

# SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

JULY 2025

*To be reviewed July 2026*

*This Policy should be read in conjunction with  
all other Sacred Heart High School Policies*

# Contents

|   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>                         | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>2 BACKGROUND</b>                           | <b>4</b>  |
| 2.1 Trends                                    | 4         |
| <b>3 AIMS</b>                                 | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>4 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE</b>             | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>           | <b>5</b>  |
| 5.1 The Governing Board                       | 5         |
| 5.2 The Headteacher                           | 6         |
| 5.3 The Senior Leadership Team                | 6         |
| 5.4 The Attendance Officer                    | 7         |
| 5.5 Pastoral Staff/Inclusion Manager          | 16        |
| 5.6 Heads of Year                             | 16        |
| 5.7 Form tutors                               | 17        |
| 5.8 Heads of Department                       | 17        |
| 5.9 All teaching staff and tutors             | 18        |
| 5.10 Parents/carers                           | 18        |
| 5.11 Students                                 | 20        |
| <b>6 PUNCTUALITY</b>                          | <b>20</b> |
| 6.1 How late is considered 'officially late'? | 20        |
| 6.2 Late codes on the register                | 21        |
| 6.3 Reporting 'Lateness to School'            | 21        |
| 6.4 Sanctions for lateness to school          | 21        |
| 6.5 Consistent Lateness to school             | 21        |
| 6.6 Recording Lateness to Class               | 22        |
| 6.7 Responding to Lateness                    | 22        |
| <b>7 RECORDING ATTENDANCE</b>                 | <b>22</b> |
| 7.1 Attendance register                       | 22        |
| 7.2 Taking the Register                       | 23        |
| 7.3 Unplanned absence                         | 23        |
| 7.4 Planned absence                           | 23        |
| 7.5 Following up unexplained absence          | 23        |
| 7.6 Keeping Parents Informed                  | 24        |
| <b>8 AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE</b>  | <b>24</b> |
| 8.1 Approval for term-time absence            | 24        |
| 8.2 Legal sanctions                           | 25        |
| <b>9 RECORD KEEPING</b>                       | <b>26</b> |
| <b>10 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES</b>           | <b>26</b> |
| <b>11 RATIFICATION</b>                        | <b>26</b> |

## ***ATTENDANCE PLANS***

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>PLAN 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORT</b>       | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>PLAN 2: UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE</b>     | <b>10</b> |
| <b>PLAN 3: IN RESPONSE TO TRIGGERS</b> | <b>11</b> |

## ***APPENDICES***

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>APPENDIX 1: Attendance Codes</b>                        |  |
| <b>APPENDIX 2: Individual Attendance Audit</b>             |  |
| <b>APPENDIX 3: Individual Attendance Plan</b>              |  |
| <b>APPENDIX 4: Pastoral Team Structure</b>                 |  |
| <b>APPENDIX 5: Special Term Time Absence Request Form</b>  |  |
| <b>APPENDIX 6: Summary information provided to parents</b> |  |

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Sacred Heart High School is committed through its Mission Statement to creating a well ordered, stimulating, secure and encouraging learning environment which will support high levels of achievement and the holistic formation of all students. There is no doubt, however, that achievement flourishes in a situation where there is not only lively teaching and learning but also one where there are high expectations of all members of the community with regard to attendance and punctuality as well as behaviour.

The school requires all pupils and parents to sign a Home School Agreement which commits both parent and child to the child's regular and punctual attendance at school.

The school will establish an ethos for students where they understand the importance of their own entitlement to full time education and recognise that **96% attendance and 100% punctuality** is the norm. This whole school policy sets out the processes which will be used to achieve this.

While responsibility for absence and punctuality ultimately rests with parents or carers, all members of the school community need to create a culture in which pupils come to school daily without question and that lateness both in the morning and to lessons during the day, is recognised as a form of truancy and a matter of discourtesy to members of the school community.

We adopt the approach of **listen, empathise and support** – but we will at the same time, do everything in our power to ensure students' attendance in school and this may include regular challenge regarding absenteeism and referral to outside agencies. We will hold parents/carers to account where appropriate.

Pupil-level absence 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.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Trends

Sacred Heart High School has a tradition of high levels of attendance and punctuality amongst pupils. Research and our own statistics show that there is a clear link between 'attendance & punctuality' and high achievement. In Years 7 - 9 trends show high attendance levels for most pupils. There is however a changing pattern of attendance and punctuality at Key Stage 4 when a growing number of pupils show a marked decline in punctuality and in attendance below our school target of 96%

The reasons for this are often linked to changing perceptions of the role and importance of studying for examinations which often overwhelms the student leading to a decline in mental health and well-being and subsequent opting out. Once this cycle starts, it is very difficult for the young person to break the pattern which can lead to underachievement, failure and even alienation.

Furthermore, there are other social and complex reasons why students are either absent or late. This may be as a result of family circumstances, or safeguarding issues linked to mental health.

## 3 AIMS

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent absenteeism

- 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 4 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

- Whilst Post 16 Education is non-compulsory, we maintain the school's high standards and expectations with attendance and punctuality at Sixth Form. These expectations will be outlined at interview and at Sixth Form Induction.

## 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 The Governing Board

---

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Promote the importance of school attendance across school policies and ethos
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance (Kate Farmer).
- Annually review this policy and ensure that its provisions and procedures (including the recording and organising of data) are being effectively implemented and staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties; ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children, and staff.
- take time at governors' meetings to consider the schools' attendance target; to review and challenge attendance data and discuss relevant issues in order to stay on top of attendance targets for the year.

The governors' Ethos Committee agrees attendance targets, reviews attendance data and monitors progress.

## 5.2 The Headteacher

---

The headteacher will have a strategic overview of attendance:

- ensuring that there is an Attendance Strategy in place including a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- ensuring that clear plans are in place to increase attendance and punctuality including:
  - a) **Plan 1: Universal Support** to ensure everyone is aware of the importance of attendance and to keep parents informed of their daughter's attendance level;
  - b) **Plan 2: Unexplained Absence** responding to unexplained absence to minimise Children Missing Education (i.e. those absent for 4 weeks or more); and
  - c) **Plan 3: Trigger Points** to respond to trigger points identified in half termly reviews.
- reporting on absence and punctuality data to governors including comparisons with the national average.
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- 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:
  1. Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  2. 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 or more
  3. Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

## 5.3 The Senior Leadership Team

---

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) plays a strategic role, ensuring that this policy is actively adhered to and is visible through the line management process.

All staff but specifically the SLT have a duty to communicate to pupils, the importance of this Attendance & Punctuality Policy and to ensure that they are aware of what is expected of them. Relevant text is included in the Parent Pack and on the parents' tab on the school website.

In particular, the Senior Leadership Team will:

- emphasise the shared role of parents in taking seriously the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by their daughters for whom they are legally responsible and accountable.
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement;

- ensure that all staff are familiar with this Attendance & Punctuality Policy and government legislation, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Lead the implementation of this policy and maintain oversight of data and benchmarking to identify areas of focus for improvement; and using data to monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Assistant Headteachers with Key Stage responsibilities to review historic and emerging patterns of attendance, across Year Groups and categories within these, and develop strategies to address them.
- coordinate with the governors' Ethos Committee to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this Attendance & Punctuality policy, including an annual review and spot checks of registers.
- develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend.
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

#### **5.4 The Senior Leader responsible for Attendance**

---

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is also responsible for Behaviour and as Inclusion Lead will be:

- 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
- Work closely with the SENCO , Pastoral Manager and Heads of Year

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs C Subban and she can be contacted via [csubban@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk].

#### **5.5 The Attendance Officer**

---

The attendance officer is Mrs D Cahill and she can be contacted on 0208 748 7600 x217 and using [absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk)

The Attendance Officer should always act promptly where absence is concerned. All actions taken should be recorded.

### **SIMS Resolution of Attendance Codes**

All official codes are set out in **Appendix 1**. The school's Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Checking all registers have been completed online by 8.50am and entering any paper copies on to the system as soon as possible after that;
- Noting verbal phone messages from parents every morning, and filing as part of the child's record.
- Producing absence reports daily by 9.30am so that these can be cross referenced with any messages received from parents and these messages to be recorded on SIMS. The Attendance Officer will only overwrite the 'unexplained absence' mark on the register, on receipt of a **handwritten hard copy** (not emailed) absence note from parents/carers when the child returns to school.
- If no call has been received to explain the absence, the Attendance Officer is required to contact the parents, by telephone or by email.
- If there is still no response on the day of absence, then the absence is to be recorded as 'unexplained' until a satisfactory explanation is received.
- On receipt of a follow-up note, the Attendance Officer recodes the register as appropriate on SIMS including a brief note on SIMS where needed, to ensure that tutors also have access to this information. Letters are to be scanned and stored electronically.
- If no note or if no satisfactory explanation is received, the absence code will be changed to 'unauthorised'. Once the appropriate information is received it will be changed to authorised.

### **Attendance & Punctuality Data Monitoring**

The school Attendance Officer will:

- **Daily:** Track attendance through the school's management information system and act in accordance with *Plan 1, Universal Support and Plan 2, Unexplained Absence*.
- **Weekly:** Monitor individual, group and whole school attendance levels sending 'Form Group Absence Reports' to Form Tutors and 'Year Group Absence Reports' to the TACT team.
- **At least once per half term:** Monitor individual, group and whole school attendance levels and identify students reaching set trigger points and acting in accordance with *Plan 3, Trigger Points*.

### **Reporting on Attendance and Punctuality**

- **Weekly Attendance reports:** The Attendance Officer will routinely inform
  - Form Tutors about attendance in their form; and also
  - The TACT team (i.e. Heads of Year, AHT for relevant Key stages, Counsellors, SENCO, Chaplain, and Deputy Head, Safeguarding Lead, Pastoral Manager ) about attendance across each Year Group

by issuing weekly attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. She will also meet with the Pastoral Support Managers weekly to discuss any concerns and be updated on any pastoral/medical issues which may be causing absence.



- **Full Week of Absence:** Attendance Officer will report by email to the Senior Leader for Attendance and Head of Year (with the appropriate Assistant Headteacher copied in) all absences of a week's duration.
- **Attendance Patterns:** Attendance Officer will liaise with Form Tutors, Heads of Year, the Senior Leader for Attendance and relevant Assistant Headteacher and Pastoral Support Manager to discuss and highlight particular absence patterns that may be evident for example days when particular subjects/work deadlines occur; or Friday/Monday, last/first days of term; etc.
- **Daily Late:** The Attendance Officer will provide to Form Tutors, Pastoral Support Managers and senior staff, a daily list of all pupils who report late with their time of arrival and reasons given, so that detentions can be issued in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. This is done through Edulink.

**The attendance officer will send a text message to parents.**

- **Punctuality Patterns:** The Attendance Officer will run regular 'morning punctuality' checks and identify those with poor punctuality and those where patterns may be evident. This will be reported to the relevant Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher for monitoring. The Senior Leader for attendance will also be informed as poor punctuality is closely linked with attendance.

## PLAN 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORT

| Threshold   | Strategies to be used  | Monitoring procedures  |
|---|--|--|
| All students, all the time, irrespective of their attendance level. | <b>Communicating expectations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular reminders of the importance of good attendance, through the school newsletter, website, etc. <b>(SLT)</b></li> <li>Half termly improvement awards for attendance and punctuality awards <b>(Heads of Year)</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance tracked through the school's management information system (MIS)</li> <li>Individual, group and whole-school attendance monitored by <b>Attendance Officer</b> to identify any concerns and trigger points</li> <li><b>Form tutors</b> to be on alert for any absence patterns</li> <li><b>Attendance Officer</b> will issue weekly attendance reports to <b>Form Tutors</b> about their form; and to <b>Heads of Year</b> the <b>TACT Team</b> (i.e. AHT, Counsellors, SENCO, Chaplain, and Deputy Head) about attendance across each Year Group to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.</li> </ul> |
|   | <b>Direct contact with parents/carers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day of absence phone calls, <b>including text and emails (Attendance Officer)</b></li> <li>Parents informed of attendance levels via Edulink and IPM reports, giving attendance percentages/punctuality data <b>(Attendance Officer)</b></li> <li>Requests for term-time absence to be declined, unless there are exceptional circumstances <b>(Attendance Officer with Headteacher)</b></li> </ul> |  |

## PLAN 2: UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE

**DAY 1: No message left on phone and no email that satisfactorily explains the absence.**

In line with universal support, **Attendance Officer** contacts parents/carers and if no response, also the emergency contacts, to establish the whereabouts of the student.

**DAY 2: No satisfactory reason for the absence.**

**STUDENT REMAINS ABSENT**

**STUDENT HAS RETURNED TO SCHOOL**

**Form tutor** seeks the reason for absence in discussion with the student and reminds her of the importance of bringing a signed note from the parent/carer of sufficient detail to confirm this (not simply 'was unwell'). Attendance Officer kept informed by the Form Tutor.

**Vulnerable Students**

Attendance Officer attempts further contact with family but if no response received by midday, absence is immediately escalated to the **PSM/Inclusion Lead** for **further reasonable enquires** including home contact & liaison with local authority as appropriate / external agencies already involved, e.g. social worker

**Other students**

**Attendance Officer** attempts **further reasonable enquires** to parent/carer and emergency contacts

**DAY 3: No satisfactory reason for the absence.**

**Attendance Officer** also changes the code to unauthorised (N). **Template Letters 1a (student in school) & 1b (student still absent)** used to notify parent/carers that the absence is now recorded as unauthorised and seeking further clarification. Letter issued by Attendance Officer, signed by Headteacher and copied to Form Tutor.

**Form tutor** again reminds student of the importance of bringing in the note.

**Vulnerable Students**

**PSM/Inclusion Lead** attempts further home contact every day and further liaises with external agencies/local authority.

**Other Students**

**Attendance Officer** refers to PSM for **further reasonable enquiries &** referral to agencies/ local authority as appropriate.

**DAY 6: No satisfactory reason for the absence.**

**Template Letter 2a/2b** issued to parent/carer signed by Headteacher, stating that the Head of Year will be in touch with them to set up a meeting in school to resolve the matter. Head of Year sets up the meeting

**Form tutor** again reminds student of the importance of bringing in the note.  
**Attendance Officer** issues Template Letter 2a/2b

**Vulnerable Students**

**PSM/Inclusion Lead** attempts further home contact every day & liaises with local authority/ agencies.

**Other Students**

**PSM** continues daily to attempt contact with the family and liaison with local authority/external agency as appropriate

**SIX WEEKS: no satisfactory reason for absence.**

**Bespoke letter** issued by **PSM/Inclusion Lead** in collaboration with (& signed by) Headteacher and copied to Form Tutor, Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher. Consideration of a referral to the ACE team for penalty notice; or to Family Support for support with underlying issues impacting attendance.

**SOONER THAN 6 WEEKS: no satisfactory reason for absence.**

**Any student**

**Bespoke letter** issued by **PSM/Inclusion Lead** in collaboration with (& signed by) Headteacher and copied to Form Tutor, Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher.

**PSM/Inclusion Lead** attempts further home contact every day and refers the matter to the ACE team/Family Support and keeps the Attendance Officer informed as appropriate

**FURTHER UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE BELOW 90% ATTENDANCE & PENALTY NOTICE**

If penalty notice and referral to Family Support has failed to affect an improvement **PSM/Inclusion Lead** in collaboration with the Headteacher consider initiating a school-led prosecution with support/guidance from ACE

If Family Support were involved, they will retain any evidence of interventions for any potential witness statements to contribute to a school-led prosecution

## PLAN 3: HALF-TERMLY REVIEW TRIGGER POINTS

### Trigger 1, Initial Targeted Support

(see also Attendance & Punctuality Template letters)

| Threshold  | Actions to be taken  | Monitoring procedures  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Initiate support at this level if any of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>93% - 96% attendance</li> <li>One day unauthorised absence over the last half term</li> <li>Five late arrivals over a half-term period</li> </ul> | <p><b>Communicating expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils will continue to receive the universal support referred to above.</li> </ul> <p><b>Direct contact with parents/carers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trigger 1 letter issued by <b>Attendance Officer</b>, signed by Headteacher and copied to <b>Form Tutor</b>.</li> <li>The <b>Form Tutor</b> will have an informal discussion with the student to explore whether they have any concerns or issues that could be a barrier to attendance. This conversation to be logged on Provision Map.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <p>Form Tutor to consider referral to TACT if external agencies may be appropriate for pupil/family and make referrals as required. Possibilities include: School counsellor; CAMHs; Early Help</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance tracked through MIS</li> <li><b>Form Tutor</b> to do <b>weekly</b> checks on the pupil's data</li> <li>Form tutor to monitor pupil more closely</li> </ul> |



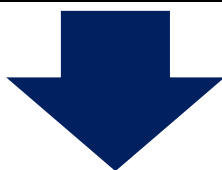
## Trigger 2, Enhanced Targeted Support

| Threshold  | Actions to be taken  | Monitoring procedures  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Initiate support at this level if any of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% - 93% attendance</li> <li>• 2-5 days unauthorised absences</li> <li>• 6-10 late arrivals over a half term period</li> </ul> | <p><b>Communicating expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students continue to receive the universal support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Direct contact with parents/carers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trigger 2 letter generated and issued by <b>Attendance Officer</b>, signed by Headteacher and made available to Form Tutor and <b>Head of Year</b>.</li> <li>• Trigger 2 letter includes text to explain that the <b>Head of Year</b> will be in touch to arrange an Attendance Meeting attended by the parent/carer, student Head of Year and where appropriate the <b>PSM</b> or <b>Form Tutor</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Individual Attendance Audit</b> (Appendix 2) and <b>Individual Attendance Plan</b> (Appendix 3) initiated by the <b>Head of Year</b> and resolved at the meeting - support to be offered in line with this plan.</li> <li>• <b>Head of Year</b> liaises with <b>PSM</b> and <b>Assistant Headteacher</b> to consider whether any additional partners could be engaged - make referrals as needed.</li> <li>• <b>Head of Year</b> to keep the Attendance officer aware of what is happening</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance tracked through MIS</li> <li>• <b>Head of Year</b> to do <b>weekly</b> checks on the pupil's data</li> <li>• Form tutor continues to monitor pupil more closely. <i>Any conversations to be logged on Provision Map</i></li> </ul> |



### Trigger 3, Intensive Support for Persistent Absentees

| Threshold   | Actions to be taken  | Monitoring procedures  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Initiate support at this level if any of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance 80-90% (<i>Persistent absentee</i>)</li> <li>6 or more days unauthorised absences. (<i>Note: this assumes that the continued unauthorised absences are sporadic and that the child is otherwise normally attending school. For those who are not attending school, then Plan 2 to minimise Children Missing Education is used</i>)</li> <li>More than 10 late arrivals</li> </ul> | <p><b>Communicating expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students continue to receive the universal support</li> </ul> <p><b>Direct contact with parents/carers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trigger 3 letter issued by <b>Attendance Officer</b>, signed by Headteacher and made available to <b>Form tutor, Head of Year, Pastoral Support Manager/Senior Leader responsible for attendance</b>.</li> <li>Letter notifies parents that the <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> will contact them to attend an Attendance/ Punctuality Panel Meeting to include the parents, student, <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead, Assistant Headteacher</b>, to review the Attendance Plan and the involvement of external agencies</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual Attendance Plan reviewed by the <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> as part of the panel meeting.</li> <li>During the Panel meeting those involved will identify whether any additional support could be offered by the school or partner agencies.</li> <li>For those on 90% attendance or below, or 10% unauthorised absence, referral made to the <b>Local Authority</b> including provision of details of previous correspondence and interventions, as appropriate (some limited exceptions as appropriate if a separate plan of action and monitoring set up)</li> <li>Consideration of referral to ACE or Family Support</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance tracked through MIS</li> <li><b>Pastoral Support Manager/Inclusion Lead</b> to do <b>daily</b> checks on the pupil's data and call home on a daily basis when student is absent</li> <li><b>Form tutor</b> offer more direct support as needed. <i>This to be logged on Provision Map</i></li> <li>The <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> to keep the Attendance Officer informed.</li> </ul> |



## Trigger 4, Use of Parental Responsibility Measures

*(Letters at this point are bespoke)*

| Threshold   | Actions to be taken   | Monitoring procedures  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Initiate support at this level if any of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance of 80% or below;</li> <li>Any of the thresholds for legal action (<a href="#">School attendance and absence: Legal action to enforce school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> have been met</li> </ul> | <p><b>Communicating expectations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students continue to receive the universal support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support initiated at previous stages will continue as appropriate</li> </ul> <p><b>Direct Contact with parent/carers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke letter notifies parents that a welfare referral is being made to the Educational Welfare Officer at the home local authority and the <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> will be in touch to arrange a further Attendance/ Punctuality Panel Meeting to include the parents, student, <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead, Assistant Headteacher</b>, and where possible the <b>Local Authority Attendance Officer</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Enforcement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Educational Welfare Officer at the home local authority will be notified of the school's concerns by the <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> in collaboration with the Headteacher</li> <li>The <b>PSM/Inclusion lead</b> will ensure that a parenting contract is be put into place which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a statement by parents/carers that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are set out in the contract;</li> <li>a statement by the school/local authority/ academy trust agreeing to provide support to the parents for the purpose of complying with the contract.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Local authority to utilise appropriate legal powers to enforce attendance</li> <li>The <b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> to keep the Attendance Officer informed.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance tracked through MIS</li> <li><b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> to continue to do daily checks on the pupil's data.</li> <li><b>Form tutor</b> to maintain regular individual support as required</li> <li><b>PSM/Inclusion Lead</b> in collaboration with the Headteacher to liaise with the local authority regularly to support any measures that are being taken and equally to consider other legal options including the issuing of a fixed penalty notice</li> </ul> |

## 5.6 Pastoral Staff/Inclusion Lead

---

*This section joined for both PSM and Inclusion Lead who is also the Senior Leader for Attendance .*

- **Safeguarding:** From school data and from their own interaction with students and their families, Pastoral Support Managers will identify vulnerable families and those for whom special care needs to be provided to avoid children missing education. As appropriate, awareness of these students will be shared with the relevant AHT, Head of Year, Form Tutor and Attendance Officer.

Pastoral staff/Inclusion Lead will also carry out responsibilities in line with Plan 2 Unexplained Absence and Plan 3 Trigger Points, including meeting parents.

- **Referrals:** Pastoral Support Managers will make referrals to the Education Welfare Officer and to the ACE Team or Family Support in accordance with Plan 2 for Unexplained Absence and Plan 3 for Trigger Points.
- **Penalties:** In consultation with the Attendance Officer, advise the headteacher about when to issue fixed-penalty notices and ensure that the Head of Year is kept informed.
- **Reducing Persistent & Severe Absenteeism:** 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.

The PSM/Inclusion Lead will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- to call home on every day of absence of persistent and severe absentees
- Develop and deliver individual targeted intervention and support to persistent and severe absentee students and their families to try to increase attendance
- work with the Education Welfare Officers at the borough to tackle persistent absence
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- **Punctuality:** Respond to reports from the Attendance Officer highlighting students with poor punctuality and those where patterns may be evident, calling home to try to establish the context.
- **Registration:** If a student is with the PSM at the time that registration normally occurs, the PSM will use the facility on SIMs or Edulink One to register the pupil's whereabouts

## 5.7 Heads of Year

---

Heads of Year will carry out their responsibilities as set out in the **Plans 1-3** including:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Organising the Attendance Meeting and preparing the Attendance Audit and Individual Attendance plan.



- Maintaining records of the meeting and a copy of the plan on provision map
- Monitoring the student's attendance weekly
- Regular Assemblies and Celebration of Achievement Events will recognise the importance of good punctuality.

## 5.8 Form tutors

---

Form tutors are responsible for

- **Recording attendance** on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office in line with the times prescribed in section 7.2 below.
- **Silence:** Ensuring that the register is taken in silence. There should be no other activity taking place in the room. Tutors must emphasise the importance of the register to all pupils.
- **Using N:** For the avoidance of doubt, when a child is not present at registration (and not known by the tutor to be present in school, perhaps in a meeting with another member of staff) the child should always be marked as N (unexplained absence) even if the tutor suspects that the child may be unwell.
- **Paper Copy:** If for some reason it is not possible to complete the register electronically, then a paper copy must be made and sent to the Attendance Officer (Mrs Cahill) where it will be inputted electronically as soon as possible.

The school is procedurally required daily to attempt to resolve all unexplained absence codes in a register; hence the emphasis (see later) on prompt early morning calls from parents regarding absence and follow up notes. Where these are not received, significant work is created for the Attendance Officer in daily tracking down parents and establishing the whereabouts of their children.

Form tutors play a key role in this by also:

- **Chasing up** missing absence letters and passing these straight to the attendance officer via the Register Folder; and
- **Conversations:** having conversations with individual students about punctuality or where reasons for absence are not apparent, stressing to the students the importance of absence notes, and keeping the attendance officer informed.

Form Tutors will also carry out their responsibilities as set out in the **Plans 1-3**

## 5.9 Heads of Department

---

Heads of Department are responsible for

- **Lateness to lessons:** Monitoring lateness to lessons and should offer support to individual teachers as appropriate, especially where the problem is related to behaviour and / or pupils experiencing difficulty with the subject itself.
- **Display:** Ensuring that display within and outside of the classroom makes the physical environment stimulating and welcoming;
- **Rewarding & Interesting Lessons:** Developing approaches to teaching and learning that support individual pupil needs and thus make the learning environment a rewarding, challenging and interesting one for pupils where all can achieve at the highest level of their potential and want to be in
- **Support for teachers:** Supporting teachers as appropriate in their consideration of attendance and /or punctuality concerns

## 5.10 All teaching staff and tutors

---

All staff should be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.

- **Registration:** If a student is with another member of staff at the time they would normally be registered by their Form Tutor, the member of staff should use the facility on SIMs or Edulink One to register the pupil's whereabouts.
- **Care about attendance:** Making it clear to pupils at every opportunity how much they care about their school attendance and punctuality;
- **Reporting Concerns:** Reporting to their line managers any patterns in non-attendance or concerns they may have around the attendance of an individual pupil, to support the whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection
- **Meeting Deadlines:** Establishing the importance of keeping to deadlines while at the same time supporting pupils in realistic scheduling and target setting;
- **Sympathetic welcome:** Giving a sympathetic welcome and support to pupils returning from a period of absence, even if they are regular absentees and/or present other difficulties;
- **Available to talk:** Being ready to talk to pupils about the difficulties they are having in school and in attending regularly;
- **Organisation:** Supporting older pupils in the management of coursework, either by discussing with them how to organise workloads or directing them to the relevant member of staff so that strategies for catching up on the backlog of work can be suggested.
- **Rewarding & Interesting Lessons:** Developing approaches to teaching and learning that support individual pupil needs and thus make the learning environment a rewarding, challenging and interesting one for pupils where all can achieve at the highest level of their potential.
- **Personal Punctuality:** Always being on time themselves for registration, assembly and lessons

Staff should seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue and contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed

## 5.11 Parents/carers

---

Parents/carers are expected to make sure their child attends every day (and timetabled session) on time and to provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.

### Telephone Message Early in the Morning

If your child is unwell or unable to attend school for whatever reason, it is vital that you notify the school first thing in the morning before 8:30 am on **every** day of absence, unless agreed with the Attendance Officer, (or beforehand where possible) to explain why your child is unable to attend and advise when they are expected to return.

This includes Sixth Form.

Attendance Officer 0208 748 7600x217 [absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk)

### Follow-Up Note

The telephone message/email must then be followed up by a written note submitted to the form tutor. Such notes can be short but should not simply say '*my daughter was*

*feeling unwell*'. We need more specifics, for example *'my daughter had an upset stomach'*. This is important for our monitoring of absence across the school and the prevalence of any particular condition or outbreaks of similar symptoms across pupils in a Year group.

The submitting of the note does not in itself, guarantee that the absence will be authorised. Parents are required to inform on Absence, however, absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

Absences are unauthorised unless satisfactory reasons for absence has been received. This will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Unacceptable reasons for absence: (these are examples and do not represent an exhaustive list)

- A student's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniform.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET or other purposes.
- "Couldn't get up"
- Did not sleep during the night
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school.
- Family holidays.
- Part-time job interviews (at sixth form)
- Tired from travel to and from school
- Non-curricular Days, including PSHE, Retreats
- Non-academic sessions for example Masses and Special Feast Day Celebrations

Form Tutors place notes in the register folders where they can be collected by the Attendance Officer immediately following registration.

**Note:** *As an issue of safeguarding, the school is required daily to attempt to resolve all unexplained absence codes in a register; hence the emphasis above on prompt early morning calls from parents regarding absence and follow up notes. Where these are not received, significant work is created for the Attendance Officer in daily tracking down parents and establishing the whereabouts of their children.*

### **Medical Appointments**

We are increasingly seeing girls arriving late, and explaining their lateness as 'I had a medical appointment'. Such cases are routinely recorded as 'lateness' and would remain as so unless proof of an emergency appointment is provided. Routine medical appointments should be made outside school hours.

For any unavoidable medical appointment made in school hours, supporting evidence providing confirmation of the appointment, such as a stamped appointment card, letter or screenshot of text appointment reminder is required. This should be submitted with a signed letter from the parent requesting permission for the absence. Doctors' notes are not required.

Parents can help us by ensuring that medical appointments within school hours are only made in an emergency. We would otherwise expect girls to visit their GP/dentist after school or during school breaks.

Where medical appointments are unavoidable, students are expected to attend school before and after the appointment.

## Further Communications

Parents can also help us by keeping us updated by telephone or letter if their child has an extended period of absence due to illness and by keeping the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance.

We encourage parents to use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises.

We also encourage parents to enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance and punctuality.

### 5.12 Students

---

Students are expected to:

- Attend school on time and every day
- Attend every timetabled session on time

## 6 PUNCTUALITY

Consistent punctuality will be important for our students in their later working lives and it can only be achieved through consideration to others, and appropriate journey planning (allowing sufficient time for the vagaries of public transport and congestion for example).

The school celebrates and rewards high levels of punctuality.

Students are expected to be in school by 8.15am. This punctuality is important to allow time for students to prepare for morning lessons but particularly because of the legal registration procedures (both in the morning and also after lunch). These registration sessions are used to give out notices and instructions.

If a child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class, discourteous and often embarrassing for the child.

All staff should demand of themselves and of pupil's high standards in terms of punctuality to registration and to lessons.

### 6.1 How late is considered 'officially late'?

---

Lateness is not defined by 'missing the register'. We expect students to be in school by 8.15am. A student is marked late when they fail to enter the school gates before their ID passes for the Bute Gardens Gate 'time out' at 8.25am. This is a full 10 minutes after they were expected in school by 8.15am.

After this time students must enter the school via the main reception on Hammersmith Road.

Registration normally takes place at 8.30am on each school day but sometimes lining up is needed before this. On mornings when there is a Year Assembly, all pupils should line up outside of the assembly location in silence and in alphabetical order, in order to allow the register to be taken quickly by the Form Tutor before Assembly. Form Tutors are expected to be outside the Assembly location by 8.25am and are responsible for the good order and organisation of their classes during this time.

To help reduce the chance of being accidentally late, we expect all students to be **on site by 8.15am**

## 6.2 Late codes on the register

---

A student who arrives late

- **before the register has closed at 8.50am and 3.00pm** (in line with s7.2 below), will be marked as 'Late', using the appropriate code, **L**.
- **after the register has closed** will be marked as absent, using a specific different code

A bus simply 'being late', will not generally be considered as a sufficient excuse since students are expected to be at school by 8.15. Girls' need to learn to plan their journeys to allow for such unforeseen circumstances. Unless the school has been notified via TfL of major transport problems or an emergency dental appointment (for example) for which they have evidence.

Unacceptable reasons for lateness to school :

- There was traffic
- I had to wait for my bus
- I travel from across London
- My parent emailed the school
- I overslept
- My alarm did not work

Note for Form Tutors: If the register was taken at 8.30 and the pupil was absent and marked absent, but then the student arrives in registration before 8.50, you **MUST** go back and amend the absent code to 'Late' because the school is legally required to use a set time for when registers officially close (8.50am). Tutor responsibility for amending the register finishes at that point, so if a child was marked absent and is not in registration by 8.50, then tutors leave the mark as absent. The school must differentiate the codes for those arriving late before 8.50 and late after this time which the Attendance Officer then records with a different code as 'Unauthorised Late' unless backed up with a satisfactory written explanation. Routine medical appointments will not be sufficient.

Arrival after registration closes (if persistent) will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance if there is not a valid reason for this. Parents must communicate this reason to the school.

## 6.3 Reporting 'Lateness to School'

---

A list of all pupils who report late with their time of arrival and reasons given for lateness is provided daily to Pastoral Support Managers and senior staff. All reasons for lateness should be followed up by the tutor/Pastoral Support manager/HOY and Senior Leader for Attendance .

## 6.4 Sanctions for lateness to school

---

As set out in the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy section 11.1, students who arrive late to school other than in the case of unavoidable **TfL reported**, public transport disruption, will be given an automatic 30-minute 'Late Detention' on the day.

If a student is late to school in this context more than once in the same week, then they are required to attend a 90-minute 'SLT detention' in place of a further 'Late detention'.

## 6.5 Consistent Lateness to school

---

As soon as any student is late five or more times in any half term, this will be handled in line with the half-termly monitoring **Plan 3 'Trigger Points'**.

## 6.6 Recording Lateness to Class

---

All teachers should:

- **Use Lesson Monitor:** Use lesson monitor so that there is a record of attendance and punctuality to lessons. This should be completed and saved within the first ten minutes of the lesson;
- **Report Concerns:** Teachers should report to the Head of Department / Form Tutor any cause for suspicion or concern.
- **Ensure Challenge:** teachers should not allow lateness to lessons to go unchallenged, even though the best time to deal with this may well be at the end rather than the beginning of the lesson. If a pupil is late to class then teachers will follow the school's Behaviour Policy with regards to the appropriate sanction.
- **Silence:** Like class registers, lesson registers should also be taken in silence and should be regarded as important records of pupil behaviour and progress.
- **Recording:** All late arrivals to class must be recorded.

## 6.7 Responding to Lateness

---

An improvement in punctuality should be positively rewarded.

As appropriate and in line with the '**Plan 3, Trigger Points**' it may be useful to set an individual a clear target for improvement in punctuality meetings, which can be monitored with agreed dates for review.

Regular Assemblies and Celebration of Achievement Events organised by Heads of Year will recognise the importance of good punctuality.

# 7 RECORDING ATTENDANCE

## 7.1 Attendance register

---

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the morning ('first session') of each school day and once during the afternoon ('second session'). The Register will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See **Appendix 1, DfE attendance codes**.

We will also record:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not | • The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances |
|---|--|

- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## 7.2 Taking the Register

---

Students are expected on site by 8.15am but must be in the school building no later than 8.25am ready for the registration.

The register (for the morning 'first session' will be taken (by form tutors) at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.50am and then submitted immediately to the Attendance Officer. The register for the afternoon ('second session') will be taken at 2.45pm and will be kept open until 3.00pm and then submitted immediately to the Attendance Officer

On mornings when there is no Year Assembly, an act of morning worship takes place after registration has occurred.

All staff will be given reminders about approaches to registration and the use of codes at the start of each academic year. The register is to be taken in silence. There should be no other activity taking place in the room. Tutors must emphasise the importance of the register to all pupils.

If for some reason it is not possible to complete the register electronically, then a paper copy must be made and sent to the Attendance Officer (Mrs Cahill) where it will be inputted electronically as soon as possible.

## 7.3 Unplanned absence

---

**Parents/carers** must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first (and every subsequent) day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school Attendance Officer and leaving a message on 0208748 7600 x217 or emailing [absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk) (see also Section 10 on attendance monitoring). On the students' return to school they should come with a note from the parent or carer confirming the reason for the absence. This note should be handed to the form tutor.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If there is any absence before and after holidays or bank holiday weekends with a specific pattern emerging, the school will not authorise the absence without genuine evidence.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers to provide 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.

### Planned absence

See section 8.1 below

## 7.4 Following up unexplained absence

---

The Attendance Officer will contact home on the morning of the first three days of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the Attendance Officer cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts or if the reason given is unsatisfactory then 'Plan 2 Unexplained Absence' is followed.



## 7.5 Keeping Parents Informed

---

The school will ensure that parents are kept regularly informed of their child's attendance level. End of year reports include attendance data but in line with **Plan 3, Trigger Points**, we will additionally notify parents on a half termly basis if their child's attendance slips below 96%, even when the school accepts that the absences, perhaps for illness, are entirely appropriate.

These letters are for information and are not intended to be critical. We believe that it is important that parents have all the facts to hand when making decisions about whether to allow their child to stay off school and we recognise that severity of symptoms are not always clear cut. Persistent Absenteeism (defined by DfE as applying to any student who has missed 10% or more of sessions, i.e. 90% attendance) is considered to be a serious concern.

**We wish to support our parents in this process, therefore communication with the school is crucial.**

## 8 AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as 'authorised' absences. Others are not allowed by law and are classified as 'unauthorised' absences, for example holidays taken in term time.

'Unauthorised Absences' will always be followed up by the school and in some cases, parents may be liable to a fixed penalty fine and/or legal action against them if their child has unauthorised absences.

### 8.1 Approval for term-time absence

---

All requests for term time absence must be submitted to the Attendance Officer only. The attendance officer will refer such correspondence to the Headteacher as required.

#### Medical/Dental

Requests for leave to attend a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the Attendance Officer well in advance of the appointment. Mrs Cahill is authorised to approve such absences herself but is also required to refer the matter to the headteacher when such absences raise concern. The headteacher has overall authority on the granting or not of term time absence including for medical/dental appointment.

Mrs D Cahill

0208 748 7600 x217

[absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk)

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

#### Special Absence Leave Form (submitted to the Attendance Officer)

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss, as a result of unauthorised activities such as holidays in term time. There is no 'automatic entitlement' to a certain amount of days off in term time.

For any issue beyond a simple local medical/dental appointment, then the student's parent/carer must request leave well in advance (at least 2 weeks term time notice) using the [Special Absence Request form](#) to be submitted by the parent/carer to the Attendance Officer using [absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk).

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



The Attendance Officer liaises with the headteacher in relation to the authorisation (or not) of the leave. Special Leave is only allowed at the discretion of the headteacher and in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the board of governors.

The headteacher has no legal discretion to allow time off in term time for **holidays**.

It is our policy that:

- Only in exceptional circumstances will a term time leave of absence be granted;
- The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for a Special Leave of Absence
- The Headteacher may ask to meet with a parent to discuss their request and will advise the parent of her decision. If denied and parents decide to take their child anyway they are most likely to be issued with a penalty notice and fined. Any time taken over and above that agreed by the headteacher will be unauthorised and may also incur a fixed penalty notice and fine. See more about penalties in section 8.2 below.
- Approval for leave of absence cannot be given without application, or retrospectively.
- Applications for leave of absence in May, June and July will NOT be approved due to whole school assessments/examinations.
- Leave of Absence will not be granted in the first or last week of any term or immediately either side of a half term or other holiday. If a pupil is absent at such a time, medical evidence will be required to authorise the absence.
- Leave of Absence may only be considered where the pupil has an attendance record of over 97% from the start of the academic year to the date of request and the reason for absence is due to exceptional circumstances or in some cases for cultural, religious or emotional benefit for the child.
- The number of Leave of Absences will be recorded by the school. If there is a dip in a pupil achievement or attendance, then further applications could be refused.
- If the school does not agree to authorise a leave of absence request and the child then fails to attend school in the specified period, the absence will be unauthorised. Parents may be liable to a fixed penalty fine or other form of action if this occurs.

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A good understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

## **8.2 Legal sanctions**

---

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

### **When are Penalty Notices used?**

The issue of a penalty notice may be considered in cases where a pupil is absent from school and the absence is unauthorised. These circumstances may include:

- truancy
- Holiday/leave is deliberately taken in term time despite permission not being granted by school staff and holiday/leave amounted to 10 or more sessions. (usually equivalent to 5 school days)
- Holiday/leave in term-time has been agreed by school staff but pupil arrives back 10 or more sessions after the period agreed. or
- A holiday/leave in term-time was taken, no permission had been sought and the period of absences amounted to 10 or more sessions.
- The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.

This can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, such as 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes, all taken within any 10-school week period.

The unauthorised absence sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks)

- The 10-school week period may span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

Sanctions are used only as a means of enforcing attendance, where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure an improvement, and to emphasise the importance of parental responsibility. The school will always explore all means to engage and work with parents to avoid proceeding to a penalty notice.

## **9 RECORD KEEPING**

Hard copy official registers for the whole school (divided by tutor group and year) should be printed by the Attendance Officer monthly and retained in an accessible location for a period of three years.

Absence notes from parents and records of any action taken in relation to absences and lateness should also be retained for a period of three years.

## **10 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

## **11 RATIFICATION**

This Policy has been approved and ratified by the Headteacher and the Ethos Committee, in July 2025. It will be reviewed in July 2026.

Mrs S O'Donovan

Headteacher

Patrick Sadd  
Chair of the Ethos Committee

## APPENDIX 1

### Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

| Code   | Definition  | Scenario   |
|--|---|--|
| /  | Present (am)  | Pupil is present at morning registration   |
| \  | Present (pm)  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration   |
| L  | Late arrival  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed  |
| <b>Attending a place other than the school</b> |   |  |
| 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   |
| <b>Absent – leave of absence</b>               |   |  |
| 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  |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>X</b>   | Not required to be in school                | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend   |
| <b>C2</b>  | Part-time timetable                         | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable   |
| <b>C</b>   | Exceptional circumstances                   | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances   |
| <b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>                             |   |  |
| <b>T</b>   | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes                              |
| <b>R</b>   | Religious observance                        | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance  |
| <b>I</b>   | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)   |
| <b>E</b>   | Suspended or excluded                       | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made  |
| <b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b> |   |  |
| <b>Q</b>   | 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         |
| <b>Y1</b>  | 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 |
| <b>Y2</b>  | Widespread disruption to travel             | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency                |
| <b>Y3</b>  | 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                    |
| <b>Y4</b>  | Whole school site unexpectedly closed       | Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)  |
| <b>Y5</b>  | Criminal justice detention                  | Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> </ul>                             |

|                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                      |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul> |
| <b>Y6</b>                            | Public health guidance or law               | Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law   |
| <b>Y7</b>                            | Any other unavoidable cause                 | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes   |
| <b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b> |   |   |
| <b>G</b>                             | Holiday not granted by the school           | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school  |
| <b>N</b>                             | Reason for absence not yet established      | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes  |
| <b>O</b>                             | 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 |
| <b>U</b>                             | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session   |
| <b>Administrative codes</b>          |   |   |
| <b>Z</b>                             | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered   |
| <b>#</b>                             | Planned whole-school closure                | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays  |

## Appendix 2: Attendance Audit Template

*(used in by Heads of Year in conjunction with the individual Attendance Plan response to the second trigger)*

|   |                                   |   |              |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|
| <b>Name of pupil</b>  |                                   |   |              |
| <b>Date of audit</b>  |                                   |   |              |
| <b>Audit carried out by</b>   |                                   |   |              |
| <b>Potential barrier to attendance</b>                                | <b>Has this been explored?</b>    | <b>Could this be a factor in the pupil's poor attendance?</b> | <b>Notes</b> |
| <b>Health-related issues</b>  |                                   |   |              |
| <b>Medical problems</b>   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Poor medical care</b>  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Disability</b>   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Poor mental health</b>   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Poorly controlled medical issue(s)</b>                             | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Pregnancy</b>  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Potential substance abuse</b>                                      | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Health issues caused by unsanitary environment or poor housing</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |
| <b>Other<br/>(give details below)</b>                                 | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No   |              |

| Home-related issues   |                                   |                   |  |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Young carer   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Caring for younger siblings   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Potential substance abuse in the home   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Parental mental health issues   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Potential domestic violence in the home                                       | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Potential abuse/neglect   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Financial issues in the home  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Unable to afford/obtain correct uniform                                       | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Homelessness  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Other<br>(give details below)   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Academic issues   |                                   |                   |  |
| Poor academic performance   | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| Undiagnosed or suspected Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |



|                                       |                                   |                   |  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Unmet academic needs</b>           | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Issues with staff</b>              | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Frequently excluded</b>            | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Other<br/>(give details below)</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |

### Social issues

|  |                                   |                   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Bullying</b>  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Issues with peer group</b>                          | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Issues with personal relationships</b>              | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Potentially involved in gangs/criminal activity</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Doesn't feel safe on journey to/from school</b>     | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Other<br/>(give details below)</b>                  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |

### Transport problems

|                          |                                   |                   |  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Too far to travel</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|

|   |                                   |                   |  |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Lacking a reliable means to get to school</b>    | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Cannot afford transport costs</b>                | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Doesn't feel safe on school/public transport</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Other<br/>(give details below)</b>               | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |

### Pupil factors

|  |                                   |                   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Low self-esteem/<br/>confidence</b> | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Low aspirations</b>                 | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Poor morning routines</b>           | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Poor sleeping patterns</b>          | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Gender/sexuality anxieties</b>      | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |
| <b>Other<br/>(give details below)</b>  | Yes / Not yet<br>Who by?<br>When? | Yes / Unsure / No |  |

*(used in by Heads of Year in response to the second trigger)*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Name of Student                                 |  |
| Year & Reg                                      |  |
| Staff supporting with attendance plan and roles |  |
| Date plan agreed                                |  |

## Attendance history

*Include details of attendance percentages (broken down by attendance code where appropriate), details of trends or patterns over time and any historical factors that might be relevant.*

| Current risk factors/barriers to attendance   |
|---|
| <i>To help with this, it might be useful to carry out an individual attendance audit, see template in Appendix 4.</i> |

| Academic Targets                           | Milestones   | Date each milestone achieved |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Target 1 - <i>add specific target here</i> | <i>For each target, provide a number of measurable milestones</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• XXX</li> <li>• XXX</li> </ul> |                              |
| Target 2 - <i>add specific target here</i> |  |                              |
| Target 3 - <i>add specific target here</i> |  |                              |

### Strategies to be implemented by the school

| Details of strategy (including date commenced)                            | Purpose of implementing strategy                      | Member of staff responsible                          |
|---|---|--|
| <i>e.g. daily wake-up calls for two weeks, starting from 16th October</i> | <i>e.g. to establish an effective morning routine</i> | <i>e.g. parent support worker to carry out calls</i> |

### Expectations of the pupil

| Details of expectations                       | How this has been communicated to the pupil?                         | Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)             |
|---|--|--|
| <i>e.g. set an alarm for 7 a.m. every day</i> | <i>e.g. discussion with attendance officer and ongoing reminders</i> | <i>e.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily</i> |

### Expectations of the family

| Details of expectations  | How this has been communicated to the pupil's family?   | Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)             |
|--|---|--|
| <i>e.g. for parents to phone school before 9 a.m. to report the reason for any absence</i> | <i>e.g. expectations explained during face-to-face attendance meeting and agreed by parents</i> | <i>e.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily</i> |

### External support

| Details of agency/partner | Support being offered   | Date support commenced  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <i>e.g. social care</i>   | <i>e.g. Early Help referral has been made as mother is reporting that she feels overwhelmed</i> | <i>e.g. referral made 2nd November - currently awaiting first contact</i> |

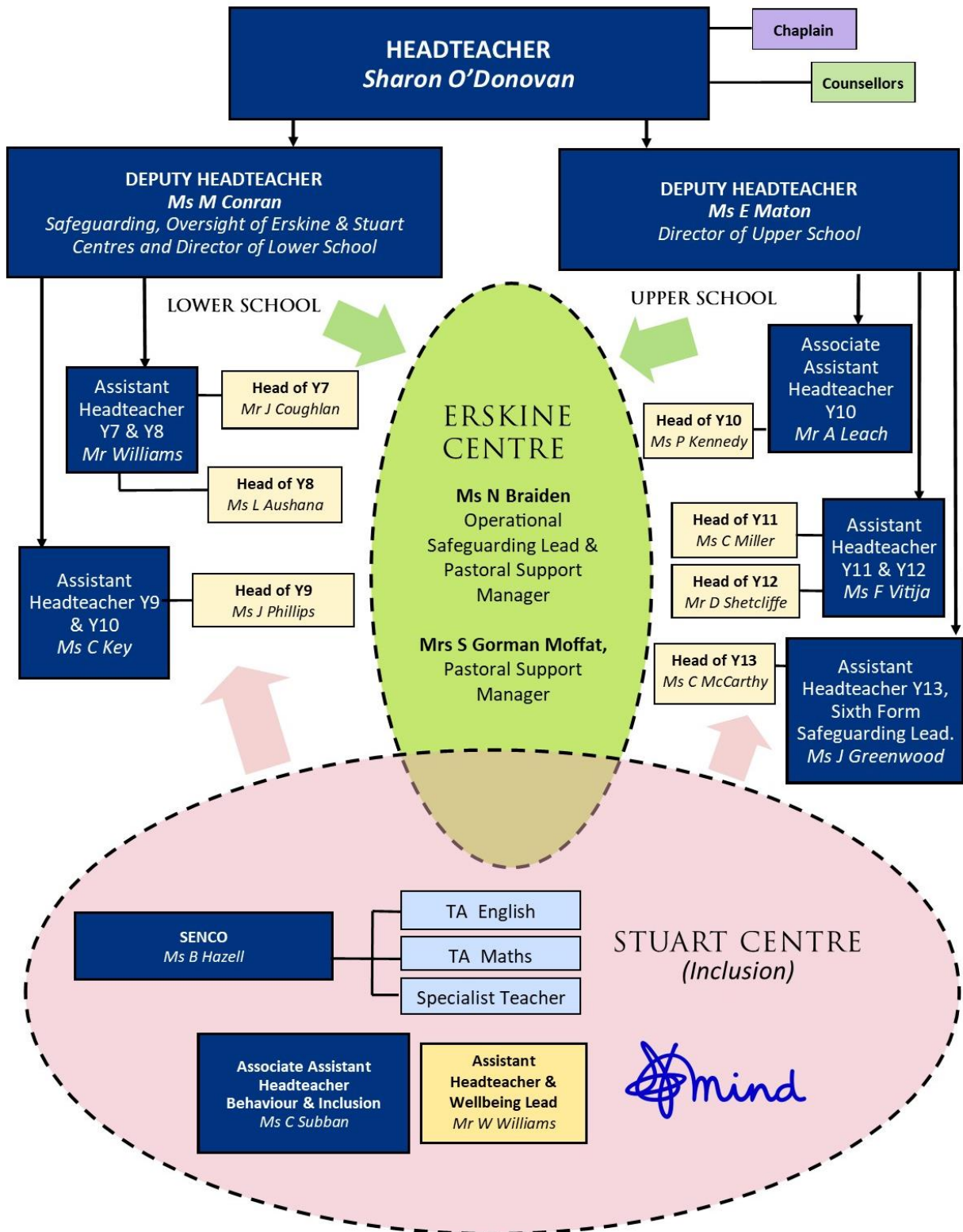
### Agreed Follow up Actions

| Action | By whom | By when |
|--------|---------|---------|
|        |         |         |

## APPENDIX 4

### Pastoral Team Structure

'PSM' is Pastoral Support Manager



## APPENDIX 5

### Request for Special Absence During Term Time

Please submit all requests for special absence to the Attendance Officer Mrs D Cahill at least 10 days beforehand. Mrs Cahill will liaise with the headteacher as appropriate.

Forms can be submitted by email to [absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:absent@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk) or by hand to the school office

|                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>For school use only</b> | <b>Date request received:</b> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|

|                                |                   |   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| <b>Name of Student</b>         | <b>Form Group</b> | <b>Name of parent/carers</b>                                    |
| <b>Address/Contact details</b> |                   | <b>Dates of Requested Absence</b><br><b>From:</b><br><b>To:</b> |

|   |                   |             |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Please outline your reasons for requesting special absence in term time.</b> |                   |             |
| <b>Signed by parent/carers</b>  | <b>Print name</b> | <b>Date</b> |

*For school use:*

|  |                          |                              |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Current Attendance: %</b>                       | <b>Authorised YES/NO</b> | <b>Letter sent to parent</b> |
|  |                          | <b>Date:</b>                 |
| <b>Reason for not authorising special absence.</b> |                          |                              |
| <b>Signed:</b>                                     |                          | <b>Date:</b>                 |

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **Summary information provided to parents**

#### **The Parent Pack, circulated to all parents includes**

- A copy of the Home School Agreement
- Clarification of the time that students should aim to be in school and the time when they will be recorded as late, in line with this policy
- An explanation of why attendance is so important and clarification that special absence in term time will not be approved in other than very exceptional circumstances
- The procedure for parents to report their child as absent
- The requirement for hand written notes explaining the absence
- An explanation of the trigger points
- Reference to referrals to the Education Welfare Officer in all cases where attendance drops to 80% or below

#### **The school website, parents tab includes**

- Reference to the link between attendance and attainment including statistics and a table to show the approximate no of days missed in relation to different attendance percentages
- Reference to the partnership between parents and the school
- A link to the Special Term Time Absence request form