

Attendance Policy



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Reviewed by	Catherine Phillips
Approved by	Governing Board
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1. Aims

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

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Maintained schools: Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the deputy headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher and can be contacted via the email address office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer (this role will be carried out by the office manager in conjunction with SLT)

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

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

The attendance officer can be contacted via the email address office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin and office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Appropriate member of staff where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

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

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)
- Parents are expected to:
 - Make sure their child attends every day on time
 - Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the and advise when they are expected to return
 - Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers.
 - Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
 - Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school office either by calling 01785 334960 or via email office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

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

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at **8.55am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site between **8:40am- 8.55am**. Pupils will have a morning break and a lunch break – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning after each.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken once lunchtime ends and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

Parents/carers MUST follow our 'First Day of Absence Contact Procedures' (see Appendix 1) and contact the school office via telephone (01785 334960) or email office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk by 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence. They will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last e.g. one school day.

We will mark an absence as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or condition.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides proof of the appointment time. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

It is important to be on time as learning starts as soon as the children arrive in class. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and your child is missing valuable learning time.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

Morning register starts at	8.55am	Your child is on time and marked as present.	/ code (present)
Morning register closes at	9.00am	Your child is late if they are not in school by these times but arrive before 9.25am.	L code
Unauthorised	9.25am	Your child is unauthorised late if they arrive after this time.	U code
Afternoon Registration starts at	1.00pm (EYFS) 1.15pm (KS1&2)		
Afternoon registers close at	1.05pm (EYFS) 1.20pm (KS1&2)		
Note the above DfE attendance codes will be used unless there are exceptional circumstances. U code is unauthorised absence.			

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:

- Contact the pupil's parent via a phone call on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If no response is received, school will send an email and then make contact with the pupil's emergency contacts. If we are unable to still make contact, the school will consider a home visit.
- 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 on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 7 below).

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via written reports.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:

- Medical emergencies
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative)

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

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

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

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

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

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

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

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

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

We actively promote good attendance by offering an exciting curriculum and a calm, welcoming atmosphere that encourages children to enjoy coming to school. Our link groups provide softer starts throughout the week. We celebrate attendance on our weekly newsletter and award Dojo points to the class with the best attendance. We use the Little Heroes resources to help promote and celebrate good attendance. We also write to families where we have seen a marked improvement in attendance and/or punctuality to celebrate these improvements.

We value open and honest communication and will regularly update parents about their child's attendance, absence and punctuality. We ensure parents understand the educational, social, and developmental benefits of regular school attendance. If a child's pattern of absence becomes a concern, the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to identify and address any barriers preventing regular attendance. Where appropriate, pastoral support is available to support children with any difficulties they may be experiencing.

We recognise that some reasons for absence can be sensitive and we are committed to offering support to families rather than resorting immediately to punitive measures.

When barriers to attendance relate to a pupil's experience in school, the Headteacher and relevant staff, will address these issues directly. If the barriers lie outside the school's control, such as challenges within the family, the Headteacher will liaise with the appropriate external agencies, including children's social care or the local authority and will encourage parents to access any support available to them.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Little Heroes

We use the Staffordshire County Council Little Heroes campaign resources to promote good attendance in school. We have the posters and banners are displayed around the school environment to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality. We also have the Little Heroes Helpful Bear available in the school office for any children who may be finding it hard to come into school in a morning. The Little Heroes booklets are used with all children to promote the importance and attending school. We have also taken part in the Little Heroes campaign and feature in their promotional videos.

7.2 Education supervision order

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

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

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

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

7.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will include:

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

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. If the school issues a penalty notice, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

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

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority.

The school recognises that pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged or are known (or previously known) to children's social care or those who may have health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with our SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) plans or Assess Plan Do Review Plans (Ps) that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate. Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health through our pastoral care offer or a referral can be made to our Mental Health Support Team (MHST).

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.

- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced/part time timetable.
- Enabling where necessary a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

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

When a pupil returns to school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school will work closely with the pupil and their family to support a smooth reintegration.

The school will ensure that the pupil is welcomed back and that appropriate support is put in place to address any academic, social or emotional needs resulting from their absence. Staff will liaise with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies to plan a tailored reintegration process, which may include a phased return or additional pastoral support. The school will also review the pupil's progress and attendance regularly to ensure they are fully supported in re-engaging with school life.

8.5 Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts. When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

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

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy and our EYFS Attendance policy) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school 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. 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 governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to senior leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, the designated safeguarding leads and the pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Listen and understand barriers to attendance
- Explain the help that is available e.g. pastoral support or Family Hub
- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Assess whether an EHCP is needed

- › 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 reengage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- › Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

10. Monitoring arrangements

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

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- › Child protection and safeguarding policy
- › Behaviour policy
- › Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- › EYFS Policy

Appendix 1: First Day of Absence Contact Procedure

First Day of Absence Contact Procedure

What is First Day of Absence Contact?

When your child is absent from school, it is important that you contact the school to inform us of this before 9am. We need you to do this for each day of your child's absence, even when we may have spoken to you the day before. This is part of our Safeguarding procedure and is how we ensure that all children who are expected to attend that day are accounted for.

Why is it important?

It is important that you as parents/carers follow this request as it is in place purely to keep your children safe. If you believe they are in school, but they have not arrived and we do not follow this up, then this poses a risk to their safety & well-being. We ask you to contact us each day, as we cannot predict when a child may return to school after an illness/absence and we need to be certain that they are safely where you expect them to be.

What do I need to do?

Each day that your child is absent, please contact the school to inform us of this and provide an explanation. You can contact the school by calling 01785 334960 (standard rates apply) or email the school office at office@st-leonards-stafford.staffs.sch.uk. Please do not email/Dojo individual members of staff to report an absence. Please leave an answerphone message if you are unable to speak to a member of staff directly and someone will call you back if required.

What will the school do?

Each day, teachers will take their class registers and record the attendance of every pupil by 9.00am. Pupils who arrive late will be noted by either the member of staff monitoring the office. The pupil's late mark will be added to the register.

After 9am, our office staff will check each potential absence and ensure that we have had the information for this absence provided by a parent/carer.

If we have not received information from the parent/carer regarding their child's absence, our office staff will begin to attempt to contact parents/carers. This will be done via telephone call initially, and email if no contact can be made via telephone call.

Where we continue to receive no communication from the parent/carer, we will begin to use the emergency contact numbers provided by yourselves to try and establish a reason for the child's absence.

If we are unable to make contact, a second text message alert will be sent to the parent/carer stating that we require urgent contact as per our safeguarding procedures.

If the parent/carer is still not responding then we may make a home visit.

If your child has a social worker and we are not able to establish contact as above, then we are required to inform their social worker that your child is not attending school and we are unable to establish a reason why.

Please note: We have the right to visit a property or request the support from external services (e.g. social care and/or police) to confirm a child's whereabouts if the situation is assessed by a Safeguarding Lead as requiring this action.

Appendix 2: 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Scenario
C	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their

		public examinations
T		Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
G		Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N		Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O		School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U		Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day