



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH



Name of School	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary
Policy review Date	Autumn 2022
Date of next Review	Autumn 2023
Who reviewed this policy?	Governing Body

St Joseph's is a joyful community which follows the example of Jesus, helping, accepting and respecting everyone, as we learn and grow together, safe in His love.

Attendance Policy 2022/2023

This policy reflects the responsibility of St. Joseph's School and the Local Authority for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and their educational attainment and achievement

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1. Vision

1.1 This Policy is focused on the new duty that has been placed on Local Authorities to ‘Work together to Improve Attendance’. It will adopt a strategic approach to school attendance to maximise the life chances and choices for all children attending Havering schools by providing:

- a. School Attendance Support Team and Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)
- b. Communications and Advice
- c. Targeting Support Meetings
- d. Multi-disciplinary support for families legal Intervention

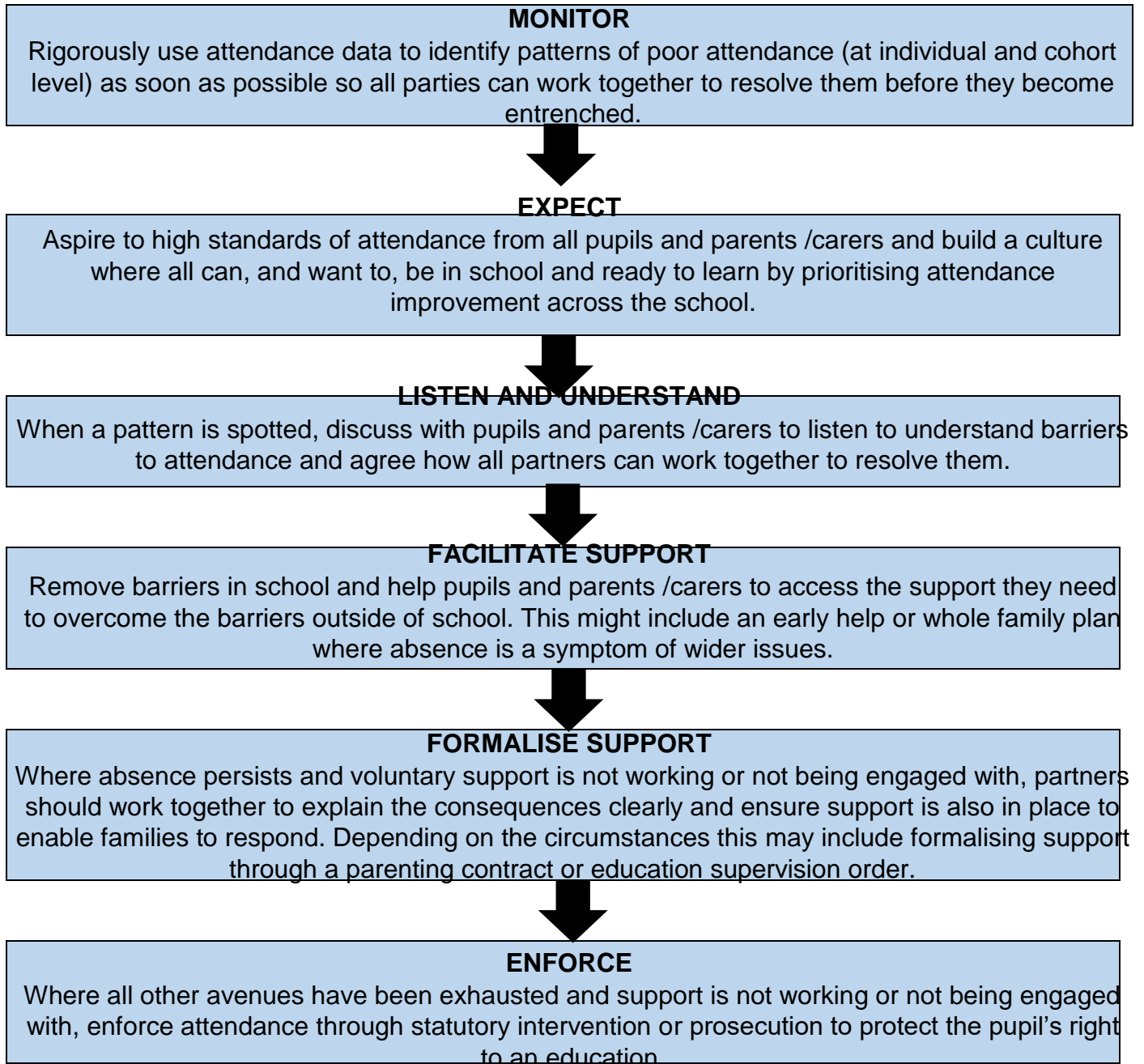
2. Introduction

2.1 The Department for Education requires all Local Authorities to have in place a legal framework that enables the strategic oversight of its schools and academies, including independent schools, attendance to assist with adopting whole school approaches to early help and interventions to promote and support School Attendance in line with:

□ *DfE Guidance 2022 ‘Working together to improve school attendance’*

2.2 Working together to improve attendance is based around successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home and in school. More broadly it requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families.

All partners should work together to ensure the following:



3. The importance of school attendance

- 3.1 Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.
- 3.2 The Local Authority in collaboration with St. Joseph's School will work together to remove barriers and encourage early intervention where required to promote high levels of attendance.
- 3.3 Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.
- 3.4 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to have an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and any special educational need they may have.

4. The expectations of schools

- 4.1 To manage and improve attendance effectively, all schools are expected to:
- a. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance in line with the school's attendance policy.
 - b. Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents /carers understand.
 - c. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence in line with DfE legal guidance.
 - d. Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
 - e. Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
 - f. Work collaboratively with other schools in the area, sharing good practice and strategies and involve the local authority, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
 - g. Share data and information electronically with the local authority, using schools MIS to ensure pupils who are not attending are monitored and tracked for safeguarding purposes.
 - h. Schools not accessing the electronic download **MUST** send the LA an attendance data spreadsheet **weekly** by e-mail to EWS@havering.gov.uk.

5. Expectations of the LA's Education Welfare Officers and other Council Services

5.1 Allocate an Education Welfare Officer to each school

5.2 Support communication and provide advice

5.3 Work with schools using data to identify barriers and approaches

5.4 Arrange and deliver targeted support meetings

5.5 Lead on multi-disciplinary support for families

5.6 The local authority to rigorously collect, analyse and track local attendance data from schools to devise a strategic approach to improving attendance and set out an attendance plan of action for schools based on the:

- Analysis of whole school attendance
- Targeting those schools who are most vulnerable

5.7 All Havering head teachers will be contacted termly where the local authority will share data analysis findings that fall within the key themes outlined below:

I. Local area themes (identify barriers)

- Staff Training
- Attendance Network
- School to school collaboration

II. Multiagency work

- Education (Inclusions Gateway Referral Form - IGRF)
- Virtual School
- Adolescent Safeguarding Service
- Health (CAMHS)
- Early Help (MARF)
- Social Care (MARF)
- Police
- Youth Justice Service

III. Attendance legal Interventions

- Parent Contracts
- Education Supervision Orders
- Attendance Prosecution
- Parenting Orders
- Fixed Penalty Notices

IV. Contribute to other multi agency legal plans

- Personal Education Plan (PEP's for LAC)
- Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Review
- Early Help (Outcome Star & Plan)
- Child in Need (CIN)
- Child Protection (CP)
- Youth Justice Service (Court Order)

V. Attendance support for groups to address wider poor attendance

- Identifying themes to deliver interventions across Havering

6. Expectations of governors, staff and parents / carers

6.1 We expect that all pupils will be supported by their parents / carers to:

- attend school every day.
- attend school punctually.
- attend appropriately prepared for the day.

6.2 We expect that all parents / carers will:

- ensure their child attends daily and on time.
 - keep the school fully informed on all matters that might affect their child's attendance and/or their wellbeing in school.
 - telephone or email the school on the first day of any absence by 9:15am to inform the school of the reason for absence.
 - work with the school to ensure an improvement if attendance becomes a problem.
 - give serious consideration to whether it is appropriate or necessary to request term time absence.
 - complete a request for leave of absence form for any term time absence at least 28 days before the period of absence is due to start.
- the proposed absence dates. Please click on the following link to download the <https://st-josephs-upminster.net/school-home-forms/> from the school website.

6.3 The Governing Body will:

- be responsible for the monitoring of overall attendance, ensuring that the school's attendance figures remain high.
- ensure the policy is carried out effectively.

6.4 The Head Teacher will:

- monitor attendance, and contact parents / carers if attendance is causing concern.
- consider requests for authorised absences, only in exceptional circumstances.
- ensure action is taken in response to any difficulties reported which impact on attendance (e.g. bullying/behaviour).
- ensure parents / carers are advised of the school's expectations during the induction meetings for new parents.
- remind parents / carers regularly in newsletters of the importance of good attendance and timekeeping.
- reward attendance with over 98% attendance certificates each term.

6.5 The School Office will:

- follow a **'First Day Calling Procedure'**. Parents / carers will be contacted if they have **not** reported their child's absence to the school office by 9:15am on the first day of absence (Responding to Non-Attendance Without a Notified Reason).
- record attendance data accurately using agreed codes.
- record late arrivals and reasons.
- ensure reasons for absence are recorded accurately and investigate reasons for absence.
- prepare standard letters to inform parents / carers when a child's attendance is giving cause for concern and is being monitored.
- meet with the Head Teacher reporting attendance issues and taking the agreed action.
- provide attendance reports when requested and ensure DfE attendance returns are accurate.
- oversee day to day attendance where there is cause for concern, working closely with the Education Welfare Officer to improve pupil attendance.
- print official registers.

6.6 Class Teachers will:

- prepare and deliver stimulating learning for all pupils.
- register pupils at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- alert the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of any children demonstrating an unsettled pattern of attendance
- report percentage attendance on annual reports.
- work with the SLT to agree and implement strategies to re-engage pupils with emerging attendance issues

7. Understanding types of absence

7.1 Every half-day absence must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Therefore, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

7.2 examples of Authorised Absence

- Illness.
- Hospital/dental/doctor appointments for the pupil which cannot be made outside of school hours.
- Visits to prospective new schools.
- External exams or educational assessments.
- Attendance at funerals of close family members/bereavement.

7.3 Examples of Unauthorised Absence

- Holidays.
- Shopping/day trip/visit to a theme park.
- Birthday treats.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Looking after other children/family members.
- Medical appointments for other family members
- Parents / carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily.
- Absences that have never been properly explained.

8. Absence procedures for parents / carers

8.1 Our arrangements for the notification of absence and seeking approval for absence (excluding school holidays):

- On the first day of their child's absence, parents / carers are asked to telephone the school office 01708 220277 or email office@st-josephs.havering.sch.uk by 9.15am.
- If it is unclear how long the child will be absent from school, parents /carers are asked to contact the school daily to record details of the absence.
- Absences of 5 days or more must have medical evidence.
- **If a student is absent prior to or does not return to school after a school holiday (half-term, Christmas, Easter or Summer) the parents /carers will need to provide medical evidence to cover the absence.** Failure to provide this evidence will result in the absence being marked as unauthorised and as such this will be referred to the EWO.

8.2 Children's absences will be monitored by school office staff and a school letter will be prepared and sent if absence becomes a concern. If a child has persistent absence, the EWO will become involved. Parents / carers may be invited into school to discuss their child's attendance and if necessary, the case possibly referred to the school nurse.

9. Absence due to illness and medical appointments

9.1 Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.

- An appointment card or verification by the doctor/dentist/hospital is required.
- Parents / carers are asked to inform the school in advance if their child has a medical appointment.
- Children should attend school around the appointment wherever possible.
- Children will not be allowed to leave the premises unless they are collected by an adult
- If your child is absent due to vomiting or diarrhoea, then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last symptom. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.
- In the case of repeated absences, the school will require written evidence of why a child has been absent. The member of the school office will request this when it is required.
- If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, the school will request parents / carers to provide medical evidence to support the illness. If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness or medical evidence is not provided, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' and parents / carers will be advised. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc.

10. Holidays during term time

10.1 Government regulations make it clear that the current law does not give any Entitlement to parents / carers to take their child for a family holiday or extended leave during term time. Any application for leave must be in 'exceptional circumstances' and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. As a school we are bound by this guidance and the Head Teacher is no longer able to authorise any holiday during term time.

10.2 Exceptional Circumstances - The school defines the term “exceptional” as an occasion that cannot be planned for, so anything that can be planned e.g. all family holidays, family birthday parties or surprise trips booked by relatives, etc. will not be authorised.

If parents / carers decide to allow their child to be absent without authorisation this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a fixed penalty of £60 (or more) per parent may be issued by the Local Authority.

11. Persistent absenteeism

11.1 A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level can be doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ / carers’ full support and cooperation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached this mark or is at risk of moving towards this mark is given priority and parents / carers will be informed immediately. These pupils are monitored and supported carefully by the school office, in consultation with the Head Teacher and EWO. We also combine this with academic monitoring where absence affects pupil outcomes. Meetings are arranged with the parents / carers, the Head Teacher and EWO if attendance does not improve and an action plan is agreed.

12. Registration and the school day

12.1 All schools must keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers must show whether an absence of a pupil is authorised or unauthorised. All absences are shown on school reports and attendance information passed on to secondary schools.

The school registration period starts at 8.45am as the gates open. Registers will be taken at 8.55 am. If your child arrives at school after the gates are closed at 8.55am, you will need to bring them into the school office. Office staff will record the names of children who arrive late. Lateness is monitored closely.

Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8:55am will be marked late. Figures of lateness will appear on school reports. Children arriving 30 minutes after registration will lose their mark and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

The school monitors punctuality closely and will invite parents / carers in for a meeting if children are regularly late. The Education Welfare Service also become involved in cases of persistent lateness.

13. Adding and deleting pupils from the school register

13.1 It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform the school as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until we are satisfied that an alternative school or alternative provision has been found. The pupil’s school records will be sent to the new school.

13.2 If a family is moving abroad, we request that they provide a new home / school address. If a family is unsure of the new school that the child will be attending, the school will ask the family to provide an email address, at least one contact phone number

- 13.3 All schools must comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 to notify the Local Authority when adding and deleting pupils from their school registers.
- 13.4 The Local Authority coordinates the admissions of children transferring into Havering schools, where our systems automatically track and record all joiners.
- 13.5 For pupils being deleted from school registers the Local Authority automatically obtains this information from schools who have a data sharing agreement in place with the LA.
- 13.6 Schools who do not have a data sharing agreement will need to advise the Local Authority each time they remove a pupil from the school register via the on line form www.havering.gov.uk/DeletionFromSchoolRegister

14. Attendance Traded Service

- 14.1 In addition to the LA's duty to operate a strategic attendance approach, they offer packages of support that enable and promote good attendance. For more information please visit www.hes.org.uk

15. Appendix 1 Attendance Codes Taken from DfE Guidance

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	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day