

St Mary's Church of England Primary School



Learn. Grow. Achieve. Flourish.

Attendance Policy and Procedures

POLICY: Attendance Policy & Procedures
APPROVED BY: Full Governing Body
APPROVED DATE: September 2026
REVIEW DATE: September 2027
This policy is statutory and will be reviewed annually or when required

Our School Vision

St Mary's school vision is to embrace a Christian like way of living, learning and teaching.

As a Church of England primary school, we value and are ambitious for all children and are committed to providing a positive, happy, safe and stimulating environment for them to enjoy and excel in their learning; grow in confidence, resilience and independence; achieve their full potential and flourish as individuals.

'I Instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths' Proverbs 4:11

Equality Statement

St Mary's CE Primary School is committed to ensuring that this policy is implemented in a way that promotes equality of opportunity, values diversity and fosters an inclusive environment for all members of the school community. We will not discriminate unlawfully against any individual based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

1. Aims

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

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- 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 Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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

It also refers to:

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting out the school timetable ensuring at least 32.5 hours of learning (see appendix 2)
- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
 - Making sure the school links 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.
 - The link governor for safeguarding and the attendance governor will be responsible for monitoring attendance and report their findings to the governing body.

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 fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Working with the parents 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 through all available channels

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 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 leader responsible for attendance is S. Khan (Headteacher) and can be contacted via officestaff@stmarys.slough.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- 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, who is the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is F. Idrees and can be contacted via officestaff@stmarys.slough.sch.uk or telephone 01753 534791.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office on SIMS the same day.

Class teachers will take the register with accuracy within 10 minutes of the start of the school day and at least 10 minutes once the afternoon session begins.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school SIMS system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the DSL, SEND lead, or the phase lead where appropriate, 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 and on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.15am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence (unless a time frame has been provided), and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with 2 or more emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting phase lead, attendance officer, PPG lead, SEND lead or DSL, who can be contacted via 01753 534791 or officestaff@stmarys.slough.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

At St Mary's, 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 8.30am and ends at 3.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am-1.30pm on Friday.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken from 8.30am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken within 10 minutes after the lunch session of which times vary across the school.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.15am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01753 534791 or officestaff@stmarys.slough.sch.uk

Parents must leave their child's name, year group, class name or class teacher, the reason for the absence and expected return date.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents can visit the office reception staff in person, telephone the school or email the school to request their child be absent. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

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 (9am) will be marked as absent for that session, using the appropriate code
- Where a child or family is continually late, the attendance officer will issue an awareness notice and will be monitored. If the lateness continues to be regular over a 1-2 week period the school attendance officer will invite the parent(s) to a meeting to identify the reason for this and seek to resolve the issue.

4.5 Following up

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

- Check with the class teacher to confirm the child is not present.
- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the home or contact the Local Authority.
- 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.
- Contact the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving a local authority education welfare officer.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence on CPOMS and to the local authority.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and 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, we will liaise with the local authority whether to issue a penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate taking into consideration equal opportunity legislation and the SEND code of practice.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels when issuing a penalty notice, when engaging in meetings to improve attendance, during consultation meetings during autumn term and spring term and the end of year written report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The Headteachers 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
- 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a one off irregular and necessary absence that will benefit the child.

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, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

At St Mary's, when making all decision about pupil leave of absence requests, we use **the Leave of Absence Decision Form** to ensure decisions:

- Are professional judgements balancing compassion with statutory responsibility.
- Comply with DfE attendance regulations.
- Are consistent and defensible if challenged. See Appendix 2

Any request **must** be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 1 week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the attendance officer or office staff. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Once a decision about a leave of absence request has been made, this will be communicated by the Attendance Officer using the **Leave of Absence Decision Notification Letter**. See Appendix 3

Copies of **Leave of Absence Decision Form** and **Leave of Absence Decision Notification Letter** will be uploaded to CPOMS (**Child Protection Online Management System**).

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.
- 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

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

Penalty notices

The Headteacher on behalf of the 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.

The school will liaise with the local authority before submitting a penalty notice 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 (5 days) 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 by the local authority.

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 thereafter.

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 and encouraging attendance

Rewards for good attendance include:

- **Weekly Senior Lead-led Celebration assembly that promotes attendance. Termly certificates for 100% attendance each term.**
- Every child in a class receives a gold headteacher sticker if there is 100% attendance in the class for that week.
- **End of term (autumn, spring and summer) celebration event for children achieving 96%+ attendance.**
- **End of half term prize to reward the class in each phase with the highest attendance over the half term.**
- **End of year gifts and celebration event to reward the class across the school with the highest attendance for the year.**
- **Each half term, for improved attendance children will receive a Headteacher sticker, praise and email/text home.**
- Class Dojo's rewarded for good attendance.
- Family meetings to support issues which may include transport.
- **Attendance Officer and Headteacher to meet weekly to analyse attendance figures.**

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

At St Mary's we will work with families on a case-by-case basis. We will work with families to:

- Agree a step-by-step improvement plan for improving attendance, this may e.g. include reduced hours and/or days, specific lessons or events, workstation areas, pupil voice.
- Encourage home school learning and for pupil to engage in online learning off-site and provide resources to make this happen.
- Hold meeting regularly to build better relationships between staff and family.
- Encourage playtime visits to mix with friends.
- Invite families to school events including after school or before school activities.

- Monitor the agreed plan to discuss impact and hold families to account.
- Discuss barriers and support opportunities.
- Liaise with the local authority to seek additional advice and guidance.
- Sign post to external agencies.
- Invite pupils on trips, visitors into school events and visits to key curriculum events, sports and competitions.

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. As above a case-by-case plan will be agreed and implemented. This may also include transport support and home visits.

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

Returning after a long period of time off school can feel daunting for a child. We support this in the following ways.

- Make a family appointment to visit the school and tour the school.
- Familiarise the child with the school layout and timetable.
- Reunite the child to friends they remember.
- Meet the teacher and/or familiar support staff member for a short welcoming chat.
- Show online access to the website, the class page, homework and other required areas.
- Answer any questions.
- Invite for a taster session if required.

7.4 Support for Pupils with a Social Worker

We support pupils who have a social worker in the following ways.

- Maintain records of pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker.
- Understand and train staff on how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for pupils.
- Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.
- Work in partnership with the local authority, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register

7.5 Support for Pupils Looked After or Previously Looked After

We support pupils who are looked after or who have previously been looked after in the following ways.

- Have high expectations for pupils.
- Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked after pupils that support good attendance.
- Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this includes discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.

8. Attendance monitoring

Slough Borough and St Mary's monitors attendance regularly through various methods.

- Attendance is monitored by the Slough Borough electronically through Study bugs
- The school attendance officer monitors families and individuals through absent reporting and chasing reasons for absence

- The school attendance officer monitors attendance on a half termly basis and inform parents of poor attendance and start the regular monitoring process of specific families
- The school attendance officer closely monitors attendance by looking at the register daily. A SIMs report is generated on a termly basis which will show authorised absences, unauthorised absences and percentage present.
- The class teacher records absence on the daily register and note absences of specific pupils on CPOMS after 3 days (6 sessions in a row) without reason
- The weekly register is looked at by the school attendance officer and class percentages are recorded on the weekly newsletter to parents
- The school attendance officer notifies parents if through monitoring a child's attendance falls below 90%

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) 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 DfE monitors attendance via the CENSUS which is generated and submitted to the Local Authority in October, January and May of every year.

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 body.

8.2 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

8.3 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 it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and phase leads, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place 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 school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of one year by the attendance officer with the Co-Headteachers. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Exclusion policy
- Admissions policy
- Children who cannot attend school with medical conditions

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, including school holidays

5. Impact on Learning

- ☐ Minimal disruption expected: Yes/No
- ☐ Catch-up is manageable: Yes/No
- ☐ Widening of attainment gaps: yes/No

6. Evidence Provided

- ☐ Supporting documents (booking date/flight tickets/medical paperwork): seen/not seen
- ☐ Clear and credible explanation: Yes/No

7. Wellbeing & Safeguarding

- ☐ Supports pupil wellbeing: Yes/No
- ☐ No safeguarding concerns: Yes/No
- ☐ Family circumstances considered: Yes/No

8. Consistency & Alignment

- ☐ Aligns with Attendance Policy 2025/26: Yes/No
- ☐ Consistent with previous decisions: Yes/No
- ☐ Decision is defensible: Yes/No

Decision

- ☐ APPROVED ☐ REFUSED
- ☐ ONE PARENT FINED ☐ BOTH PARENTS FINED

Rationale for decision:

Headteacher Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3: Leave of Absence Decision Letter

Date:

Subject: Decision Regarding Request for Leave of Absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your request for a leave of absence for **[Child's Name]**, who is currently in **[Year/Class]**. The request submitted was for the period **[Start Date]** to **[End Date]**, totalling **[Number]** school days.

Our Decision-Making Process

The school has carefully considered your request using the **Leave of Absence Decision Process** set out within the school's Attendance Policy. This process is applied to all requests to ensure that decisions are:

- Fair and transparent;
- Consistent with decisions made in other leave of absence cases;
- In line with the school's Attendance Policy;
- Compliant with Local Authority (LA) guidance and Department for Education (DfE) attendance guidance.

Each request is considered on its individual circumstances, considering the information provided by parents/carers and the potential impact on the child's education and attendance record.

Rationale for the Decision

In reaching our decision, we considered the following factors:

- The reason for the leave request;
- The circumstances presented in support of the request;
- The timing and duration of the absence;
- Your child's current attendance record;
- The potential impact of the absence on your child's learning and progress;
- The school's legal responsibilities regarding attendance and leave of absence requests.

[Insert specific rationale for the decision here. For example: "Whilst we appreciate the family circumstances outlined in your request, the reasons provided do not meet the exceptional circumstances threshold required for authorisation under the school's Attendance Policy and current statutory guidance."]

Decision

☐ **Approved**

The leave of absence for **[Child's Name]** from **[Start Date]** to **[End Date]** has been **approved** and will be recorded as an authorised absence.

Penalty Notice:

No Penalty Notice will be requested from the Local Authority in relation to this approved absence.

☐ **Not Approved**

The leave of absence for **[Child's Name]** from **[Start Date]** to **[End Date]** has been **not approved** and will therefore be recorded as an unauthorised absence if taken.

Penalty Notice:

- ☐ The school **will not** request a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.
- ☐ The school **will request** that the Local Authority considers issuing a Penalty Notice in accordance with relevant legislation and local authority procedures.

The Penalty Notice request will relate to:

- ☐ **Both parents** with parental responsibility.
- ☐ **One parent only: [Name].**

Please note that the Local Authority is responsible for determining whether a Penalty Notice is issued and any associated enforcement action.

Further Information

If you would like to discuss this decision or require further information regarding the school's Attendance Policy, please contact **Mrs Idrees, the Attendance Officer** at St Mary's.

Yours faithfully,

Headteacher

Mrs S. Khan

Appendix 4

Our School Day

The school building is open from 7am-6pm Monday-Thursday and Friday 7am-5pm for all staff.

Our school students have access to a minimum of 33 hours of learning time each week.

Nursery places are for 15 hours per week (3 hours am or 3 hours pm).

Session 1 morning: 08.30am-11.30am

Session 2 afternoon: 12.20pm-15.20pm

Reception Year to Year 6

START OF THE DAY

Gates Open: 08.20am (Monday-Friday)

Registration: 08.30am (Monday-Friday)

END OF THE DAY

Gates Open: 15.20pm (Monday-Thursday)

Reception Gate Opens: 15.25pm

School Ends: 15.30pm (Monday-Thursday)

Gates Open: 13.20pm (Friday)

School Ends: 13.30pm (Friday)

Clubs, tuition, and catch-up lessons: Friday 13.30pm-14.30pm

Support staff training: Friday 14.30pm-15.15pm

PPA for teachers: Friday 13.30pm-15.30pm

The Friday Club 1.30pm-3.30pm