

Attendance Policy

St Margaret's CEVAP School



**Transforming lives by living and learning
together in God's love**

Approved by: FGB

Date: Autumn 2025

Last reviewed on: Autumn 2025

**Next review due
by:** Autumn 2026

Source: The Key October 2025

Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	4
4. Recording attendance	6
5. Authorised absence	8
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	9
7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance	10
8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school	11
9. Attendance monitoring	12
10. Monitoring arrangements	13
11. Links with other policies	14
Appendix 1: attendance codes	15
Appendix 2: Leave of Absence Request	17

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- 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 DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

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, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, 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 Attendance Committee will meet every term to review and analyse the school's attendance data, identify areas for concern and discuss areas for improvement.
- The link governor for attendance will liaise regularly with the Attendance Lead and attend the Attendance Committee meetings to report back to the governing body.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Attendance Officer to be able to do so
- 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
- 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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers 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 Debbie Richards can be contacted via the school office, tel 01473 251 613

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- 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 Inclusion Manager(authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Nikki Moore and can be contacted via the school office tel. 01473 251 613 or email admin@stmargaretsipswich.org

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 8:55 for the morning session and 13:15 for the afternoon session.

3.6 School Admin staff

School Admin 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 leadership team 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 biological or adoptive 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 9am on the day of the absence 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. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers, where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Debbie Richards or a member of the Senior Leadership Team who can be contacted via the school office.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Show the school values in all day to day activities
- Use the school's Reliable Repeated Routines

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon 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 a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to exceptional causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.10pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.10 pm for KS1. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.25pm for KS2.

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 10am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school attendance team, who can be contacted via telephone 01473 251613 or email admin@stmargaretsipswich.org

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 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 unauthorized and parents will be notified of this decision.

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.

Where parents/carers need to inform the school of a medical or dental appointment, they should notify the school attendance team, who can be contacted via telephone on 01473 251613 or email admin@stmargaretsipswich.org, where possible this must be done at least one week in advance.

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. See section 5 to find out the procedures for applying for a leave of absence and 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

When a pupil arrives late their parent is required to sign them in on our electronic system where they will be asked to record the reason for lateness. Punctuality is monitored on a half termly basis and letters sent home to parents at the end of each week informing them of how many days their children have arrived late. This is monitored by the attendance team and if there is a concern over punctuality, parents may be invited to school for a meeting with the attendance team to discuss the situation and explore the any support that can be given to improve punctuality.

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:

- Text 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 will attempt to contact the emergency contacts recorded for that pupil. If the school is unable to make contact with the parents or the emergency contacts, the school may contact the police or other relevant authorities.
- 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.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker or other appropriate agencies
- 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 7 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done via a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) letter which will be sent out at the end of every half term.

Parents will also be informed of their children's attendance at parents evenings and on school reports every term.

Whole school attendance is shared with parents half termly on the school newsletter.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher may allow pupils to be absent for educational activities if the pupil is attending other schools or settings. The headteacher delegates this responsibility and oversight to Debbie Richards.

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, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child or a housing crisis which prevents attendance. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short.'

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 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via appendix 2 of this policy. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 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 for religious observance
- 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)

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

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at St Margaret's CEVA Primary School. We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

Staff promote good attendance by using strategies such as:

- Attendance is regularly discussed at assemblies and in class.
- Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment and wellbeing.
- attendance information leaflet to all parents – translated for main languages where possible.
- Parents updated with their child(ren)'s attendance every half term using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system.
- Weekly figures attendance are reported to the whole school during celebration assemblies and reward given to the class with highest attendance.
- Certificates given to pupils, at the end of every term for Green (95%+) and Gold (97%+) attendance.
- An attendance reward happens at the end of the school year for pupils who have 100% attendance for the whole academic school year.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support. This will be completed by and in conjunction with Education Welfare Officer

7.2 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school, under the Education Welfare Officers guidance, may issue a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice 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.

It 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, or prosecution considered, 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

7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by the headteacher), 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, the school will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority 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.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Some pupils face complex barriers to attendance. This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or complex social needs. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as it is for any other pupil but additional support may need to be provided.

In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply:

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

8.2 Pupils absent due to other barriers e.g. mental or physical ill health or SEND

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they will work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil.

They will:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.

For pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, school will:

- Work in partnership with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- Work in partnership with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see further details on SEN support.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate. Attendance is everyone's business so in many of

these cases school will not be able to fully support a pupil without the assistance of a range of other agencies. School should:

- Make use of school nursing services and mental health support teams where they are available.
- Consider whether additional support from other external partners (including the local authority, children and young people's mental health services, GPs or other health services) would be appropriate and make referrals.
- Where external support is provided work together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.

If the child has an education health and care plan, school staff will:

- Communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Where possible agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care plan in collaboration with parents.
- Where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified.

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

Following an extended period of absence, the school will:

- Work in partnership with families to identify and understand the barriers to school attendance.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are involved with creating a reintegration plan for example the Wellbeing team or the school SENCo for pupils with SEND.
- Work in partnership with all relevant staff, outside agencies and families, to create a reintegration plan.
- A good plan is:
 - Flexible – expect things to go wrong, and be ready to adapt the plan as the situation evolves
 - Progressive – build on progress slowly, and make sure there are lots of achievable milestones along the way
 - Multi-layered – no 1 measure is going to be 100% effective, so make sure the pupil doesn't fall through the cracks, by implementing a range of measures
- Review the reintegration plan regularly and seek feedback from parents, all relevant staff and outside agencies to ensure the plan is effective.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check).

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

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

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

The 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.

9.2 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

9.3 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 we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to 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

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the 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 7, above)

Where pupils have unauthorised absences the school will:

- Send a letter informing the parent of how many unauthorised absences they have.
- Ensure parents understand the procedures for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices
- Where appropriate, invite the parent into school to meet with the attendance team to discuss the reasons for unauthorised absences and agree a plan to prevent further unauthorised absences.
- Where there is a lack of engagement with support the school may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (see paragraph 5.2)

10. Monitoring arrangements

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

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

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

Appendix 2: Leave of Absence Request

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Bolton Lane, IPSWICH IP4 2BT

Tel: (01473) 251613

admin@stmargaretsipswich.org www.stmargaretsipswich.org

Head Teacher: Mrs Joanna Gunn BEd (Hons) NPQH

PLEASE READ BEFORE COMPLETING THE LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR HOLIDAY FORM (on reverse)

St Margaret's primary School will consider every application individually, Its policy is NOT to grant 'leave of absence', other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays or celebrations is not a right. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence and in advance. Such an event may be the unfortunate need to attend a funeral, family wedding, a sick relative or to attend a child's pre-arranged hospital appointment (but not a regular appointment at your Gp, Optician or Dentist)

St Margaret's Primary School will consider AUTHORIZING 'leave of absence' for

- Armed Forces personnel returning from active duty.
- Funerals
- Weddings
- A pre-arranged hospital appointment that cannot be changed
- Religious observance of a Nationally or Internationally recognised occasion

Requests for 'leave of absence will be deemed UNAUTHORISED for;

- A family holiday, regardless of a parent's employment restrictions.
- Family celebrations (e.g. Birthdays).
- A regular GP, Optician or Dentist appointment

St Margaret's Primary School will NOT authorise family holiday leave during term time.

St Margaret's Primary School will respond in writing to all requests to take a Child Out Of School.

Important: The local authority Education Attendance Service will actively seek to track and take action where necessary for those parents who persist in taking their child/ren on holiday during term time. In such cases the Local Authority will notify the parent concerned and issue a penalty Notice where necessary. We urge all parents to be aware of this when making their decision.

We encourage honesty and transparency in all that we do and this includes pupil absence. We work in close partnership with our Education Welfare Officer who regularly monitors pupil's absence. If the authenticity of the absence appears to be in doubt, then the school will request parents to provide evidence to support the period of SENCo, otherwise the absence will be unauthorised and a penalty notice (fine) issued. Please visit our school's website for further details, a full copy of our policy and a link to further information from the Local Authority.

St Margaret's Primary School leave of absence guidelines:

Type of Request	Able to Authorise	Meeting with Headteacher required	Evidence Required
Holiday in term time	No	No	N/A
Holiday in term time (services/military)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wedding*	Yes	No	Yes (if possible)
Visiting terminally ill relative*	Yes	No	No
Funeral*	Yes	No	No
*Weddings, funerals and visiting terminally ill relative; Local – 1 day authorized. Out of the county – 2 days authorized. International – 5 days authorized.			
Religious festivals (only actual festival day(s))	Yes	Yes	Yes (if possible)
Sporting events (county level and above)	Yes	No	Yes

Leave of Absence Form

Completed forms should be returned to the school office

Child 1 details:

Forename: Surname:

Date of Birth: Class:

Child 2 details:

Forename: Surname:

Date of Birth: Class:

Dates of Requested Absence:

First date of absence: Last date of absence:

Reason why absence needs to be taken during term time (Please add additional sheet if needed):

Parent/Carer Declaration: I have read the school Attendance Policy regarding 'Term Time Holidays' and understand I/we may receive a fixed penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. *Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a 5 day absence equals 10 sessions.*

Signed: Parent/Carer Date:

Child(ren)'s name(s) Class(es)

Date(s) of requested absence to

The school's decision as to whether to authorise the requested absence will be filled in below and the decision slip will be returned to you, via your child.

Absence request WILL BE authorised.	
Absence request WILL NOT be authorised.	
A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.	Yes
	No

Reason for this decision:

Signed:

Date:

Head Teacher/Head Teacher's Representative