



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Attendance Policy

Through our loving God

We follow in the footsteps of St Joseph

Who helps us to be gentle, caring and hardworking.

**As we learn together, we love, value and welcome
everyone.**

Date adopted: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Policy owner: Headteacher

This policy applies to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (including Pre-School and wrap-around care). It has been written to reflect current UK legislation and guidance and to promote a whole-school culture of high attendance in line with our school vision and values. The policy supports inclusion for pupils with SEND and those with additional needs, and it aligns with safeguarding duties.

Contents

- Purpose
- Scope
- Legislative and guidance context
- Principles and aims
- Roles and responsibilities

Attendance expectations and procedures:

- School day, sessions and registration
- Reporting and recording absence
- First-day response and follow-up
- Medical appointments and persistent medical absence
- Leave of absence in term time (including holidays)
- Late arrival and punctuality procedures
- Persistent absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)
- Children with SEND and other vulnerable cohorts
- Pre-School attendance and transition to Reception
- Wrap-around care attendance
-
- Use of data and monitoring
- Support, interventions and escalation
 - Early support and staged intervention
 - Multi-agency working and formalising support
 - Use of legal interventions and penalty notices
 - Communication, incentives and whole-school culture
 - Record keeping, data protection and reporting
 - Safeguarding and children missing education
 - Training and resources
 - Evaluation, review and policy questions for leaders
 - Appendices: codes, template letters, flowcharts

Purpose

- To ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils so they can achieve their full academic, social, moral and spiritual potential.
- To set clear expectations, responsibilities and procedures for preventing and addressing absence and lateness.
- To identify, remove and support barriers to regular attendance — especially for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and others facing particular challenges.
- To provide a transparent framework for staff, parents, pupils and governors to work collaboratively to improve attendance.

Legislative and guidance context This policy is written to comply with:

The Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments

- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and updates (including 2024 regulations where relevant)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (statutory guidance) and Department for Education attendance guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education and Children Missing Education guidance
- Equality Act 2010 and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child principles
- Local authority protocols and the National Framework for Penalty Notices
Leaders must check and apply any subsequent statutory updates; this policy should be reviewed at least annually.

Principles and aims

- Attendance is a whole-school responsibility rooted in a nurturing Catholic ethos (Gentle, caring, hardworking).
- Everybody has a role in promoting attendance: pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and the local community.
- Early identification and support reduce the need for formal enforcement.
- Monitoring is proportionate, data-led and targeted at the pupils and cohorts who need the most support.
- All actions must be inclusive and reasonable, with reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities or long-term health needs.

Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure the school meets statutory requirements for admission and attendance registers and reporting.
- Promote attendance across the school's ethos and policies.
- Regularly review attendance data and challenge leaders on trends and interventions.
- Ensure staff have suitable training and that safeguarding duties around children missing education are met.

Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team

- Provide strategic leadership for attendance and ensure this policy is implemented consistently.
- Appoint and publicise the Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer.
- Ensure resources and staff training are available.
- Ensure interventions and multi-agency referrals are timely and effective.
- Lead whole-school attendance strategy, monitoring and reporting.
- Liaise with families, staff, Local Authority (LA) and external services.
- Oversee escalation and legal intervention processes.
- Provide additional support and reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, medical or social barriers.
- Lead or coordinate individual attendance plans and work with external agencies.

Attendance Administrator

- Maintain accurate registers and carry out daily processes (first-day calling, logging reasons, follow-up for unexplained absence).
- Support data analysis and communications.

Teachers and Form Tutors

- Take registers accurately at the start of morning and afternoon sessions within required statutory times.
- Monitor punctuality and follow up on attendance concerns within the classroom (including recognition and support).

Parents / Carers

- Ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually. Provide timely explanation for absence.
- Work with the school when support is offered and engage with meetings and plans.

Pupils

- Attend regularly and on time, communicate where appropriate (age-appropriate) and follow school rules.

Attendance expectations and procedures

School day, sessions and registration

Normal start time: 8:50am.

Gate opens: 8:40am

Wrap-around care starts: 07:10am after-school care ends: 18:00pm

- Statutory registration times: morning register by 9:00am
- Afternoon register at the start of the afternoon session: 13:00pm
- Register closing time: registers close at 9:15am. Pupils arriving after register close are recorded as absent for that session unless a valid late reason is provided.
- Attendance codes used in registers should follow the DfE guidance; staff must use the correct code and record reason for absence where known

Reporting and recording absence

- Parents must inform school of absence by: Studybugs, telephone or email by 8:30am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day unless otherwise agreed.
- Pre-School absences must be reported through the same routes.
- Where no message is received, the school will make first-day contact.
- All absence reasons should be recorded and retained for records and possible LA scrutiny.

First-day response and follow-up

- First-day calling: for any unexplained absence the school will contact parents/carers on day one to confirm safety and reason. This may include phone, email, text or home visit depending on risk factors and context.
- Unexplained absence after attempted contact: maintain records of attempts, escalate to the Headteacher and consider welfare checks or referral to LA if child welfare is a concern.

Medical appointments and persistent medical absence

- Where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours. If during school time, evidence may be requested and time out recorded as authorised medical absence.
- For repeated medical absence, the school will request supporting evidence, coordinate with health services, and consider an attendance plan or tailored curriculum.

Leave of absence in term time (including holidays)

The school follows statutory guidance: leave of absence will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances.

- Requests must be made in writing in advance using the school's form.
- Where leave is taken without permission, the school will consider issuing a Penalty Notice in line with LA protocols and the National Framework.

Late arrival and punctuality

- Arrivals after the register closes are marked as unauthorised absence for the session unless there is an acceptable reason.
- Persistent late arrival will trigger an attendance review and staged interventions.

Persistent Absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)

- Definitions: follow DfE thresholds (e.g., PA = attendance below 90% over the school year; Severe Absence as defined by latest DfE categories).
- Identification: the Attendance Officer and Senior Attendance Champion will monitor attendance data. PA pupils and cohorts (including those with SEND, PP, certain year groups) will be targeted for support.
- Action: staged interventions — initial supportive contact, attendance plan, multi-agency support, and if necessary, legal intervention.

Children with SEND and other vulnerable cohorts

- Apply the policy fairly but with reasonable adjustments for disabilities, long-term health conditions or neurodiversity, in line with the Equality Act.
- Co-produce attendance plans with parents, SEND/inclusion leads and external partners; ensure access to a suitable education when absence is necessary.

Pre-School attendance and transition to Reception

- The Pre-School will record daily attendance using the same principles and communicate closely with Reception staff to align curriculum and attendance expectations.
- Transition plans should include attendance objectives and monitoring to ensure children are ready for Reception routines.

Wrap-around care attendance

- Attendance for breakfast/after-school clubs will be recorded for safeguarding/
- Late collection procedures apply according to school policy

Use of data and monitoring

- Regular analysis of attendance by cohort (year group, SEND, PP, vulnerable groups) and at individual pupil level.
- Termly reports to SLT and governors, and daily/weekly monitoring for the Attendance Officer.
- Use data to target resources and to inform evaluation of interventions.

Support, interventions and escalation

- Early support and staged intervention
- Universal: whole-school strategies (positive culture, incentives, routine).
- Targeted: early contact, pastoral support, parental meeting, individual attendance plans, reasonable adjustments, mentoring.
- Specialist: multi-agency support, involvement of health professionals, social care where appropriate. Formal support with LA such as an Education Welfare Officer referral.
- Each stage should have clear timescales, responsibilities and review points.

Multi-agency working and formalising support

- Where barriers are beyond school capacity, refer to LA services (EWO), health, social care or other agencies with parental consent as required.
- Consider formalising support via Early Help, a Team Around the Family, or other LA pathways.

Legal interventions and penalty notices

- Where supportive approaches fail or are not appropriate (e.g., unauthorised term-time holidays), school will follow LA protocols for Notices to Improve, penalty notices or prosecution where proportionate.
- All legal steps will be documented and parents will be informed of consequences and how to remedy absence.

Communication, incentives and whole-school culture

- Promote attendance through newsletters, assemblies, parent information evenings and pupil voice.
- Provide positive recognition (certificates, celebration assemblies, class-based incentives) that align with Catholic values.
- Ensure parents receive policy on admission and at the start of each year; publish on the website.

Record keeping, data protection and reporting

- Keep accurate attendance records in line with statutory guidance and data protection law.
- Store evidence of communications and interventions securely.
- Provide attendance data to the LA, DfE and governors as required.

Safeguarding and children missing education

- Absence is a safeguarding concern where a child's whereabouts are unknown. Follow KCSIE and Children Missing Education guidance.
- Rapid welfare checks and multi-agency escalation are required for prolonged unexplained absences or where a child is at risk.

Training and resources

- Provide regular training for governors, SLT, attendance staff, teachers and pastoral teams about attendance recording, legal duties and communication.
- Ensure staff understand how to make reasonable adjustments and support vulnerable pupils.

Appendices

Appendix A: Attendance codes and definitions (DfE codes)

Present

Code	Definition
/	Present at school (AM)
\	Present at school (PM)
L	Late arrival before the register closes

Approved Educational Activity (Counts as Present)

Code	Definition
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
P	Participating in a sporting activity
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience

Authorised Absence

Code	Definition
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
C1	Regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Part-time timetable
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
I	Illness
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution
M	Medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes

Unauthorised Absence

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

Not Counted in Possible Attendances

Code	Definition
D	Dual registered at another school
Q	Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
X	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to attend
Y1	Transport normally provided not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Part of the school premises closed
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed
Y5	In criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on roll
#	Planned whole-school closure

Appendix B:



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Supporting Improved School Attendance

Support First Conversation Pro-Forma

Conversation Aims and Information

- An informal conversation to aid early identification of any concerns so that the right support is put in place early (where required)
- To aid a trusted, strong working partnership between pupils, families, and the school
- Pupil voice and wellbeing is the intended focus
- Documentation of the conversation is important, as is ensuring relevant parties are made aware of any concerns and identified support strategies, to ensure continuity and understanding by all parties

Supporting our children and young people to engage

Date	
Name of person completing form	
Position of person completing form	
Pupil Name	
Pupil Date of birth	
Pupil Year Group	
Form tutor	
Head of year	

Introduction to the purpose of this conversation, the school member leading the conversation can use the information and aims above and should link it to the school's ethos and approach with an emphasis on building strong, trusted, and supportive relationships with pupils and their families

How do you feel your child is finding school currently?

<i>Remember depending on the response to ask why?</i>	
What does your child report they enjoy at school? Are there any lessons or subjects they prefer or is there anything that has peaked their interest? <i>Remember depending on the response to ask for details and ask why.</i>	
Is there a particular member of staff your child has a positive relationship with? <i>Remember depending on the response to ask for details and ask why?</i>	
What do you think is important for your child about school? <i>Remember depending on the response to ask for details and ask why?</i>	
What is important to you as parents about school, for example, is it their grades, their well-being, their friendships, or all the above?	

<i>Remember depending on the response to ask for details and ask why?</i>	
Do you know if your child has any concerns about school – subjects, friendships, teachers? <i>Remember depending on the response to ask why?</i>	