

Policy for:

Attendance Policy

2025/26 V3



Committee: Curriculum and Standards

Document Control

A. Confidentiality Notice

This policy document has been approved by the Governing body of St.Modwen's Catholic Primary School and is intended for internal and /or external publication. Where the document is identified for internal use the policy information may not be shared with external agencies or parents without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or authorising Committee.

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1. Aims/Expectations

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards 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.

We strive to provide a welcoming and caring environment where all members of our school community feel wanted and secure.

All staff take responsibility for welcoming pupils into school and into the classroom every day. Persistent or long-term absence has a negative impact on all areas of school life, not just academic achievement but also on the development of key skills and friendships. Interrupted attendance makes teaching and learning difficult for all pupils and can limit pupil achievements. At St Modwen's Catholic Primary School, we place a high value on maintaining high levels of attendance. We work closely with parents and carers to make this happen for every pupil.

It is really important that your child attends school regularly and it is vital that we work together to ensure that your child arrives on time, every day.

If your child has an appointment to attend during school time e.g. doctor, dentist, we will now need proof (a letter or text confirming the appointment) when you collect your child. Otherwise, this will be put down as an unauthorised absence on your child's record.

If your child's attendance goes below 90%, we do have to report this to the Educational Welfare Officer and you could receive a fine.

SANCTIONS FOR NOT MEETING EXPECTED ATTENDANCE STANDARDS:

From August 2024, a new national threshold for issuing penalty notices was implemented, **meaning that a fine will be issued if a child has 5 school days or more (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.**

If, however, in an individual case the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example, if parents/carers are seen to deliberately avoid the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the threshold of 5 school days, **or** for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

As a Staffordshire school, we are legally required to send Staffordshire County Council any applications of unauthorised absence that we receive into school which exceed the threshold stated above. We ask that you understand that it is not a school decision whether or not to fine parents. This is the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council.

As of 19th August 2024, if a child has 5 school days or more (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks the penalty notice will consist of:

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days

If the fine is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. If the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £2500 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school

Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences:

Only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution.

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Our aim is for pupils' attendance to **be at least 96%** in each academic year (September – July).
2. **The school target for the academic year 2025/26 is >96%.**
3. All absences should be notified and authorised for justifiable reasons.
4. To provide advice and support to parents to promote the school's policy.
5. To encourage pupils to have a positive attitude to school and recognise the importance of attending school in good time, with the equipment they need for school, so that they are prepared and ready to learn
6. We will continually improve pupil attendance by:

- (a) promoting and rewarding regular attendance and good time keeping
- (b) raising parental awareness about:-
 - the legal requirement for all pupils to attend school regularly
 - the crucial link between regular attendance and raising pupil achievement
 - the need to give informed reasons which justify and authorise pupil absences
 - giving appropriate help and advice
- (c) enabling the school governors to fulfil legal requirements regarding admission, registration and required data
- (d) Consistently monitoring and reporting to governors on pupil attendance and where appropriate take agreed actions.

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 BOARD

The governing board is responsible for:

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

3.2 THE HEADTEACHER

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels

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
- Working to support the attendance officer in their role to:
 - 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Carol Salt and can be contacted via telephone 01283 247560

3.4 THE ATTENDANCE TEAM

The school attendance team are responsible for:

- **Championing and improving attendance across the school**
 - Implementing strategies for improving and maintaining good attendance. Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
 - Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
 - Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary: Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices and preparation of Fixed penalty Notice paperwork
- **Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance. Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)**
 - Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
 - Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
 - Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
 - 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.

➤ Building close and productive collaborative relationships with parents/carers and partner agencies to discuss and tackle attendance issues

- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The attendance officer is Mrs Shirley Rooney and can be contacted via 01283 247560.

3.5 CLASS TEACHERS

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information direct on Arbor on the same day.

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 system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance officer, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 PARENTS

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

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence **before 9.00am** on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. **All year groups should be in class by 8.55am. Children who arrive after 8.55am will need to enter school via the main school office and sign in using the Entry system.** If a child arrives in school after the registers are closed, he/she will be marked as late (Code L). **After 9.15am**, this is recorded as unauthorised absence (Code U)
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting attendance officer Mrs S Rooney, who can be contacted via telephone 01283 247560 or e-mail attendance@st-modwens.staffs.sch.uk

➤ 3.8 PUPILS

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 ATTENDANCE REGISTER

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils 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:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

The school day starts at 8:55am and finishes at 3.20pm for EYFS/KS1 and 3.30pm for KS2. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day. **Children who arrive after 8.55am will need to enter school via the main school office and sign in using the Entry system.** If a child arrives in school after the registers are closed, he/she will be marked as late (Code L). After 9.15am, this is recorded as unauthorised absence (Code U)

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 9.00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office, who can be informed via

writing, ParentMail or on an email or a message can be left on the telephone via the absence line 01283 247560. A member of staff will return any calls if necessary.

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.

Where the absence is longer **than 5 or more 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 as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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. Parents need to complete a Leave of Absence Request form, available from the school office. Leave of Absence requests should be sent in to school in time to be considered well before the desired period of absence (a minimum of 10 working days, where possible). Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request.

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 will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Late Pupils

Everyone is late sometimes. We would rather children arrived late than not at all. Pupils arriving late will be reminded of the need to be in Good Time

- Children will be recorded late on the register
- Morning registration closes at 9.15 am.
- Children who arrive late before registration closes are marked with Code L, those arriving after registration closes are marked with Code U (no mark for session). The number of minutes late can also be added if desired.

Monitoring Lateness - Regular lateness is monitored by the School Attendance Officer.

Late Parents

Children who are collected late from school will be recorded in the School Late Book.

Child Protection Abandonment of Children (late collection of children at the end of the school day): We understand that some families have unforeseen circumstances, staff are more than happy to support families who are in an emergency situation. Children not collected by 3:40pm will be seated outside the Deputy Headteacher's Office, supervised by school staff until collection. There will be a charge of £5.00 per

child, per 10 minutes late chargeable after 3:40pm. School will not charge parents for the first late collection but all subsequent late collections will be chargeable at the discretion of the school and the fee will be added to your child's ParentMail account. School encourages parents to review their childcare arrangements for emergency collection and consider:

- End of Day procedures – if they need updating to ensure one of the contacts could collect their child in an emergency situation
- Registering their child with the schools After School Club provider so they can attend there in case of an emergency and subject to a space being available.

Failure to collect your children on time from school at 3:30pm on a persistent basis could be indicative of a wider problem and as a school we must be vigilant to behaviours which may cause rise to a child protection concern. If you have problems getting your children to school on time or picking them up on time, please speak with a senior member of staff about the possibility of having a Family Support Worker assigned to you. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs A Sherratt – Headteacher. **If a child has not been collected after 30 minutes i.e. 4:00pm or if parents are persistently late in collecting their child/ren from school we are obliged to report the matter to Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS).**

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- 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/contact police/social services /Education Welfare Services (Staffordshire County Council).
- 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 an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

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 via half-termly written reports or via alerts for parents to view their pupil's attendance on the Arbor App.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 APPROVAL FOR TERM-TIME ABSENCE

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

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

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance. Parents wishing to take a pupil on an extended trip abroad should be directed to make an appointment to see the Headteacher as soon as possible, where the school's policy will be explained and the impact of a pupil's education being disrupted. If parents proceed with this extended leave it will be unauthorised (G code) and after 20 days their children will be removed off roll.

- Circumstances (family illness or death, emergencies) - in exceptional circumstances a pupil may be granted leave of absence.
- Due to the government class size policy this may lead to a child losing their place at St Modwen's Catholic Primary School as the number of pupils in Key Stage 1 classes may not exceed 30. Parents will have been advised of this implication and will be supported to find a suitable alternative school.
- Statistics on the numbers of pupils whose education has been affected will be reported to Governors each term in the Headteacher Report.
- Any parent taking unauthorised leave of more than 10 sessions (5 days) may be liable to a fixed penalty notice and fined.
- Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated (reference 4.3).

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
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

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 (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 usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

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

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

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

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

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

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 attendance

We will continually improve pupil attendance by:

- Introducing 'Little Heroes' in school. 'Little Heroes' is a Staffordshire County Council Attendance initiative launched in 2024, the initiative has already made a significant impact, helping to boost attendance, reduce lateness and support pupils' wellbeing across the county's primary schools
- promoting and rewarding regular attendance and good time keeping
- raising parental awareness about:-
 - the legal requirement for all pupils to attend school regularly
 - the crucial link between regular attendance and raising pupil achievement
 - the need to give informed reasons which justify and authorise pupil absences
 - giving appropriate help and advice
 - enabling the school governors to fulfil legal requirements regarding admission, registration and required data
 - Consistently monitoring and reporting to governors on pupil attendance and where appropriate take agreed actions.

Rewarding Good Attendance / Good Time Keeping: Pupils are encouraged to be at school on time, school gates open at 8.35am for KS2/ KS1 and EYFS.

Pupils arriving at school after this time are considered to be late and will be reminded of

- the importance of being in good time and ready to learn.
- Parents should be at the Nursery as follows:
 - Morning session - 8.45 am and again at 11.45 to collect their child.
 - Afternoon session – 12.15 pm and again at 3.15 pm to collect their child.
 - All day sessions(30 hours) are 8.45 am to 3.15 pm

There are regular opportunities to praise and reward pupils who are punctual and have regular good attendance as well as incentives to encourage those pupils and families who may need support, advice and encouragement. Pupils and families will have opportunities to receive:

- Certificate presented in Assembly
- Class awards
- Colour coded letters showing attendance levels

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 PUPILS ABSENT DUE TO COMPLEX BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

Attendance Officer, Inclusion Support Manager, parents, class teacher and SENCO will meet to identify the barriers to good school attendance. If appropriate, the child's views will also be gathered.

- An attendance contract may be put in place to support progress towards improved attendance.
- School-based interventions may be offered: ELSA, Thrive, a consultation with Inclusion Support Manager so the child can build success, Emotionally-based School Avoidance resources
- External Interventions may be offered: referrals to Primary Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Early Help/Family Support Services
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.

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.

Attendance Officer, Inclusion Support Manager, parents, class teacher and SENCO will meet to identify the barriers to good school attendance. If appropriate, the child's views will also be gathered. If appropriate, the attendance policy will be implemented alongside the Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School and Children with Medical Conditions policies.

The school may identify a key adult to work with the child and the family using THRIVE resources to explore the positive and negative influences on absenteeism and build resilience.

- School-based interventions may be offered: ELSA, Thrive, a consultation with Primary Behaviour Support, a time limited part-time timetable so the child can build success
- External Interventions may be offered: referrals to Primary Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Early Help/Family Support Services
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.

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

As soon as parents have informed the school of the expected date of return:

- Class teacher will organise a welcome pack back for the child to receive before they return. It may include: messages from the class, timetable for their first day back, a reading book

- Headteacher will meet with the parents (and child if appropriate) in advance of the first day to discuss expectations, reasonable adjustments and individual health care that may be in place
- Soft start: parents/child will be given the option to arrive through the school office, where the child will be welcomed by an adult known to them.
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.
- Statutory Policy: A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff ELSA or Thrive sessions will be available to support the child's return.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. School uses AStar to monitor and track pupil attendance in school – reference Appendix 2 – AStar Attendance policy and introductory letter to parents.

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

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases.

The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

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 to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board 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

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)
- School closely monitors its Persistence absence cohort and targets them through meetings, letters, PA Assemblies working with EWO.

9. Monitoring arrangements

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

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

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:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using 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



A Star Attendance Solutions

Attendance Policy Appendix

December 2025

Date Approved: December 2025
Review Frequency: Annually
Next review: December 2026

Working together to improve school attendance (published February 2024) makes it clear that all parties; including schools, trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities should place a strong emphasis on maintaining high levels of school attendance.

All students are expected to attend every session. Where a student's attendance falls below the attendance threshold of **96%**, our attendance procedures will be instigated according to the Staged response below:

Agreed Stage Attendance Intervention Levels

Stage	Criteria
Stage 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 96% or below. 2. Student has had an absence (coded I, O, U, G) in the previous 10 school days.
Stage 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 96% or below. 2. Student has absence (coded I, O, U, G) in the previous 10 school days and has previously been issued Stage 1.
Stage 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 90% or below. 2. Student has unauthorised absences (O, U, G) in the previous 10 school days and has previously been issued Stage 2.
Stage 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 90% or below. 2. Student has unauthorised absences (O, U, G) in the previous 20 school days and has previously been issued Stage 3.

As we strive for all students to have good attendance, our escalation route is as follows:

Stage 1

Where the student has met the criteria for Stage 1; the students attendance falling below **96%** and having an absence in the previous 10 days. A letter will be sent home to parents/carers and the student's attendance will be monitored for the next 10 school days.

The student may be moved to Stage 2 if they have further absence and meet Stage 2 criteria. If deemed appropriate Stage 2 may be initiated before the end of the 10 day monitoring period.

Should the student attend every session and have no further absence, Stage 2 will not be initiated.

Stage 2

If the student's attendance continues to be below **96%** and they have subsequent absences, a Stage 2 letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting medical evidence for any future absence to be authorised. Alongside the Stage 2 letter, parents/carers will also be issued with a feedback form.

The student will be monitored for the next 10 school days. The student may be moved to Stage 3 if improvement criteria is not met. If deemed appropriate Stage 3 may be initiated before the end of the 10 day monitoring period.

Should the student attend every session and have no further absence, Stage 3 will not be initiated.

Stage 3

At Stage 3, parents/carers will be issued with a letter along with an Attendance Action Plan. The student's attendance will be monitored for 20 school days. However, if the pupil has further instances of unauthorised absence within the monitoring period, the student may be escalated to Stage 4.

If no further unauthorised absences are recorded within the monitoring period, the student will remain at Stage 3.

For student that have not had unauthorised absences during the 20 school days monitoring period, the student will be de-escalated to Stage 1 and the above criteria for the suggested Stages will be followed.

Stage 4

If a student's attendance remains a concern and they continue to have unauthorised absences, they may be escalated to Stage 4. At Stage 4, a student may be referred to the Local Authority and legal proceedings may commence. The Local Authority could take action that could include, but not be limited to, issuing parental contracts, issuing fixed penalty notices, pursuing prosecution towards potential educational supervision orders or other court sanctions.



Date:

Dear Parent / Carer

Important Update: Attendance Monitoring Update

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve attendance and outcomes for students, we are introducing a 4 stage monitoring process, which is intended to improve attendance across our school.

Attending school is a crucial foundation for a child's future success and personal development. Each day spent in the classroom offers invaluable opportunities for learning, growth and socialisation that are all essential for academic achievement and wellbeing. As you will already be aware, we expect consistent and punctual attendance as this fosters a sense of routine and responsibility that are vital skills for both academic and personal life, both now and in the future.

Stage 1	Students who have an attendance percentage below the school's attendance threshold. An initial concern letter will be sent to remind parent/carers of the importance of good attendance.
Stage 2	Students that continue to have an attendance percentage below the school's set attendance threshold and have further absences from school, parents will be sent an ongoing concern letter along with a parent survey requesting more information to be provided regarding school absence.
Stage 3	Students that continue to show little, or no improvement, continue to have absences from school and where attendance has not reached the school's set attendance threshold. A serious concern letter will be sent to parents/carers advising that the student will commence a 4 week monitoring period. During this period 100% attendance is required unless medical evidence can be provided.
Stage 4	Where a student has unauthorised absences during the 4 week monitoring period, they will be considered for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Team. Parent/carers will be notified of this decision.

We are asking for your co-operation and you can help us by:

- Encouraging your child to attend school every day and be punctual.
- Reporting any absence prior to **9:00am** including the reason for absence.
- Informing school, confidentially, of any changes or circumstance that may affect your child.

- Supporting your child and the school by attending parent's meetings and taking an interest in your child's schoolwork.
- Taking holidays outside of term time. Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We want to support your child to reach their potential and we would like to remind you that you can arrange to speak to school about any concerns or support that you may need, at any time.

We believe that our new attendance processes will support our students and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed academically. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to working together to improve outcomes for all our students.

Should you have any questions or require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs S Rooney, Admission and Attendance Officer on 01283 247560 or e-mail attendance@st-modwens.staffs.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs A Sherratt

Headteacher