone's business' and contribute to a safe and positive school environment.

> Promoting and ensuring all staff understand children, education, attendance and relationships with parents all matter.

> Managing attendance based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support.

> Understanding that successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly, requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families.

> Adopting a 'support first', 'relentless' approach, providing gradual and continual support to families.

> Building strong relationships with families, to ensure pupils have the correct support in place to attend school.

> Continuing to offer support and understanding, while remaining resilient to any lack of family engagement that may stem from their own worries and anxieties.

> Providing clear and supportive information to parents regarding their child's attendance, including the number of days missed, to ensure parents can easily understand and track their child's attendance.

> Promoting the welfare and safeguarding of all pupils.

> Promoting and setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.

> Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance, ensuring every pupil sees the positives of regular school 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.

2. 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

> https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

> Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

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

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities of staff across the Trust

3.1 Board of Directors:

> The Board of Directors will set high expectations of all Trust and school leaders, staff, pupils and parents in promoting good attendance.

> The Board of Directors will ensure, that, through the Trust Attendance Lead and the wider performance team, all school leaders and Local Governing Bodies fulfil expectations and statutory duties. This includes:

   o Ensuring attendance is recorded accurately in the school register and the required information is shared with the DfE and local authorities.

   o Communicating and working effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and where appropriate, informs them regularly regarding specific pupils.

   o Recognising and promote the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos.

- Ensuring the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Ensuring the school, has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Ensuring school attendance data is regularly reviewed and challenged, and school leaders are supported to focus improvement efforts on individual pupil or cohorts who need it most, through half termly attendance review meetings with each individual school.
- Ensuring there is consistent monitoring of attendance figures for all the schools in the Trust including repeated evaluation of effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- The Trust Attendance Lead will maintain effective and productive working relationships with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and is providing support and challenge throughout the school year.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, ensure school leaders are supported to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.

> Ensure all staff receive adequate training on attendance, including with teachers from across the Trust, 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 Trust's and 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
- Ensure there is high quality and effective training provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Ensure effective practice on attendance management and improvement is shared across the trust and regular opportunities are provided for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources.
- Ensure school leaders are supported to identify attendance patterns, and these are monitored across the trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and effective practice is shared between schools.

> The Board of Directors will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

> ==If you have a link trustee/local governor for attendance, or a committee responsible for attendance, add details of their role in monitoring pupils' attendance.==

3.2 The headteacher:

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Ensuring the implementation of this policy at the school and includes information related to their setting.

> Ensuring all staff understand their school's attendance policy and their role and responsibilities in promoting good attendance, whilst contributing to a safe and positive school environment.

> Ensuring staff recognise that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign for safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual and child criminal exploitation.

> Promoting and ensuring all staff understand Attendance is everyone's business.

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Local Governing Body and the Trust Attendance Lead.

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance to be able to do so.

> Supporting the SENCo working with parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.

> Supporting the SENCo in communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has declining 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 through all available channels.

3.3 The Trust Attendance Lead:

> The Trust Attendance Lead will:

  o Drive attendance improvement across the trust by supporting and challenging all schools to overcome barriers that may hinder good attendance.

  o Ensure all schools maintain and update accurate attendance records.

  o Work more intensively with schools who require support to improve attendance and where necessary visit family homes to discuss attendance issues.

  o Conduct parent/carer meeting for pupil's with/or at risk of declining attendance.

  o Support school staff with legal processes relating to school attendance.

  o Deliver staff training through termly professional learning network meetings.

  o Act as a central contact point for schools with attendance queries.

  o Liaise with the DfE's regional teams for advice about wider support programmes.

The Trust Attendance Lead is Mrs Jo Davies and can be contacted via telephone 0161 705 4374 and/or email jdavies@stoccat.org.uk

3.4 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.

> Working closely with the Trust Attendance Lead to overcome barriers that may hinder good 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 to discuss, support and tackle attendance issues.

> Ensuring intervention or reintegration plans are developed and executed in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.

> Ensuring, through the attendance officer and pastoral team, that targeted intervention and support is delivered to pupils and families which may include the consideration of an Early Help Assessment.

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Regena Battaglia and can be contacted via 01706 647761 email: rbattaglia@stcuthberts.stoccat.org.uk

3.5 The school attendance officer

The school attendance officer at each school is responsible for:

> Taking calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording the absence on Arbor.

> Conducting meetings with parents/carers to offer support in improving their child's attendance as early as concerns arise, exploring each family's personal situation and understanding what support is needed.

> Building strong relationships and supporting pupils and families with attendance interventions including home visits when required.

> Liaising and referring to external support agencies when required.

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).

> 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 closely with the Trust Attendance Lead and the Local Authority officers to tackle persistent and severe absence.

> Working closely with the Trust Attendance Lead to identify and support pupil's at risk of declining attendance.

> Advising the headteacher and/or the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

> Completing all relevant Local Authority documents in relation to school and pupils' attendance.

The attendance officer is Sherrill Towers and Jean Kirk and can be contacted via telephone on

01706 647761 or stowers@stcuthberts.stoccat.org.uk or jkirk@stcuthberts.stoccat.org.uk

3.6 Form tutors:

701   Mrs Bowden / Mrs Briffa (Tuesday)

702   Mr Treanor

703   Mrs Didyk-Wild

704   Mr Deffo

705   Mrs Fitzsimons

706   Mr Vynne

707   Mr Sunderland

708   Mr Barlow

HOY- Mrs Machen

Assistant HOY- Mr Weaver

SLT Link – Mrs Gallagher

801   Mrs O'Loughlin

802   Mr Hammersley

803   Miss Thomas

804   Miss H Wood

805   Miss Duffin / Mrs Drews (Monday)

806   Mrs Walters

807   Mr Miles

808   Mr Edwards

HOY- Mr Beisty/ Mrs Murray

Assistant HOY- Mrs Pearce

SLT Link – Mrs Battaglia

901   Mr Ojo

902   Mrs Meaden

903   Miss Moulton / Mrs Rhodes-Warner (Friday)

904   Miss Gillatt

905   Mr Close

906   Miss Holland

907   Mrs McNamara

908   Mrs Maloney

HOY- Mrs J Walsh-Allen

Assistant Head of year- Mr Kisimba

SLT Link- Miss Costello

1001   Miss Price

1002   Mrs Gutic

1003   Mrs Rothwell

1004   Miss Begum

1005   Mrs Bibi

1006   Miss Hughes

1007   Mrs Morris

1008   Mr Havercroft

HOY- Miss J MIller

Assistant HOY- Mr G Hicks

SLT Link- Mrs Grennan

1101, Miss Rouze

1102, Mrs McCabe / Miss Light (Wednesday)

1103, Mrs Burlison

1104, Mrs Lane

1105, Miss Phillips/Mrs Ellidge

1106, Mrs Murray

1107, Mr Moore

1108, Miss Watt

1109, Mr Welsh

HOY- Mr D Mr McLachlan

Assistant HOY- Miss Mirza

SLT Link- Miss J Holt

All class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis via Arbor, ensuring the correct use of code (see Appendix 1).

Subject teachers are responsible for recording attendance for each timetabled lesson on a daily basis. Subject teachers should record a truancy on Arbor when a pupil has not arrived to their lesson who has attended their previous lessons that day.

3.7 School office staff:

> The school office will take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor using the correct code.

> The school office will transfer calls from parents/carers to the head of year/pastoral leads/attendance officer where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.8 Parents/Carers:

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer, 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/Carers are expected to:

> Ensure their child attends school every day and every session on time.

> Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.

> Contact the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the first day of the absence, and each subsequent day of absence, advising school when they are expected to return.

> Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.

> Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

> Inform school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

> Support school by being involved in their child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school.

> Work with school to address any barriers to attendance for their child, including attending all meeting requests to discuss attendance issues.

> Adhere to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.

> Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting staff in school, such as the attendance officer Mrs J Kirk or Mrs S Towers , head of year (see form tutor / HOY lists in section 3.6) , pastoral lead or family liaison officer, who can be contacted via phone on 01706 647761 or email address Headteacher@SCRCHS.COM in the subject line please include the person's name and role of who you wish to contact.

3.9 Pupils:

Pupils are expected to:

> Attend school and all lessons every day on time and be ready to learn.

> Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.

> Communicate with parents/carers to encourage a written explanation to be shared with school to explain any absence that has happened or is foreseen.

> Follow school procedures if they arrive late to school.

>

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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

> 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 8.25am and ends at 3.00pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.15am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.10pm and will be open for five minutes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff and/or attendance officer, who can be contacted via 01706 647761 and press line 2 for pupil absence.

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.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence:

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers should inform school via telephone or email and send a note with the pupil to show their class teacher and office staff if they need to leave school early

However, we encourage parents/carers 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/carer 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.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality:

Arriving at school on time is very important as it sets the tone for the rest of the day and allows learning to start straight away. There is an expectation for all pupils to arrive to school on time every day

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code 'L'
> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code 'U'

We define persistent punctuality issues as meaning:

- o Arriving to school late on more than three occasions

If students arrive after 8.25am they must enter the school via the student reception entrance and will be classed as late.

Students arriving via student reception later than 8.25 to 8:48am will be recorded as late, given an L mark and must attend a same day lunchtime detention for 15 minutes in room 101.

Students will be informed at the reception window that they must attend the 15-minute detention. Failure to attend the lunch time detention- will escalate to a 25-minute detention the next day. Parents will be informed via ARBOR, through an in App message.

If a pupil is late more than two times in a week, they will be placed on a form tutor punctuality report.

Any students arriving after 8:50 (The morning register will close at 09.00am) will be issued a **U** code which is 'late after registration' mark. This is equivalent to an unauthorised absence for the session. They will be given a same day 25-minute detention at lunch. Failure to attend this or if a pupil is consistently late, without a genuine reason parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the attendance team and the pupil will be placed on a punctuality monitoring report.

Pupils are expected to arrive to lessons on time and be in the classroom with 5 minutes of the warning bell sounding. Any pupil who is not, will be given a late mark for that lesson.

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:

> Activate first day calling procedures after the registers have closed by phoning and sending a text notification to the pupil's parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence.

> If there remains no contact, then a further telephone call will be made later that morning to the parent/carer and, if no response, a call will be made to all other emergency contacts.

> If the school cannot make any contact and are concerned about the pupil, then a home visit may be carried out. If the family is supported by a social worker, then the social worker will be informed of the absence.

> Home visits to be made on the 3rd day of absence and every 3 days thereafter should the absence continue

> A wellbeing visit must be made weekly for pupils with long term absence

> Liaise with the school safeguarding team and/or external support agencies if the pupil is deemed a vulnerable learner. This includes pupils with a social worker and/or youth offending team officer.

> 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/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure the correct safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving external services to support with a welfare check.

> 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 will issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as deemed appropriate.

> If school have concerns around a pupil's safety, they may also visit the home of the pupil or request a welfare check to be made by the police.

> Contact home if a pupil leaves school without permission.

4.6 Reporting to parents:

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via:

- o Attendance letters every half term. However, parents will be informed if concerns arise earlier
- o Parent/carer meetings if a pupil's attendance begins to decline
- o Attendance conversations with the attendance officer/form tutor/class teacher/Head of Year and Trust Attendance Lead
- o Home visits on the 3rd day of absence and every 3 days thereafter should the absence continue
- o A wellbeing visit must be made weekly for pupils with long term absence
- o Parents' evening
- o School reports

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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.

Exceptional circumstances may include the following:

- o One day for religious observation
- o The death of a family member
- o Unexpected family emergency

However, there may be instances where exceptional circumstances fall outside of these examples. In such cases, please liaise with the Trust Attendance Lead.

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 highly 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.

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 attendance office or can emailed upon requests. 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 (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

> 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

5.2 Sanctions

> School will always adopt a 'support first', 'relentless' approach, providing gradual and continual support to families before resorting to legal sanctions.

> 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 National Framework, and are not subject

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

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

School will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include:

o A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement
o Attendance displays
o Rewards system for positive behaviours
o Discussions with parents and pupils
o Communication parents/carers to highlight and celebrate pupils' achievements
o Home visits
o Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/or has a social worker
o Working with attendance professionals internal and external to the school
o Regular staff briefings to discuss whole school attendance
o Attendance panels
o Attendance support plans
o Attendance report cards
o Attendance contracts
o Referrals to support agencies
o Learning mentors
o Extra-curricular events and activities
o Friendship groups
o Pupil voice activities
o Personal, social and health education
o Emotional based school avoidance resources
o Trauma informed approaches
o Early help referral options
o Attendance reward systems
o Additional learning support
o Pastoral support
o Behaviour support

- o Reintegration support packages
- o Open evenings
- o Multiple transition visits for primary school pupils- Friendship morning and additional for any SEND need.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Adapt your approach towards pupils with complex barriers to attendance, including how you work with families and strategies for removing in-school barriers

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly – in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in the future.

There are times when attendance is impacted by several complex factors, including but not limited to:

- o Mental and physical health
- o Poverty
- o Caring responsibilities
- o Significant events/Trauma
- o Environmental/familial factors
- o Inclusivity

School will implement a range of strategies to support a reintegration back to school for all pupils experiencing complex barriers: These include:

- The use of PTTT or reduced hours on a temporary basis (see section on part time timetables below- no longer than 6 weeks).

- Use of inclusion center and opportunity for hybrid timetable and use of Alternative provision where school thinks this is appropriate.

- Use of Attendance clinics/ panels to support parents and pupils to improve their attendance.

- o Home visits will be conducted to meet with parent/carer and pupil. A discussion will be held to understand the pupil's needs and establish the contributing factors to their absence from school and/or what is good about staying at home.
- o Emotional based school avoidance toolkit will be discussed with families explaining the importance of capturing the pupil's voice.
- o Where barriers are outside of school's control, school will help to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily and if necessary, refer to external agencies.
- o Supportive approaches are most effective when put in place as early as possible. If a pupils absence requires support from an outside agency which is not provided quickly (e.g. subject to a waiting list) other avenues of support, or temporary solutions will be considered whilst waiting.
- o A bespoke plan will be agreed, and reasonable adjustments will be made in school once the barriers are identified and addressed with the pupil and parent.
- o A trusted adult will be identified by the pupil for 1:1 support. This support is available prior to the pupil returning to school and will continue thereafter.
- o Regular contact will be made with the parent and pupil to ensure a relationship is built between home and school.
- o Where required, a short period of phased timetabling to allow a transition back into school and to attend full-time, including where the pupil is in school but does not attend all lessons, working with the pupil to support with any anxiety they are experiencing during time not spent in class.
- o Pupils are offered a "meet and greet" at the school gate to support transition back into school.
- o A safe place in school is offered to the pupil.
- o School will monitor the impact of interventions and make adjustments where necessary.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority. School will work with the LA to review and amend the EHCP to incorporate additional or different attendance support identified.

Children who experience normal emotions such as nerves about attending school, worries about friendships etc are still expected to attend school regularly to prevent heightened anxious feelings about attending in future.

Additional support may need to be provided for pupils with complex barriers to attendance such as long term physical or mental health issues or SEND.

School will work in partnership with the pupil and family to understand individual need when developing support plans. Support will be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the need of the pupil. Attendance is everyone's business so in many of these cases school will not be able to fully support a pupil without the assistance of a range of other agencies.

Where a pupil experiences a long term physical or mental ill health school will:

o   Facilitate pastoral support ensuring joined up practice is in place. Consideration may be given to a time limited phased return (Part-time timetable) where appropriate.
o   Consider adjustment to practice and policies in line with the Equality Act 2010 Any adjustment should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with pupil and parents
o   Make a sickness return to the LA. (Sickness Returns - School are to provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and LA to agree to any provision for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education Children who Cannot Attend School Because of Health Needs).

Part-time timetables:

o   All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
o   In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.
o   In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly (code C2)
o   The school will have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
o   Where the pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process
o   If the pupil has an education health and care plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

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

School will implement a range of strategies to support a reintegration back to school for all pupils who are or have been absent from school due to a variety of reasons.

Staff take a bespoke approach to each child with an emphasis on breaking down barriers to attendance, so that children are ready to learn, feel safe and grow in confidence. These include:

o Considering the needs of the pupil, including offering a safe place, someone to talk with and liaising with parents/carers at home.
o Meeting with the pupil and parent/carer at home or in school prior to their return to build on the relationship between school and home and build confidence for the pupil.
o A trusted adult is identified by the pupil for 1:1 support. This support is available prior to the pupil returning to school and continues thereafter.
o Discussions are held with class teachers to support the pupil with their learning. This is often a barrier to returning as pupils can feel overwhelmed with content they have missed.
o School to consider a short period of phased timetabling to allow a transition back into school and to attend full-time, where the child is in school but does not attend all lessons, working with the pupil to support with any anxiety they are experiencing during time not spent in class.
o Use of the SEND building and Inclusion to support the child back into full time education.

8. Attendance monitoring:

8.1 Monitoring attendance:

The school, with the support from the Trust Attendance Lead will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

The school and the Trust Attendance Lead will monitor and analyse absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support in the following ways:

o Our approach to attendance management is based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support.
o Staff will implement the attendance policy consistently
o Form tutors and/or class teachers will maintain accurate registers on Arbor at the start of registration and lessons. Pupils arriving to lessons five minutes after the start, will be marked as late 'L'
o Consistently promote the importance and legal responsibility of form teachers/class teachers for the inputting of accurate registers
o Have robust attendance procedures and trackers in place to track whole school and group data
o Regularly monitor, analyse and evaluate attendance data to identify pupils who have consistently high attendance, those who have shown improvements in their attendance and to identify pupils who may be vulnerable
o Contact parents/carers and if necessary, emergency contacts, each day of absence for unexplained absences
o Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence to build confidence and bridge gaps.
o Inform parents/carers on a regular basis of their child's attendance via clear and supportive letters and conversations, including the number of days their child has missed from school, to ensure they can easily understand and track their child's attendance.
o All lines of communication will be used sensitively, taking into account families that have encountered significant challenges and those with literacy and language needs.
o Continue to reach out to offer support and understanding to parents, while remaining resilient and empathetic to any lack of family engagement that may stem from their own worries and anxieties
o Complete individual absence prevention plans that enable school to look deeper into factors affecting attendance for pupils and families.

- o Ensure that every pupil has a trusted adult in school who knows them well and can support attendance improvement
- o Ensure parents/carers have trusted members of staff who they contact to help them understand communication from school and therefore improve engagement
- o Explain the importance of attendance and punctuality for all pupils through assemblies
- o Set rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality
- o Challenge pupils who arrive to school late and inform parents/carers on a weekly basis of punctuality concerns
- o Conduct parents/carers and pupil meetings to offer support and guidance for pupil's with/or at risk of declining attendance
- o Attendance officers and pastoral leads to work closely with families and other professionals
- o If school have any concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of a pupil then, in line with the safeguarding policy and procedures, they will make the necessary referrals
- o If school have been unable to contact the family, and have not seen the pupil, they will inform the Local Authority so that joint enquiries can be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures
- o Produce and share termly reports with the Local Governing Body

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 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 Local Governing Body and the Trust Board of Directors.

8.2 Analysing attendance:

The school and the Trust Attendance Lead will:

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

- > Identify and understand the root causes of absenteeism which may encompass factors such as mental/physical health, quality of education/inclusivity, poverty, as well as systemic/attitudinal and geographical influences

- > Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence

- > Conduct thorough analysis of weekly, 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

- > Identify attendance patterns across the Trust to identify common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools

8.3 Using data to improve attendance:

The school and the Trust Attendance Lead 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 (see section 8.4 below)

> Work with pupils and parents to complete an Individual Absence prevention plan which will focus on understanding the root cause of the absences and breaking down the barriers to reduce these (See Appendix 2)

> Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors / pastoral teams, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the Local Governing Body and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, 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

8.4 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 Trust and school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school and the Trust Attendance Lead 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

> Implement all monitoring procedures (see section 8.1 above)

> 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:

   o Discuss attendance and engagement at school

   o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance

   o Explain the help that is available

   o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence

   o 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 (see section 5.2, above)

> Where appropriate, Individual Attendance Support Plans are put in place and monitored by the attendance officer

> Engage fully in all targeted Support meetings with the Local Authority Officer

> Consider issuing a penalty notice

> Implement rewards and incentives, where attendance has improved.

9. Monitoring arrangements:

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs J Davies, Trust Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board of Directors.

10. Links with other policies:

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour 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

Appendix 2: Individual Absence prevention Plan

Pupil Name:	Year Group:	Pupil Group: PP/FSM/EAL/LAC/ SEND (Support/EHCP)	School Lead	Parent/Carer Contact	Plan Start Date:	Plan End Date:

Areas of Concern	Intended outcome	External Agency Support	Level of Early Help/ Social Care Involvement TAF/CIN/CP
	To listen to the pupil and parent to remove all barriers and reduce the number of absences from school.		

Start Date Attendance %	End Date Attendance %	Start Date Days Absent	End Date Days Absent	Start Date Late After Register Close	End Date Late After Registers Close
Start Date Achievement Points	End Date Achievement Points	Start Date Behaviour Points	End Date Behaviour Points	Start Date Suspensions	End Date Suspensions

Relationship with Teachers/Peers	Peer behaviour inside and outside of the classroom.	Personal Successes inside and outside of school	Support Pupils would like in school.	Significant events/Trauma
Systemic/attitudinal	Mental/Physical Health	Environmental /Familial Factors.	Geographical. Travel	Inclusivity (Motivational/Access)

Next Steps	By Whom?	Timeframe

Summary of Interventions and Progress made
Summarise the impact of the support from school. Take into account: Progress & attainment, behaviour & attitudes, attendance, pupil voice, family voice, staff voice…