



Attendance Policy and Procedure

St Christopher's School and Nursery

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1 Aims

- 1.1 This is the attendance policy of St Christopher's School and Nursery (the School).
- 1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:
 - 1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
 - 1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
 - 1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence in order to prevent children becoming children missing education (CME), and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
 - 1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
 - 1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole School, including our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- 2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2 EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (DfE, September 2025);
 - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;

- 3.1.4 Children Act 1989;
 - 3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006;
 - 3.1.6 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, May 2025);
 - 3.1.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
 - 3.1.8 Equality Act 2010; and
 - 3.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)
- 3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
- 3.2.1 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, August 2024);
 - 3.2.2 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2024);
 - 3.2.3 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024);
 - 3.2.4 Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);
 - 3.2.5 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
 - 3.2.6 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025);
 - 3.2.7 Children missing education (DfE, September 2025);
 - 3.2.8 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
 - 3.2.9 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
 - 3.2.10 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
 - 3.2.11 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
 - 3.2.12 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
 - 3.2.13 Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024); and
 - 3.2.14 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).
- 3.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
- 3.3.1 Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures;
 - 3.3.2 Risk assessment policy for pupil welfare;]
 - 3.3.3 Missing child policy and procedures
 - 3.3.4 Policy on special educational needs and learning difficulties;
 - 3.3.5 Behaviour policy;
 - 3.3.6 Non-collection of pupil policy

3.3.7 School rules; and

3.3.8 Parent Contract.

4 **Publication and availability**

4.1 This policy is published on the School website.

4.2 This policy will be sent to Parents when pupils join the School and Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated.

4.3 This policy is available in hard copy on request.

4.4 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the School's website or the main reception office during the school day.

4.5 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 **Definitions and interpretation**

5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.

5.1.2 references to the **Governors** are references to the board of Governors.

5.1.3 references to a **Parent** means:

(a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;

(b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and

(c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

5.1.4 References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.¹

5.1.5 **SAC** means the School's attendance champion

6 **Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks**

6.1 The Governors have overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2 The Governors recognise that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.

6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Governors have allocated the following tasks:

¹ This is the definition as set out in section 3 of the Education Act 1996 and referred to in chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024 .

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SAC	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Governors	Annually

7 The importance of good attendance

- 7.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:
- 7.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life.
 - 7.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils.
 - 7.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents.
 - 7.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
 - 7.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

8 School responsibilities

- 8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.
- 8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.

- 8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.
- 8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.
- 8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance, those at risk of becoming CME, and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

9 **Staff responsibilities**

The SAC

- 9.1 The Governors have appointed a senior member of staff of the School's leadership team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

9.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

- (a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school.
- (b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff.
- (c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- (d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and
- (e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

9.2 **Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance**

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

- 9.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon.
- 9.2.2 record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified.
- 9.2.3 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School.
- 9.2.4 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School.
- 9.2.5 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns.

9.2.6 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly.

9.2.7 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

9.3 **All staff**

9.4 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.

9.5 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

10 **School arrangements**

10.1 The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices Appendix 1- Appendix 3.

11 **Monitoring attendance**

11.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

11.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

11.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to the safeguarding team which includes the SENDCo, Assistant Heads and Headteacher.

11.1.3 undertaking frequent individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeting actions for those cases;

11.1.4 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends.

11.1.5 benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement.

11.1.6 devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.

11.1.7 monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

11.1.8 providing data and reports to the Governors to support its work.

11.1.9 In line with government guidance, if a child of statutory school age has missed 15 days due to illness, either consecutively or cumulatively, the school is required to share the child's full name and address with the local authority. To ensure we work openly and in partnership with parents, we will contact families once a child reaches 10 days of illness absence to keep them informed and offer support.

11.1.10 We reserve the right to challenge parents' statements about a child's absence and to seek evidence if we have concerns. This evidence could include a conversation between a member of our pastoral team with a health professional caring for the pupil, confirmation of an appointment from the surgery attended by the child or an email from a doctor or other healthcare professional.

12 Pupil responsibilities

12.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

12.2 Pupils should be aware that:

12.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

12.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all lessons;

12.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

12.2.4 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their class teacher or those staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

13 Additional needs

13.1 The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

13.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

13.3 It will also work with Parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.

13.4 Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

13.5 Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

13.6 Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

13.7 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of

sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

14 **Parent / carer responsibilities**

- 14.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.
- 14.2 This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.
- 14.3 The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.
- 14.4 Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.
- 14.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

15 **Training**

- 15.1 **Staff:** The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:
 - 15.1.1 the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and
 - 15.1.2 the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.
- 15.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:
 - 15.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers.
 - 15.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.
 - 15.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
 - 15.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.
- 15.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16 Information sharing

- 16.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.
- 16.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).
- 16.3 Where enquiries following the absence of a pupil lead the School to reasonably believe that the child will not return, and no alternative provision has been confirmed by the parent, the School will make a referral to the child's home local authority CME team without delay.
- 16.4 Where appropriate the School will attend regular targeting support meetings.
- 16.5 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:
 - 16.5.1 New pupil and deletion returns;
 - 16.5.2 Attendance returns;
 - 16.5.3 Sickness returns.
- 16.6 The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.
- 16.7 The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.
- 16.8 Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

17 Record keeping and confidentiality

- 17.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 17.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

Appendix 1 School arrangements

1 Managing attendance

- 1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance and prevent children becoming CME. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.
- 1.2 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8.30 am to close at 8.50 am, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

2 The role of Parents / carers

- 2.1 The School expects all Parents to:
 - 2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity.
 - 2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this;
 - 2.1.3 notify the School in writing if their child will no longer attend the School after a certain day and supply information to the School about how their child will be continuing to receive suitable education; and
 - 2.1.4 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.
- 2.2 Parents of pupils should ensure their child attends School by 8.30 am for morning registration;

3 Registration and attendance checks

- 3.1 Morning registration is at 8.30 am. The registers will remain open for 20 minutes after the start of morning registration.
- 3.2 Afternoon registration will be at 1.30 pm .
- 3.3 Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.
- 3.4 If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed, they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L).
- 3.5 If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this

will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

- 3.6 For pupils of non-compulsory age, the school uses a paper register for the 3 possible sessions per day, which are then updated on the MIS on a weekly basis.

4 Reporting absence

- 4.1 If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 8.30am on first morning of absence;
- 4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness;
- 4.3 Parents are expected to report to continued illness to the school office by 8.30am on a daily basis

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

- 5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

6 Managing absence

- 6.1 A member of the admin team will email class teachers to inform them of any pupil absences with the parent's reason for absence on the morning of absence. This will enable staff to monitor all pupil absence.
- 6.2 Where no message is received by 9.00am, the School Secretary, will contact parents by telephone to establish the safety of the child. Details are recorded by the School Secretary on the School's MIS system. If no contact has been established, the Headteacher will be informed.
- 6.3 Where we have any concerns around patterns of absence, we will invite the parents of the pupil to discuss with a member of the pastoral team what the cause might be. It is important that the school can work with parents to help resolve any health worries or indeed other concerns that may be causing a pupil to not attend school. There is a range of support that we can put in place at school, such as extra help with academic work, counselling, mentoring, or indeed a referral to an outside agency. Parents of pupils who are consistently late during a half term will be contacted by the school and parents will be invited in to discuss how to resolve any issues there may be. We reserve the right to challenge parents' statements about a pupil absence and to seek additional evidence if we have concerns. This evidence could include the following as examples: a conversation between a member of our pastoral team with the health professional caring for the pupil, confirmation of an appointment from the surgery attended by the pupil, a note or email from a doctor or other healthcare professional.

7 Authorised absences

- 7.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

8 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

- 8.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Headteacher via the school office email: office@st-christophers.surrey.sch.uk
- 8.2 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.
- 8.3 Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Headteacher or Assistant Head if the Headteacher is absent.
- 8.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the Headteacher should be informed.
- 8.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.
- 8.6 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

9 Reporting duties

- 9.1 The School is legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:
- 9.1.1 **New Pupil and Deletion returns:** notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
- 9.1.2 **Attendance returns:** providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and / or U).
- 9.1.3 **Sickness returns:** providing 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.
- 9.2 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing child policy and safeguarding and child protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. This includes referring any concerns about a pupil to local children's social care services and instigating a police welfare check where necessary.

Appendix 2 Admission register

1 Admission register

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:
 - 1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
 - 1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically, and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.
- 1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.
- 1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:
 - 1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;
 - 1.6.2 the address of the pupil;
 - 1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
 - 1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
 - 1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

- 1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024
- 1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically, and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched and in order to prevent children becoming CME.
- 1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
 - 1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
 - 1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
 - 1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or
 - 1.6.4 absent.
- 1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
 - 1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
 - 1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
 - 1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
 - 1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
 - 1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

- 2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

- 2.1.1 leaves of absence;
- 2.1.2 other authorised reasons;
- 2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;
- 2.1.4 unauthorised absence.

3 Remote education

- 3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.
- 3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:
 - 3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision.
 - 3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity.
 - 3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.
- 3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.
- 3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4 Unauthorised absence

- 4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:
 - 4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher.
 - 4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided.
 - 4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation.

4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

Appendix 4 Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil 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 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 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.
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 age is not required to attend.
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable.
D	Dual registered at another school	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered.
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 permanently 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 at the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather).
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil’s travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law.
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause.	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes.
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school.
N	Reason for absence not yet established.	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances.	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn’t satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using 1 of the codes for authorised absence.

U	Arrived in school after registration.	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of the session.
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on the 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 holiday

Appendix 5 Supportive Steps for Engaging with Families Regarding Attendance

Our aim is always to support families and help children feel settled, secure, and confident in school. We recognise that family circumstances, childhood illness, and routines can all cause occasional absence.

The following steps explain how we work alongside parents when attendance patterns suggest a child may need additional support.

Step 1: Gentle Monitoring & Informal Check-In

When: If a child has been absent **3–5 times** within a short period.

What happens:

- The class teacher or office team gently checks in with parents.
- Tone is warm, caring, and curious:
"We hope everything is okay—please let us know if there's anything we can do to help."
- This step is simply to maintain communication and support.

Step 2: Supportive Conversation

When: If absences continue and reach around **7–8 days in one term**.

What happens:

- A brief conversation (in person or by phone) explores whether the school can offer support (e.g., settling routines, health concerns, separation anxiety, morning transitions).
- Staff reassure parents that the goal is to understand and help, not to criticise.

Step 3: 10-Day Illness Letter (Friendly and Reassuring)

When: A child has missed **10 days of school due to illness** (cumulative or consecutive).

Purpose:

- To check in warmly.
- To ensure there are no ongoing health needs the school should be aware of.
- To offer support.

Letter Template

Dear [Parent/Carer],

We hope your child is feeling much better. We are writing because our records show that they have had around 10 days of illness-related absence this year. We completely understand that young children often pick up bugs, and we know how quickly illness can spread.

We simply wanted to check in to see how they are doing, and whether there is any support the school can offer as they settle back into routines. If there is anything you would like us to be aware of—medical, emotional, or practical—please do let us know. We are here to help in any way we can.

Step 4: Pastoral/Attendance Meeting

When: If absences reach **12–15 days** or if patterns suggest a need for deeper support (e.g., anxiety, frequent illness, morning difficulties).

What happens:

- A gentle, supportive meeting with a senior leader, SENCo, or pastoral lead.
- Aim is to work together on a plan that supports attendance, wellbeing, and routines.
- Parents are invited to share any worries or barriers.

Step 5: Local Authority Involvement (Statutory Requirement)

When:

For **statutory school-age pupils** (children in **the term after they turn 5**):

- The school must inform the local authority if a child has missed **15 days of school** *either consecutively or cumulatively*.

Tone for families:

This is a **required process**, but it is **not punitive**. It allows external services to offer guidance or support where needed.

Suggested wording for parents:

"Once a child reaches statutory school age, schools are required to notify the local authority if absences reach 15 days. This is simply to ensure that families can access any support they might need. Please be reassured that our focus remains on working together to help your child feel secure, happy, and settled in school."

Step 6: Ongoing Review & Support

When: Over the next **2–4 weeks**.

What happens:

- The school continues to monitor attendance gently.
- Staff share positive feedback when routines improve.
- If difficulties persist, the plan is adjusted.
- Additional support (SENCo, Early Help, medical advice) is offered if appropriate.

Appendix 6 Supportive Steps for Engaging With Parents When a Child is Persistently Late

The aim is always to **work together**, understand any challenges, and support smoother routines.

Step 1: Gentle Monitoring & Informal Check-In

When: After **3–4 late arrivals** in a short period (e.g., 2–3 weeks).

What happens:

- Class teacher or office staff notices a pattern.
- A **kind, informal conversation** or email checks in:
"We've noticed a few late mornings—are you ok? Anything we can do to help?"
- Purpose is reassurance, not criticism.

Step 2: Formal but Supportive Communication

When: If lateness continues for another **1–2 weeks** (approximately **5–8 late arrivals** total).

What happens:

- A member of SLT or the class teacher contacts the parent.
- A short conversation identifies any difficulties: routine, travel, mornings, wellbeing.
- School offers help (visual timetables, earlier hand-in windows, breakfast club options if available).
- Parent is reassured that the school wants to help reduce stress for both child and family.

Step 3: Meeting With a Senior Leader (Pastoral or Attendance Lead)

When: If lateness becomes **persistent** (e.g., **10 or more late arrivals** over a half term).

What happens:

- A **support meeting** is arranged with a senior leader (e.g., Deputy Head, SENCo, or Pastoral Lead).
- Together, parents and staff create a simple **positive morning-routine plan**.
- Any deeper concerns (sleep, anxiety, SEND needs, family circumstances) can be discussed confidentially.
- The focus remains supportive and solution-oriented.

Step 4: Regular Review and Continued Support

When: Over the **next 2–4 weeks** following the meeting.

What happens:

- School monitors arrival times.
- Parents receive gentle updates:
 - *"Things are improving—well done!"*
 - or

- *"We're still seeing some challenges—can we revisit anything in the plan?"*
- If needed, the SENCo, pastoral staff, or external family-support services may be involved.

Step 5: Formal Attendance Plan (Only If Needed)

When: If lateness remains very frequent and has a **clear impact** on the child's learning or wellbeing.

What happens:

- A short **Attendance Support Plan** is created jointly with parents.
- Clear, realistic steps are agreed.
- Reviews take place every **2–3 weeks**.

This stage is rare in EYFS and KS1 and is approached with sensitivity and care