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ST AUGUSTINE'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Date of last review:	Jul-26	Date of next review:	Jul-27
Author:	HR & Policy Manager	Owner:	Executive Education Directors
Type of policy:	Trust-wide	Approval:	Education Standards Committee

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1. Attendance Principles

The Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership ("the Trust") applies the following Attendance Principles to ensure clarity, consistency and high expectations across all schools:

- *We expect 100% attendance for all our pupils*
- *Attendance is everyone's responsibility – pupils, parents, school staff and the Trust*
- *Every day counts – learning is sequential and absence disrupts progress*
- *Only the school can authorise absence – providing a reason does not guarantee authorisation*
- *Early intervention prevents escalation – support begins as soon as attendance starts to fall*
- *High expectations apply to all pupils, including those with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)*
- *Support comes first, but sanctions will be used when necessary to protect a child's right to education*
- *Absence is a safeguarding concern – schools will act quickly when a child is missing in education*
- *Attendance decisions will be fair, consistent and aligned with statutory Department for Education (DfE) guidance.*

The Trust use a colour-coded attendance system to ensure consistency across all schools and to support early identification of pupils at risk of persistent absence:

Excellent	**Above 99% - 2 days of absence or less or 4 sessions (am or pm)** There is a direct correlation between excellent attendance and higher progress and achievement.
Good	**97% - 99% - less than 5 days of absence or 10 sessions (am or pm)** Fewer than 5 days missed across an academic year. Regular attendance fosters a sense of belonging and higher levels of pupil well-being.
Below expectation	**95%-96.9% - 9 full of absence or 18 sessions (am or pm)** Students with lower than 95% attendance tend to have a lower chance of making good social and academic progress.
Poor	**90%-94.9% - 13-18 days of absence or 26-36 sessions (am or pm)** Pupils with poor attendance have lower academic outcomes and find it hard to maintain friendships as they are not attending well.
Persistently Absent Major concern	**Below 90% - more than 19 days of absence or 38 sessions (am or pm)** The government classes pupils who have an attendance rate of below 90% as persistently absent. Pupils have missed more than 19 days or nearly 4 weeks of school. This is a major concern.

2. Statement of Intent

The Trust is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. The Trust expects all pupils to attend school every day. In line with national expectations, the Trust sets a clear expectation that pupils should not miss more than **five days** of school in any academic year - "*No more than 5 to ensure you thrive*". Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. We expect pupils to attend

regularly, punctually and we actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils, including those in the sixth form.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote 100% attendance and good punctuality.

The Trust Board of Directors, Headteacher and staff in partnership with parents / carers have a duty to promote full attendance at the school. Staff at the school must monitor the attendance of each individual pupil from a safeguarding perspective and it is the legal duty of parents / carers to ensure their child attends school daily.

The Trust will give a high priority to conveying to parents / carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents / carers have a vital role to play, and we will maintain strong home-school links and communication so that attendance can be addressed quickly and effectively.
Where barriers to attendance arise, we will work proactively with parents/carers and pupils to identify the underlying causes and remove those barriers at the earliest opportunity.

We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

We will apply this policy fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance, mindful of our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (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
- 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

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trust Board

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and ensure the Trust Executive help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the Trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice between schools

4.2 Trust Executive

The Trust Executive is responsible for:

- Driving attendance improvement across the Trust
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure all schools record attendance accurately in the register, and share the required information with the DfE and local authorities
    - Making sure all schools work effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keep them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
    - Making sure the school 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 schools have high aspirations for all pupils, and adapt 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, through Area School Improvement Partner termly attendance review meetings
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust/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
- Holding Headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy
- Acting as a central contact point for schools with attendance queries
- Liaising with the DfE's regional teams for advice about wider support programmes
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources

4.3 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the governance committee and the Trust
- Ensuring that the Trust's expectations for attendance ("No more than 5 to ensure you thrive") and punctuality are communicated clearly and consistently to parents and pupils through all available channels
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so
- 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
- 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

- 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.

4.4 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 oversight of patterns of absence, including repeated short-term illness, term-time holiday patterns, or repeated absence adjacent to weekends or holidays

- Ensuring first-day calling and escalation procedures are followed
- 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 senior leader responsible for attendance is Louise Holden and she can be contacted via telephone 01892 529796 or email Louise.Holden@st-augustines-tunbridgewells.kcsp.org.uk

4.5 The school attendance officer

The school attendance officer at each school is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8)
- 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 (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Katie Sanders and can be contacted via 01892 529796 or email office@st-augustines-tunbridgewells.kcsp.org.uk .

4.6 Class teachers/form tutors

All class teachers/form tutors 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 for both morning and afternoon registration sessions.

4.7 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:

- Ensure their child attends every day and arrives on time
- Notify the school before the start of the school day if their child is absent, and provide medical evidence where requested
- Provide the school with that least 2 emergency contacts and keep these updated.

- Understand that only the school can authorise absence, and that providing a reason does not guarantee authorisation
- 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 Louise Holden, Headteacher, who can be contacted via the school office on 01892 529796.

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

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

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

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at 8.55am (Gates open at 8.45am) and ends at 3.25pm (Gates open at 3.15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

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 at 1.10pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am, or as soon as practicably possible.

To inform us of all absences you can:

- email the School Office, office@st-augustines-tunbridgewells.kcsp.org.uk
- Call the School Office – 01892 529796
- Leave a voice message on the School Office Answer Phone

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

The school may request medical evidence where:

- a pupil's attendance falls below 5 days
- an absence is longer than 5 days
- illness is cited frequently or in identifiable patterns (e.g., repeated Mondays/Fridays)
- there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness

The school 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.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and they remain under 5 days of absence for the academic year.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

Leave of absence should be made in writing and sent to office@st-augustines-tunbridgewells.kcsp.org.uk, for the attention of the Headteacher.

5.4 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

Face to face meetings will be held with parents/carers to discuss how the school can assist when lateness and punctuality is becoming a regular occurrence. Formal letters are sent to parents/carers if a pattern of later arrival/collection is identified and noted on CPOMS.

5.5 Following up on unexplained absence

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

- 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 conduct a home visit or contact police (where deemed appropriate)
- 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. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the local authority
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's 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 the school may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

5.6 Reporting to parents

All Trust schools will report each pupil's attendance to parents at least three times per year (once per term). Reports will include attendance percentage, sessions missed, colour-coded thresholds and whether the pupil is at risk of persistent absence.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents may request an absence, but the school will decide whether it is authorised. Providing a reason does not guarantee authorisation, and patterns of absence, frequency of absence or insufficient evidence may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

The Headteacher (or their delegate) will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances.

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

Exceptional circumstances

For clarity and consistency, the Trust defines "exceptional circumstances" as rare, significant, unavoidable events that are wholly outside the control of the family, this could include immediate family bereavement or critical illness. The following are **not** considered exceptional circumstances:

- Family holidays or travel
- Family reunions or celebrations
- Visiting relatives abroad
- Parent work commitments or rota patterns
- Overlapping travel dates or cheaper flights.

The Headteacher considers each application for term-time absence individually. Authorisation will only be granted where the circumstances meet the strict criteria above.

In order to ensure that the negative impact of leave of absence is minimised, applications for leave of absence will not be considered in the following periods or circumstances:

- During the first term of a new academic year
- In SATs week/s for all KS2 pupils and during SATs week/s for Year 2 pupils (dates will be published in advance)
- In Y10 and Y11
- Where attendance is below 97% (or 5 days absence) unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. All requests must be submitted in writing via the School Office office@st-augustines-tunbridgewells.kcsp.org.uk. The Headteacher (or their delegate) may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

6.2 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 5.2 and 5.3 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). Additional travel days will not be authorised
- 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 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)

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

Other reasons the Trust may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

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

6.4 Transport issues

Transport difficulties are not a valid reason for absence. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child arrives on time.

6.5 Weather/travel disruption

Absence due to weather or travel disruption will only be authorised where the school site is closed

6.6 Tackling unauthorised absence and the use of sanctions

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 (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

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

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

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will 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 child, 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, are 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.

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.

6.8 Off rolling after 20 days unauthorised absence

Where a pupil has 20 consecutive days or unauthorised absence, the school will make a referral to the Local Authority to begin the statutory process for removal from roll, in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations (2024).

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

All schools will use Trust-approved attendance messaging, including the strapline “No more than 5 to ensure you thrive”, colour-coded attendance thresholds, and termly attendance reports.

Attendance data for each year group/class is published weekly in our School Newsletter and promoted in our weekly celebration assembly.

Children with improved levels of attendance are awarded certificates of achievement, as well as those achieving 100% attendance across the term.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil, but additional support may be needed. Schools will work with parents/carers and pupils to:

- Understand the individual needs of the pupil and family
- Work in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place
- Set appropriate and measurable targets
- Work with the local authority and other agencies where appropriate to put external support in place (where needed and available)
- Regularly review and update the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

Where mental or physical health is cited as a reason for absence, the school will work with the family to understand the underlying needs and agree a support plan. Absence will not automatically be authorised unless supported by evidence or professional advice.

Where a pupil has an education health and care plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the pupil’s needs, the school will inform the local authority.

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance including SEND

Pupils with SEND are expected to attend regularly. Where attendance barriers relate to a pupil's needs, the school will work with parents to make reasonable adjustments and/or interventions that are timely, appropriate, well-chosen and targeted. Lower expectations for attendance will not be applied unless formally agreed as part of an EHCP review.

Where a pupil has an EHCP and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

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

All pupil absence will be followed up as soon as possible. The action taken, and the responses received, will always be recorded.

Any pupil returning after 10 or more days of absence will have a reintegration plan, which could include pastoral check-ins, curriculum catch-up support and review of barriers to attendance. Part-time timetables will only be used as a short-term intervention, reviewed fortnightly and reported to the local authority.

8.5 Attendance as a safeguarding duty

Absence from school can be a safeguarding concern. Where a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures, which may include home visits, contacting external agencies, or requesting a policy welfare check.

8.6 Part-time timetables

Part-time timetables will only be used as a short-term intervention, agreed with parents, reviewed fortnightly, and reported to the local authority as required.

Where a Part-time timetable has been put in place, expectations of attendance remain high. In the event that attendance is not good, the school may withdraw this provision.

8.7 Prolonged absence for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (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 on the school website) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance Monitoring

Every Trust 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. The Trust Board will monitor attendance and absence data on a regular basis.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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 (and Trust Executive at Trust level) will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the local governance committee and Trust Board.

9.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- 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
- Identify attendance patterns across the trust to identify common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools

9.2 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. These patterns may result in absences being recorded as unauthorised unless supported by medical evidence.
- 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 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governance committee and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.3 Early Intervention Pathway

All Trust schools must follow the early intervention pathway below when a pupil's attendance begins to fall:

- Stage 1 –Early Support where attendance is below expectation: 95%-96.9% - 9 full of absence or 18 sessions (am or pm)
    - Attendance information shared with parents
    - Early intervention strategies deployed
    - Medical evidence may be required for illness

- Stage 2 – Targeted support for poor attendance 90%-94.9% - 13-18 days of absence or 26-36 sessions (am or pm)
    - Phone call home
    - Meeting with parent with measurable targets
    - Pastoral assessment of barriers
    - Notice to improve considered
    - Attendance Action Plan
    - Medical evidence required for illness
    - Referral to Trust Attendance Support where LA support is unavailable
- Stage 3 –Intensive support where attendance is major concern - Persistent Absence Below 90% - more than 19 days of absence or 38 sessions (am or pm)
    - Senior leader meeting with measurable targets
    - Notice to Improve
    - Penalty Notice considered
- Stage 4 – Critical Support where attendance in a severe concern (Below 50%)
    - Headteacher (or delegate) meeting with measurable targets
    - Multi-agency involvement
    - Escalation to LA statutory processes.

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 Trust's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Produce a strategy to reduce persistent absence, attached at Appendix 3.
- 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 6.6 above)
- Follow the procedures as set out at 6.6.

10. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant Trust and school policies.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention

		• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – Religious Observance Examples

Religious Observance Examples

Example 1

If a family want to travel to visit other family members to celebrate Eid then the two days for the Eid festival would be approved and coded R, but the Headteacher does not need to approve any travel or holiday time with family, nor do they have to approve absence as a result of fasting. They would instead consider the child and the request and use their discretionary powers to consider whether to approve any further days, other than the two days for religious observance.

Example 2

A Jewish Orthodox family request to remove their child from school to attend a Jewish conference in America and request to keep their child at home during the last week of term so they can avoid participating in any Christian Christmas celebration. The school should consider the request to attend the Jewish conference as they would any other leave of absence request, as although the event itself is religious the conference is not a day of religious observance set aside within the Jewish Orthodox calendar. In terms of the child being removed from the school to avoid participating in any Christmas festival, parents/carers do have a right to withdraw the child from a celebration or an act of worship not of their religion, so it would be important for the school to discuss with the parents/carers where there are activities that their child is withdrawn from and the school should provide an alternative activity. Where there are usual learning activities and classes going on up to the end of term, then parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw them and any absence would be unauthorised, and a Penalty Notice would be considered.

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Appendix 3 - Strategy to reduce persistent and severe absence 2026 – 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the school's culture of high attendance, which is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities, is effective in reducing both persistent absence and severe absence.

- **Persistent absence is when a pupil's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions (i.e., attendance falls below 90%).**
- **Severe absence is when a pupil's overall absence equates to 50 per cent or more of their possible sessions (i.e., attendance falls below 50%).**

It also outlines the school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

Rationale

- This strategy is intended to support the overall implementation of the **KCSP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027, including the Well-being Plan and the Framework for Continuous School Improvement.** It is essential that all leaders, staff, pupils and parents understand and support the school's expectations around the need for pupils to attend school regularly so that they get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Data and research show that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 (age 11) and key stage 4 (age 16) have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

KPI 1: To reduce overall persistent absence at KCSP Trust schools so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

KPI 2: To reduce overall severe absence at KCSP Trust schools so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

- The monitoring of impact will be measured through school leaders' own self-evaluation including analysis of schools' attendance data, benchmarking against Trust schools, other schools locally and regionally and national data, and school-based visits by the School Improvement Team. The outcome of any Ofsted inspections will also be taken into consideration.

How the school will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils/pupil cohorts who need it most

We will use the data to target as a minimum, all those who are persistently absent and severely absent. Parents and carers will be contacted and invited in for a meeting to discuss and plan steps to support and increase the attendance of the pupil. The DSL and DDSLs at the school will work closely to track and monitor the absence of the selected pupil to ensure improvements are made. Further advice will be sought from outside and external agencies if improvements in attendance are not made.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI 1: To reduce overall persistent absence so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND	Implementation	Milestones	Expected Impact
Data used to identify pupils who are at risk of being persistently absent or are already persistently absent	• Data analysed to identify trends and pupils at risk/already PA. • Staff work with pupils and parents to understand and remove barriers.	• Weekly analysis of data; • weekly reporting; • 6-weekly AMP reviews.	• A minimum reduction of a further 5 % points in PA • Pupil voice shows a good understanding of the importance of regular attendance and better

	• Strategies implemented through Attendance Monitoring Period (AMP). • Call and texts sent to parents. • Weekly attendance meeting	• Documented weekly attendance meetings.	attendance habits are formed. • Parent surveys show parents understand the importance of regular attendance and are supportive of the school's approach to attendance • SLT acts promptly to resolve attendance issues
Encourage whole-school responsibility for improving attendance	• Weekly attendance data given to class teachers enabling them to spot trends and challenge poor attendance • Teachers to explicitly note and recognise pupils' absence and return to school • Teachers to ensure that pupils' have caught up on work missed due to absence as much as possible • Attendance training for all staff, • All staff to model good attendance and to have read and understood the attendance policy	Weekly	• Class teachers are more aware of trends and can be more proactive in improving attendance and noting absence • Pupils feel valued in the school community • Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities with regards to attendance
Agency Involvement	• Work closely other agencies to target and support identified families • Closely follow attendance policy and processes with regards to fines etc. • Where pupils present with Safeguarding concerns, attendance is rigorously monitored	Half-termly minimum	• Attendance of targeted families improves. Use of fines decrease • Better attendance habits are formed • Attendance concerns of targeted families improves

	• Where attendance trends indicate a safeguarding issue, all appropriate agencies are involved		
Whole-school involvement/rewards	• Half-termly School attendance champions league • Good attendance reward incentives Attendance reminders sent out in the newsletter • Most improved attendance award Weekly attendance reminders in assemblies	Half-termly/Weekly/Annually	• Attendance improves; • pupils and parents take ownership.
Pastoral Support	• Family support meetings arranged for families whose attendance is causing concern • Counselling/support where needed from pupil well-being mentor	Weekly or as needed	• Families feel supported and more able to manage their children o • Staff in school have a better understanding of the barriers to attendance for identified families
Links to behaviour policy	• All parties understand behaviour policy. All parties understand working with challenging families.	Ongoing	• Reduced suspensions and less impact on attendance.

KPI 2: To reduce overall severe absence so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND	**Implementation**	**Milestones**	**Expected Impact**

Pupils with attendance dropping below 80%	As per KPI 1 plus intensive support involving school and outside agencies including health, housing and social services.	Ongoing	No cases of severe absence.
PP and SEND overlap pupils	• Targeted support for PP and SEND overlap pupils and families; • Requisite training for staff and pastoral/emotional wellbeing support for parents.	Half-termly / Annually / As needed	• Improved attendance of PP and SEND pupils; • stronger parental engagement; • increased staff understanding; • trust built between school and community.