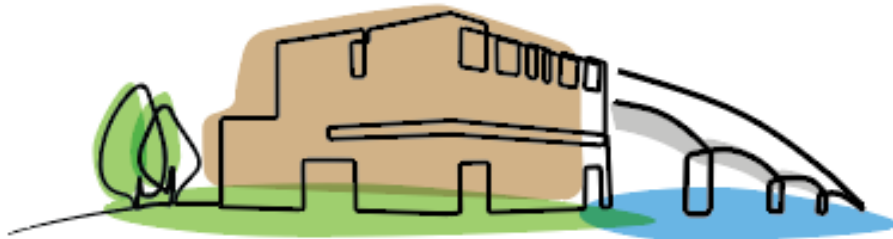


# Valentine Primary School



## **VALENTINE** PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Pupil Attendance Policy

### Pupil Attendance Policy 2024-25

Approved by: Governing Body

Approval date: September 2024

Last review date: August 2024

Contact:

Next review date: September 2025

Approvers signature: Chair of Governors

## Valentine Primary School's mission statement:

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*Valentine Primary School is devoted to nurturing each child's ability to articulate ideas and understanding, through oracy, instilling a lifelong skill for success. Our curriculum extends beyond the academic, fostering the talents of the whole child. We have created an environment that enables focused learning, free from distraction. With a commitment to communication, holistic growth, and intellectual stimulation, we empower pupils to express themselves confidently, embrace diverse challenges, and thrive as well-rounded individuals. Our mission is to prepare them for a dynamic world by providing a platform for their character, emotional, and social development.*

## Our 'I DREAM' values:

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I		<b>Independent</b> Being independent learners empowers us to explore, discover, and solve problems, fostering lifelong skills for personal growth.
D		<b>Determined</b> Being determined learners fuels our resilience, pushing us to overcome obstacles and achieve goals with unwavering dedication and success.
R		<b>Reflective</b> Being reflective learners allows us to learn from experiences, to make better choices and continuously improve.
E		<b>Enquiring</b> Being enquiring learners' sparks curiosity, driving us to ask questions, seek knowledge, and develop critical thinking skills.
A		<b>Ambitious</b> Cultivating ambition in class ignites a desire for mastery, pushing us to pursue excellence, take risks, and to be the best we possibly can be.
M		<b>Motivated</b> Being motivated is essential for success, it fuels perseverance, focus, and the drive to overcome setbacks on the path to achievement.

Every child deserves a champion. An adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and who insists that they become the best they can possibly be.

Who is responsible for attendance at this school?				
Academic Year	Executive Headteacher	Head of School	Attendance Governance lead	Chair of the Governing Body
2024-2025	<b>Daniel Constable-Phelps</b> Oversees policy implementation and presentation of data to the Board	<b>Anna Rutter</b> Ensures policy is implemented and directs staff to resource policy and strategy.	<b>Amanda Humby</b>	<b>Amanda Humby</b>
Names of personnel across the school who support the implementation of this policy				
Academic Year	Attendance Officer		Partnership Attendance lead	
2024-2025	<b>Carla Lawrence</b> <a href="mailto:info@valentineprimary.co.uk">info@valentineprimary.co.uk</a> Maintains regular contact with the SLT and staff team to ensure that staff aware of current attendance.		<b>Davina Ashbolt-Smith</b> Partnership Inclusion leader <a href="mailto:d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk">d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk</a>	

## 1. Aims of the Pupil Attendance Policy

*Whilst this policy is created as a team across The St Mary's Partnership, each is nuanced to the needs and developmental stage of the schools within the partnership.*



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.

## 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:

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- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school 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

**The link governor for attendance at each school is Amanda Humby. The St Mary's Partnership board (made up of sub-committees of local governors at each partnership school) is the committee responsible for attendance.**

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, 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
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

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- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Davina Ashbolt-Smith and can be contacted via [d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk](mailto:d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk)

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/Attendance Champion (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### The attendance officers across the partnership:



St Mary's Church of England Primary School	Ms Sue Reeves ( <a href="mailto:office@stmaryspri.org.uk">office@stmaryspri.org.uk</a> )
Valentine Primary School	Ms Carla Lawrence ( <a href="mailto:info@valentineprimary.co.uk">info@valentineprimary.co.uk</a> )
Mason Moor Primary School	Ms Sian Deltrieu ( <a href="mailto:info@masonmoorprimary.co.uk">info@masonmoorprimary.co.uk</a> )
Bitterne Church of England Primary School	Ms Amy Davies ( <a href="mailto:info@bitternceceprimary.co.uk">info@bitternceceprimary.co.uk</a> )

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 9:30am (close of register am) and 1:30pm (close of register pm)

### 3.6 School admin/office staff

School [admin/office] staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers [and pupils] about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers [and pupils] to the pastoral lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- 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 and/or local authority
- **Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Inclusion Deputy Head for the partnership (Davina Ashbolt Smith), who can be contacted via [d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk](mailto:d.ashbolt@smpartnership.org.uk).**

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- 
- Attend school every day, on time
  - Tell us if there are any issues or barriers preventing attendance that we can support them with to ensure good attendance at school
  - Play their part in securing

## 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.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken between 13:00 and 13:30 (depending on phase) and will be kept open until 13:30 and 14:00.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school [admin/office] staff.

The administrative teams should be available, if however the line is engaged – please leave a concise message on the answer machine. Ensure that your child's name, class and reason for absence are clearly stated.

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 3 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.

**Parents should ask at the school office, or email the school, to request an absence request form for any leave of absence.**

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 – to ensure that their attendance is still possible at as many teaching sessions that day.

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

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

Persistent lateness has a debilitating impact on your child's attainment and ability to follow the planned curriculum. Where the school Attendance Officer notifies the Headteacher of any particular patterns of lateness (e.g. Every Friday the child is late) and where there isn't a plausible explanation for this lateness – we will pursue penalty notices as per the guidance. <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/support-inclusion-education/education-and-school-services/education-welfare/#:~:text=Penalty%20notices%20are%20fines%20of,where%20alternative%20provision%20is%20provided.>

### 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 contact Social Care at Southampton City Council's CRS (Children's resource service), contact the Police (if we cannot contact you or complete a home visit and can see a child is home unsupervised).
- 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 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: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

We regularly report the overall school attendance picture in our weekly newsletter. It provides parents and carers with a breakdown of the attendance per year group.

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 e.g. printed attendance certificates issued at the end of each full half term, make a point of discussion about attendance at parent's evening.

## 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 circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- Attending an interview (which we interpret to be an interview such as through social care or the police)
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

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- Attending a funeral of significant/immediate family member,
- The family being made homeless unexpectedly,
- Attendance to visit an extremely poorly close family member for compassionate reasons,

Alternatively, we are aware that pupils have interests and develop skills in areas outside of the school's taught curriculum. Parents and carers may request leave-of-absence for exceptional events. This could include: a piano graded exam, a specific sports tournament a ballet exam etc. These requests will require full application alongside appropriate evidence. E.g. the examination letter to your child, the planned travel time (mitigating where possible additional time off).

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

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our school website and the school office.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

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- **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

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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

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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. <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/support-inclusion-education/education-and-school-services/education-welfare/#:~:text=Penalty%20notices%20are%20fines%20of,where%20alternative%20provision%20is%20provided.>

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

Our four schools have a rich history of promoting and rewarding successful attendance. We are always keen to ensure that families value the education offered across the partnership and we listen carefully where parents, carers and children tell us that something is happening that impacts wellbeing and their ability to attend.

Strategies that are common to pupils and parents:

- **Weekly newsletter** – outlining the year group, the current attendance percentage as an average of that year group, the difference between current and previous week percentages and the class with the best attendance score.
- **Celebration** – we have a weekly celebration of the best scoring class(es) to ensure that we promote and encourage improving attendance habits.
- **Encouragement on a personal level** – through Praise Postcards.

Strategies that are personalised and unique to help promote improved individual attendance:

- **Parent and child 'bonding time'** – we recognise that for some children, connection comes first. Home lives may be difficult because of a need to balance differing familial needs. The schools provides time, space and resources to help children to make strong connections between school to reinforce safety.
- **Temporary adjustments to school day times** – including starting slightly earlier or later – to help encourage children who have specific needs to feel calm, confident and to reduce triggers or anxiety.

## 7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

### 7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

In all cases, our initial approach is to 'UNDERSTAND' the needs of the child and the family situation that sits behind it. We accept that in the past, a 'one size fits all' approach has been detrimental to our families and so, our new approach is to ensure that our pastoral support systems reach out and provide the wraparound needed to encourage and improve a child's attendance.

Each case is unique and will be considered dependent on the circumstances presented, however provision we could offer includes:

- In extreme circumstances this could include a short period of home-school tutoring to prepare and gently navigate a child back into education at our school.
- Reasonable adjustments – to timetabling, school day or plans for teaching. Co-produced with parents and carers and the child.
- Creating an individualised plan – assessment of need and the impact of the child’s presenting barriers with a plan to support the pupil moving forward.

### 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.

Our approach is to ensure that the school engages fully and consistently with external agencies supporting the child and family. Where there is a known SEND need, we recognise that children may be subject to appointments with specialist services that are not in the control of a parent/carer. If these appointments regularly prevent the child from studying in a certain subject, reasonable adjustments will be made by the school to alter the timetable to accommodate changes to support the child’s learning.

In all circumstances we will communicate openly with parents/carers, provide flexible learning options, offer regular check-ins, designate a dedicated staff member for support, implement reasonable adjustments in the classroom, and work with external services when needed; ensuring a supportive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their needs and can access appropriate interventions to manage their health concerns and continue their education effectively

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

The intention is to equip families with questions to ask of schools to make the return to school from a period of absence as successful as possible. The questions can be used by families and by young people to support self-advocacy. Effective partnerships can help to reduce misunderstandings and help secure the most successful return to school.

<p>Preparing for the return</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we, as the family, share with you our knowledge about what is needed and what will work most effectively?</li> <li>• How will children / young people be involved in shaping their own return and evaluating the extent to which it is successful and sustainable?</li> <li>• How does the school support its staff in order to secure a successful return to school for children / young people?</li> <li>• How will changes within the school, that have occurred during the period of absence, be communicated to children / young people in order to support their return?</li> <li>• How will the school ensure that both families and children / young people know who to contact in order to raise any concerns?</li> </ul>
<p>Supporting the return</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What services or expertise can the school access with regards to supporting the emotional wellbeing of children / young people both prior to and following their return to school?</li> <li>• Where necessary, how will blended learning, accommodating both on site and home education, be facilitated in order to meet the educational, social and emotional requirements of children / young people?</li> <li>• Where necessary, how will children / young people be supported to have a programme of variable attendance, and how will they and their families be involved in making decisions regarding what is required?</li> <li>• What support will be provided for peer groups associated with the child / young person as part of the planning and preparation for a return to school?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the school make use of multiagency approaches to ensure that a return to school is successful?</li> </ul>
Making adjustments for the return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the school evaluate what has worked well previously, or has not worked well, in order to inform effective practice and support the successful return to school?</li> <li>• How do you evaluate your policies, including those for behaviour, in order to support a successful return to school and how are any reasonable adjustments to those policies decided?</li> <li>• How will you determine what reasonable adjustments need to be made to facilitate a successful return of children / young people with a disability to school?</li> <li>• How has the school risk assessed the return to school and what reasonable adjustments have been put in place in order to maximise the possibility of success?</li> <li>• How will the school evaluate the relative importance of educational development and wellbeing, on an individual basis and use this information as part of the planning process for return?</li> </ul>

## 8. Monitoring attendance at our school

Leaders regularly monitor the attendance of children at each school. Across the partnership there is a common approach that ensures attendance is strictly monitored and a key tenet of our success in raising standards across the school – improving outcomes for every pupil.

### 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

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

In addition, we have partnership internal mechanisms including:

- **Daily monitoring by the Headteachers** – specifically looking at PA (persistent absence) and those meeting the threshold, absences including authorised and unauthorised absences. Headteachers at each school maintain a daily tracker – which comes from our MIS (Arbor) and is shared with the Executive Headteacher.
- **Attendance leads (officers in the administrative teams)** – have specific children RAG (red, amber, green) rated with an 'actions list' for those who (if absent) we will visit the home of irrespective of reason given. This includes: children we deem vulnerable because of child protection status, SEN (special needs) or those we have on internal monitoring lists.

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 severed 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)
- Conduct and arrange 'Acceptable Attendance Contracts' with parents approaching 10% absence and review with the EWO those who are approaching Severe Absence.

## 9. Policy implementation and monitoring

The Executive Headteacher works with the Head of each school to ensure that this policy is in operation.

The board of the St Mary's Partnership have standing items at their half-termly meetings to explore the data surrounding attendance and the actions being taken. Detailed minutes of these are circulated and kept as a record of challenge.

Local governance boards for each individual school are also accountable – with a Headteacher's report circulated at each of the meetings.