



ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

St Stephen's Junior School is committed to providing an excellent education for pupils of all abilities. High attendance is essential for children to work to their potential, be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them at their school. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly since high attendance is also a necessity in preparing them for their future life as a working adult.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance. Through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, we intend to

- Promote good attendance and punctuality
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

AIMS

- To raise attendance for all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable
- To promote the importance of attendance in improving the wellbeing and outcomes of all pupils
- To work collaboratively with families and local partners in the following way:

MAINTAIN high expectations for attendance from all pupils and parents

2

USE attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance and put early support in place

2

LISTEN to pupils and parents in order to **UNDERSTAND** barriers to attendance

2

FACILITATE SUPPORT by removing barriers in school and by helping parents to access support they need

2

FORMALISE SUPPORT where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with

2

ENFORCE attendance through statutory intervention where all other avenues have been exhausted

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Poor attendance not only undermines a child's education and future life chances but it also can put children at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour or activity that makes a child vulnerable. For our most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and supported.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling. Regular absence will seriously affect their learning and has a negative impact on academic achievement. Any pupil's absence also disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning and progress of other pupils.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY EXPECTATIONS

We have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve our pupils' attendance and our target is 100%. Pupils are also expected to arrive on time for school every day and be on time for all of their learning. This means that all pupils should be in school by 8.45am and remain in school until the school day ends at 3.15pm. The school will contact parents whose children are regularly late for school to offer support with overcoming any barriers that are preventing a pupil from arriving at school on time. To support pupils' punctuality each morning, the main school gates open at 8.35am.

LEGAL PARENTAL DUTY

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. Parents have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child 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.

Any parent who allows their child to be absent from school without an authorised reason creates an offence in law which may result in prosecution. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a **'parent' includes any person who is not a biological parent, but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.**

This includes:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/carers are expected to

- Make sure their child attends school every day on time
- Contact the school by 8.45am on the first day of absence and on subsequent days on the attendance telephone number 01227 464119 (option 1) or by emailing admin@ststephensjuniorschool.co.uk
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Communicate as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support
- Be aware of their legal responsibilities for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance
- Provide a reason immediately each time their child does not attend school and advise the school in advance of medical or other urgent appointments, which should not normally result in a full-day absence
- Take an active interest in their child's education and promote the benefits of regular attendance
- Attend all attendance improvement meetings and be willing to discuss poor attendance patterns and possible solutions.

Parents should do everything possible to encourage their child to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be school-based, such as difficulty with work or bullying, please discuss this with the school at the earliest opportunity. Allowing your child to be absent without taking any action is likely to make the situation worse and gives your child the impression that attendance does not matter. If you would like to discuss your child's attendance, contact should be made with **Mrs Amos (Family Liaison Officer)** - kamos@ststephensjuniorschool.co.uk

Pupils are expected to

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Attend any meetings and engage in strategies around improving their attendance
- Tell their parents and staff at the school about anything that is affecting their attendance at school, including reporting bullying.

The Family Liaison Officer is responsible for

- Monitoring the attendance email account and telephone line
- First Day Calling procedures
- Collating and entering registration information as required
- Monitoring and recording holiday requests and other leaves of absence
- Making contact with parents regarding unexplained absences
- Working closely with the Co-Headteachers, SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Working with local partners as required
- Keeping records of all interventions and updating information on Arbor
- Contributing to initiatives that promote the importance of good attendance.

Class Teachers are responsible for

- Reinforcing attendance and punctuality expectations
- Promoting rewards and celebrating progress
- Reviewing tutor group attendance weekly to identify issues and help set targets with pupils.

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for

- The implementation of this policy in their school
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting fixed-penalty notices (or delegating this duty), where necessary
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Trustees

The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- The Senior Attendance Champion is Mrs Sarah Heaney: headteachers@ststephensjuniorschool.co.uk

Trustees are responsible for

- Promoting the importance of school attendance
- Holding school leaders to account for the implementation of this policy
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring the school's attendance figures
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.

PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Helping to create a habit of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To maintain a focus on this, we will maintain regular contact with parents and carers regarding their child's attendance and report regularly on how their child is attending.

We have extensive rewards and incentives to celebrate and promote children's attendance with individual, class and whole school rewards. We know that every day matters and want to ensure that pupils are making the most of all the opportunities we provide them on a daily basis.

We do consider the circumstances of individuals and take them into account when rewarding children's attendance (for example, absences that are as a result of medical issues) to ensure that all children are rewarded fairly. However, we like to remind parents that the true reward of attendance will be seen in your child's progress, not only academically, but also socially, emotionally and through their personal growth.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

We will monitor attendance and absence data weekly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level. We will also identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

We will share our daily attendance registers with the Department for Education and Local Authority. Our absence data will be published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. School leaders will compare attendance data to the national and local averages, and share this with the Trustees.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE DATA

Since poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. School staff will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support. They will then use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. In developing support strategies, they will also look into historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence.

OUR APPROACH TO SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and, at all stages of improving attendance, staff will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance. As part of our work to improve pupils' attendance, school staff will phone and write to parents, hold Attendance Improvement Meetings, conduct Home Visits and liaise with Early Help and Children's Social Services.

To maximise support and ensure early intervention, pupils are placed in an attendance group related to the number of days they have been absent from school and their risk of underachieving due to absence.

RISK OF UNDERACHIEVING	PERCENTAGE	DAYS ABSENT	ACTION
NONE	96% < 100%	0 - 8	Promoting and rewarding good attendance
MODERATE	93% ≤ 96%	9 - 14	Initial School Support
SERIOUS	80% < 93%	15 - 38	Escalated School Support
CRITICAL	≤ 80%	39+	Intensive School Support
EXTREME	≤ 50%	95+	Referral to KPAS for Statutory Intervention

REDUCING PERSISTENT AND SEVERE ABSENCE

- **Persistent Absence** is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school i.e at least 4 weeks over the year.
- **Severe Absence** is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. This equates to 19 weeks.

Category	Support from School
AT RISK OF	● Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance

BECOMING PERSISTENTLY ABSENT	• Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance • Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance • Play a part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners.
PERSISTENTLY ABSENT	• Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. • Where there is a lack of engagement, conduct Home Visits, hold more formal conversations and put in place an Attendance Contract • Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, issue Notices to Improve • Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care • Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings • Be clear with parents/carers about possible legal intervention in future.
SEVERELY ABSENT	• Continue support as for persistently absent pupils • Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the Local Authority.

PUPILS WITH ILL HEALTH/SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and, because the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil, the school will provide them with additional support. In developing this support, the usual processes apply:

- Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family
- Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place
- Working with the Local Authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the support to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. These pupils are still expected to attend school regularly and school staff will ensure this expectation is communicated with parents/carers at an early stage. In many instances, attending school may help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

Any pupil with anxiety about attending school will be supported as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce specific barriers. In doing this, the school will work with parents to mitigate a pupil's anxious feelings as much as possible and, in developing a plan to support attendance through reasonable adjustments, school staff will take into account the individual circumstances of the child and be mindful of their safeguarding responsibilities.

School staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions. Instead, they are expected to work with families to ensure regular attendance for every child. Staff at the school will:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue
- Consider adjustments to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed
- Consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance
- Make a sickness return to the Local Authority if a pupil is absent because of sickness and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness will reach or exceed 15 school days.
- Consider a referral to KCC's commissioned service, The Rosewood School, when a pupil's educational needs cannot be met at school due to health/medical reasons.

For all pupils with SEND we will:

- Maintain a high ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance
- Ensure a joined up approach with the pastoral team and, where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan
- If applicable, we will ensure the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals
- Help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed
- Work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Make use of school nursing services and mental health support teams where they are available
- Consider adjustments to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Where a pupil's health need means they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we will seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision in line with the statutory guidance in supporting pupils at school with medical conditions or arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Where parents do not engage in support, we will work with the Local Authority or other local partners to formalise that support and, as a last resort, enforce attendance through legal intervention
- Consider a referral to the Emotional Barriers School Attendance (EBSA) Pathway

Emotional Barriers to School Attendance (EBSA)

EBSA is when a child or young person finds it very difficult to attend school due to emotional reasons, often linked to anxiety. EBSA can affect any child, but it is more common in those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), who may experience heightened anxiety or face additional barriers to attending school. EBSA is rarely the result of a single cause; instead, it is often the consequence of several different issues coming together i.e. home, individual and school factors.

School absence due to EBSA means that a child misses out on learning and friendships. Because of this, it is important for school staff and parents to work together so the child can overcome these difficulties as soon as possible. When signs of EBSA are identified, **staff at the school** will:

- Work with parents/carers to explore the difficulties their child is experiencing
- Collaborate on ways to make school a more positive and accessible environment
- Respond to school-based issues by addressing academic challenges, bullying, or difficulties with peer relationships that may be contributing to non-attendance
- Provide support for the child's arrival at school. Reasonable adjustments might include meeting a friend or member of staff, using a quiet space to help settle or engaging in a preferred activity
- Seek support from other professionals if needed.

During the support process, **we will ask parents/carers to:**

- Maintain good communication and work with the school to put in place support strategies
- Give their child clear, consistent messages with an expectation of compliance
- Avoid discussing their own doubts and worries with their child
- Maintain the expectation that their child will attend school.

PART-TIME TIMETABLES

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible.

A part-time timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and will not be treated as a long-term solution. Any attendance support programme or other agreement will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or in an alternative provision. There will be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing the part time provision with the pupil and their parents. In some very limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part time timetable for a prolonged period. If the pupil has an EHCP or is a Child in Care, the school will discuss the part-time timetable with the Local Authority so that any support package can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

A part time arrangement can only be agreed on grounds of health, reintegration, frequent persistent absence or flexi-schooling. There is no automatic right to flexi-schooling; it is entirely at the discretion of the Co-Headteachers and there is no right of appeal when a request is declined or rescinded.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

We will keep an **attendance register**, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take this register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The attendance register will record every pupil as one of the following:

- Attending school
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent

We will also record:

- Whether an absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending a place other than school
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school is classified as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks for each session. Registers are legal documents so school staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Attendance marks are also recorded in every lesson to monitor pupil punctuality and guard against internal truancy.

Information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. School staff can change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence, and vice versa, if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school that have an acceptable reason, agreed by the school. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure attendance at school unless they can prove that the absence was due to:

- Illness that prevents the pupil from attending school - this must only relate to the child, not their parent or other family member
- Medical/dental appointments that could not be arranged outside of school hours
- Religious observance body to which the pupil's parents belong
- Mobile pupils whose parents are travelling for occupational purposes
- Suspension from school
- Leave already granted by the school

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. With unauthorised absence, the school does not agree that the reason given by a parent is acceptable. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised reasons include:

- Parents/carers keeping children at home unnecessarily - this includes when a child has a non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn in school
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school after the first session register has closed
- Shopping trips or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time, or absences not deemed 'for exceptional purposes'
- Oversleeping due to a poor night's sleep or late night
- Absence to look after a sibling or accompanying family members to medical appointments
- Inadequate uniform
- Confusion over term dates
- School refusal
- Any other leave of absence that has not been agreed by the Co-Headteachers

UNPLANNED ABSENCE

Parents/carers must provide the school with a detailed reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by contacting school by 8.45am on the first day of absence and on all subsequent days on the dedicated attendance telephone number or email:

01227 464119 (option 1)

admin@ststephensjuniorschool.co.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. The school may contact a parent/carer to discuss the absence before deciding whether it is to be recorded as authorised.

In line with Statutory Guidance, we will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily but if the authenticity of any reported illness is in doubt, or where a child is having multiple periods of brief absence which are being reported as illness, we may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence to support the absence. If we are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

PLANNED ABSENCE

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised absence as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance and provides evidence of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. We would expect a pupil to return to school after a morning appointment and come to school before an afternoon appointment unless agreed otherwise in advance.

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE occurs when we are not provided with a reason for absence. In these cases, we will:

- Phone the pupil's parent or carer to ascertain the reason for absence
- Phone the pupil's emergency contacts if we are unable to make contact with the parent or carer
- Consider conducting a home visit when the absence remains unexplained after the first day
- Code the absence as unauthorised.

GRANTING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Co-Headteachers will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Co-Headteachers's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events which are unavoidable. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, or a housing crisis which prevents attendance. In addition, if

significant family trauma has occurred and it is believed that a break from school is in the child's best interests, the leave request may be agreed. Lower cost holidays or a family's trip to visit their country of origin are not considered to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We will consider each application for term-time absence individually and take into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. We will also want to weigh the above criteria against the child's record and educational progress to minimise the risk of any negative impact. We will take into account:

- Previous attendance
- Attainment and progress
- Ability to catch up on any work missed
- Any impending tests, exams or significant school events
- The frequency of any other requests for leave.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence. The Co-Headteachers may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

PUNCTUALITY

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day or lesson, they can miss vital work and information. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons for other pupils. Habitual poor punctuality may result in sanctions being applied.

How we manage lateness:

- At 8.45am the school day starts and pupils are expected to be in class at this time
- If a pupil arrives within the first 30 minutes of the school day, they will be marked as late
- If a pupil arrives after 9.15am the U code may be applied to their attendance record which means they receive an unauthorised absence mark for the morning session.

If a pupil has a persistent late record, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Family Liaison Officer to resolve the problem. Parents/carers can approach the school at any time if they experience problems getting their child to school on time.

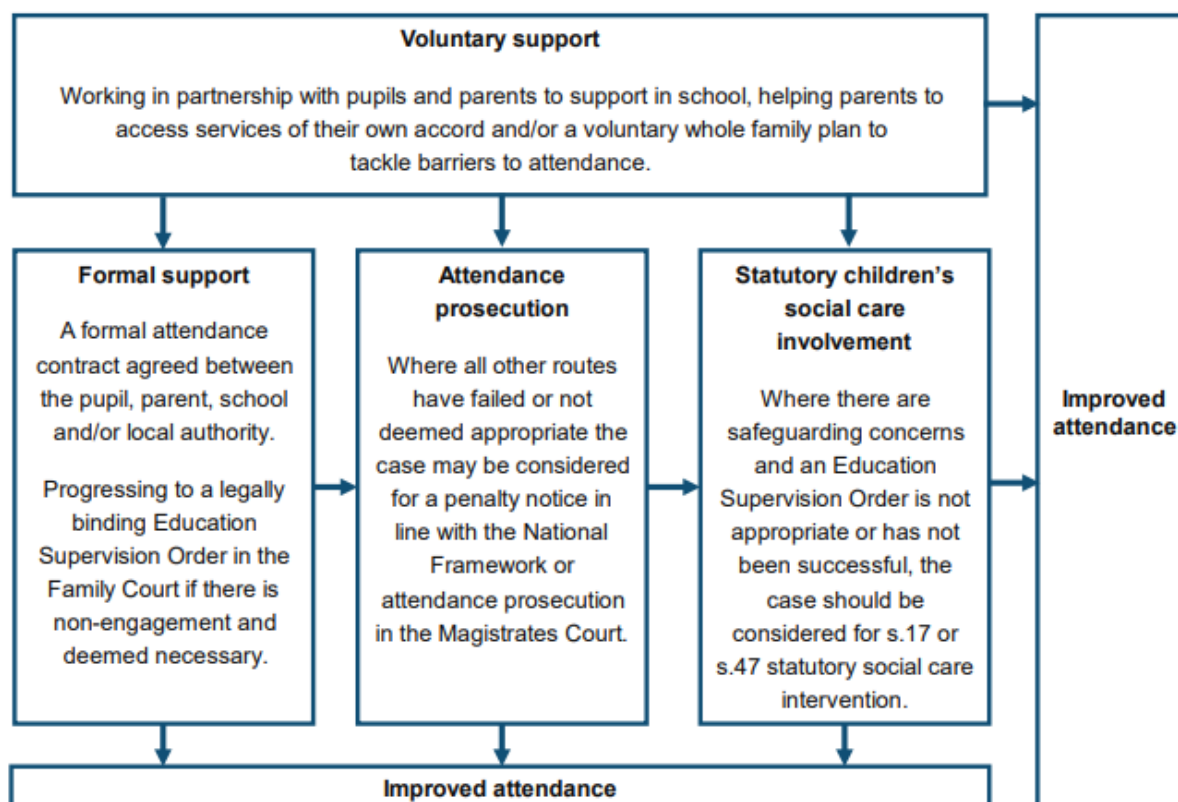
REPORTING TO PARENTS/CARERS

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via written reports. Parents also have access to the Arbor Parent App where they can see their child's attendance record.

LEGAL INTERVENTION

We will always work with parents and local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Decisions around legal intervention will be made on an individual case by case basis.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



ATTENDANCE CONTRACTS

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where an informal plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. There is no obligation on the school to offer an attendance contract, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but this support mechanism will always be explored as part of the initial stages of supporting a pupil to attend school.

NOTICES TO IMPROVE

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If offers of support have not been engaged with, or have not worked, a Notice to Improve will be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support before being issued with a fine. In cases where the school does not expect a penalty notice to have any impact because the parent has already received one for a similar offence, or the pupil's attendance is at a critical level, a Notice to Improve may be sent before a request for Statutory Attendance Intervention.

Notices to Improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the Local Code of Conduct for Kent County Council and will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the unauthorised absence
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- The opportunity to engage with further support

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of 20 school days
- Notice that absence from school caused by illness will need to be supported by medical evidence in order for the absence to be authorised
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.

PENALTY NOTICES are an alternative to prosecution and can be issued for:

- Unauthorised absence of 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions (or 50 school days) – these do not need to be consecutive and include family holidays taken during the school term
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the school register has closed)

The National Framework for Penalty Notices imposes a limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling three year period. The initial penalty charge will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second Fixed Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent for the same child, within three years of the first Fixed Penalty Notice, the second Fixed Penalty Notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

Once two Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued, and a third unauthorised leave of absence occurs within a three year rolling period, a request for prosecution will be made to the Local Authority.

ATTENDANCE PROSECUTION

Prosecution in the Magistrates' Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances. The decision to prosecute rests solely with the Local Authority as an independent prosecuting authority, but in deciding whether to prosecute, the Local Authority will consider

- The level of engagement from the parent
- Whether statutory children's social care intervention would be more appropriate in the case
- A parent's response to the Notice to Improve

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)

We will notify the Local Authority of any pupil who has moved from their current address and is no longer a reasonable distance to be able to attend. We will also make a referral if a child is missing from education for 10 consecutive school days and we are unaware of the whereabouts of the family.

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

Elective Home Education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children instead of sending them to school. All parents have the legal right to educate their child at home but it is a step which should not be taken lightly. **Our preference is that all children remain in a formal school environment.**

If you remove your child from the school in order to educate at home but then change your mind, there is no guarantee that a place would still be available at the school. In such cases an application would have to be made in the usual way through the Local Authority's process for in-year admissions.

RELATED GUIDANCE AND LEGISLATION

[Working together to improve school attendance - August 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

[Keeping children safe in education 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

[Working together to safeguard children 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

[Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

[Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities](#)

[Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff - GOV.UK](#)

[Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(GOV.UK\)](#)

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs - GOV.UK](#)

[Supporting children who are unable to attend school because of medical/health needs Policy](#)

[Arranging Alternative Provision - A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools - GOV.UK](#)

[KENT COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES CODE OF CONDUCT From 19th August 2024](#)

[Guidance Notes for Penalty Notice Request for Unauthorised Absence \(2023\)](#)

[Equality Act 2010 - GOV.UK](#)

[Education Act 1996](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) regulations 2024](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](#)

[Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance - GOV.UK](#)

[Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](#)

[Working together to improve school attendance | Children's Commissioner](#)

[Elective home education: guide for parents](#)

[Kent County Council Elective Home Education Policy and Procedure](#)

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Child Protection Policy

Inclusion and Special Needs Policy

Behaviour Policy

Equality Objectives

ATTENDANCE CODES

PRESENT CODES	
Code	Meaning
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
L	Late arrival before register has closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity

AUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES	
Code	Meaning
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE CODES	
Code	Definition
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed

ADMINISTRATION CODES (not a possible attendance)	
Code	Definition
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
D	Dual registered at another school
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure