



ST. MARK'S CE SCHOOL
ONE SCHOOL - SERVING ALL - THROUGH EXCELLENCE

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy Statement and Guidelines

Policy Date: March 2026

Review Date: July 2026

**St Mark's Church of England School
Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (DfE)
- Children Missing in Education 2025 (DfE)
- Working together to improve school attendance 2024 (DfE)
- Supporting Students at school with medical conditions 2015 (DfE)
- Behaviour in schools: sanctions and exclusions (DfE)
- St Mark's All Through Behaviour Policy (2024)
- Elective Home Education Policy and Guidance (2024)
- School attendance (Student registration (England) Regulations 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Support and inclusion in education (Southampton City Council's webpage)

Parents / Carers mentioned in this policy refers to the following generally speaking (unless there are legal restrictions in place with regards to contact):

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

1. Working together to improve attendance

St Mark's CE School seeks to successfully identify the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, be that at home, in school or elsewhere. Therefore, we are committed to work collaboratively with, not against families. All parties should work together in the following ways as outlined in the *DfE's Working together to improve school attendance*:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

2. Common reasons for absences?

If your child is experiencing any of the following, we can support them and the family in school.

The best way to approach this is as soon as possible, and in person, by appointment with the expectation that the young person will attend school knowing they and the family will be supported.

St Mark's is a calm and safe school and we will support our young people and families as well as tackle any negative behaviour from peers swiftly.

We have experienced and trained staff who are here to help resolve concerns, put measures and support in place but we can only do this with open, honest conversations on site:

- ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) triggers associated with your child's own presenting needs on any given day
- Having their period
- Feelings of anxiety
- Tiredness from being a young carer
- Friendship issues or worries
- Bullying/threats
- Incidents that have happened in and out of school, in person or online
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Body image e.g. on days when they have PE or other practical activities
- Finding certain lessons hard
- Feel overwhelmed with any aspect of school life
- Do not have school uniform or PE kit or any other item of school equipment

3. The importance of school attendance

St Mark's C E School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students. We recognise and promote excellent attendance as it is vital for raising standards and student attainment through their educational experience.

This policy underpins our school Christian ethos and our aim is to ensure:

- Every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled (UNCRC Article 28: Every child has a right to an education)
- Every child succeeds whilst at school; and
- Our students have access to the widest range of opportunities when they leave school (UNCRC Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full)

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and arrive at school on time every day.

Any absence that affects the pattern of a child's schooling will impact on their learning and cause disruption to the learning of others.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting **absence from school without sufficient reason is an offence and may lead to prosecution.**

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 students and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere students want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all students are keen and ready to learn.

Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work in partnership with students and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including student premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Source: Working together to improve school attendance, Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities Published: 29 February 2024 Applies from: 19 August 2024

4. Southampton School Attendance Support Service [www.southampton.gov.uk]

Education Support Officers (ESO) within Southampton City Council, discharge the local authority duties of enforcing school attendance. To do this, they work in partnership with schools, academies, students, parents/carers to reduce barriers to school attendance. Our work is essential to ensure that students can make the best possible use of the educational opportunities which are available to them and maximise their future potential. We are a statutory service, working in line with the 'working together to improve school attendance' guidance, and we work within several statutory frameworks and guidance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

All schools have a named allocated ESO who acts as a point of contact for consultation on process and for advice. Schools can contact the allocated ESO for general queries and advice. Parents/carers can contact the ESO for their school via education.welfare.service@southampton.gov.uk

A duty officer is available daily during term time to provide advice and guidance around reducing barriers to school attendance and can respond to any queries you may have. If you are referred to the School Attendance Support Service, an ESO will be in contact with you.

Role of the Education Support Officers: The ESO will work together with parents/carers and students around the barriers to school attendance, assess the support required to help reduce these barriers so children and young people can return to school on a regular basis. Education Support Officers work in partnership with children, young people, parents and carers to find out about the reasons for your child's absence.

The ESO will talk about the legislative framework and your responsibilities for securing regular school attendance and discuss any intervention necessary or onward referrals with you and your child. ESOs may undertake proceedings on behalf of the Local Authority, in respect of parents/carers who do not ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fail to enrol them at school or otherwise. The ESOs will make relevant investigations and action plans in collaboration with you and your children, school, and other relevant parties, concerning absence from school or alternative educational provision.

Schools are responsible for engaging with and informing parents/carers of the potential involvement of the School Attendance Support Service. Evidence is provided to the ESO with the referral, and the expectation is that the school have notified the parent/carer of the referral prior to submission. However, schools who do purchase an ESO's time for early intervention work and prior to a referral being made, you may be contacted by the ESO to address concerns before the need for statutory intervention. The ESO will explain this when they make contact. ESOs undertake termly Targeting Support Meetings with their schools, looking and discussing all children and young people who have attendance 90% and below, exploring the reasons for any barriers to school attendance.

5. The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

*The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. **It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.***

*Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, **they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open**, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.*

This is essential for students to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. The students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, students not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of students not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, students not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4.

The overall absence rate of students not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%). For the most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime (the proportion of children that had been cautioned or sentenced for any offence that had ever been persistently absent was 81% and for serious violence offence was 85%).

Source: Working together to improve school attendance, Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities Published: 29 February 2024 Applies from: 19 August 2024

6. Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, children, staff, governing body and the local authority.

To assist us all to focus on this, the school will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our various communication methods;
- Celebrate good attendance;
- Support child and families in a graduated approach as outlined in *Appendix A*, taken from the DfE's *Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance* publication.

7. Understanding types of absence

Every half day from school will be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause/reason of any absence is always required. There will be times where we will require further detail or information on the reason given and then the appropriate reason/code will be formally recorded and/or to trigger support as necessary.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for illness, hospital appointments, emergencies or other unavoidable causes [approved by the school]. If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern, any absence following this period where proof i.e. hospital letter, medical card or prescription is not provided will be coded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been granted by the school.

Examples of this nature include the following:

- Parents/Carers keeping their child/children off unnecessarily
- Any absence where the child's attendance falls and no reasonable evidence can be given
- Children not attending as a result of parental illness /child care issues/ work commitments
- Children who arrive late after the register has closed (Secondary = 8:30am/Primary = 9:00am)
- Truancy
- Unexplained absences
- Day trips and holidays
- Birthdays and treats
- School refusal

This type of absence can lead to further action being taken such as legal proceedings.

8. Persistent Absentee (PA) and Severe Absentee (SA)

A child becomes a Persistent Absentee (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for **whatever reason**, this is 50% or more for a Severe Absentee (SA). As a school, we will monitor all absences and the reasons given. **PA/SA** students are tracked and monitored carefully alongside academic tracking where absence affects attainment. In any case that is seen to have reached the **PA/SA** threshold or is at risk of doing so, parents/carers will be informed by the school and support can be explored with the family (*see Appendix A*). For example, parents/carers of **PA/SA** children will be asked to meet with relevant school staff and where appropriate, other agencies working with the school or the family. Additional support will be explored and put in place and monitored using our graduated approach with the view to increase attendance for the child in the most appropriate way. Where relevant, the child's attendance will be discussed by the local authority Education Support Officer allocated to the school and further supportive action may be taken, in partnership with the parent/carer, family and school attendance team and linked colleagues.

The more engagement we have from families, the easier it will be to provide or signpost support to benefit the young person we are supporting and concerned for.

9. Is my child too ill for school?

The NHS has advice from professionals about child illness, see <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> or Appendix B.




Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

	Until...
Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek





SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for **health protection in schools** or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec.>

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10. Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

If your child is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related) parents/carers are to follow the absence reporting procedure on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Whilst we are not expected to routinely request that parents/carers provide medical evidence to support illness absences, we will do so in cases where the school need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the student is not in school for the session/s in question. In the majority of cases a notification by the child's parent/carer that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, we will be flexible on what form that takes and can speak to the family about what evidence is available. Where a parent/carer cannot provide any written evidence, the school will have a conversation with the parent/carer and child, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

11. Requesting Authorised Absence

DFE January 2016 states:

“Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance”.

The Executive Headteacher will only authorise absence in **exceptional circumstances**. Parents/carers must apply for leave of absence in advance via:

attendance@st-marks-southampton.org.uk

12. Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.

Wherever possible, medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of the school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should get the agreement from St Mark's attendance team in advance and the child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment e.g. attend school before and after the appointment depending on the time of it. Parents/carers are asked by the school to provide the attendance team with a medical or dental appointment record/confirmation (this may be in the form of an official NHS or relevant medical/dental form of confirmation such as a letter, email, text message for example) confirming the appointment as evidence. In all cases, we ask for medical evidence in order to accurately document the reason for absence. If the child requires any administration of medicines in school, please follow the instructions of the Health and Safety Policy via our Policies page of the school website.

13. Absence reporting procedures – This must be done on every day of absence

If a child cannot attend school for any reason, parent/carer should use the Studybugs application which can be used on a smartphone, tablet, computer or internet enabled device and can be found at <https://studybugs.com/signin>.

Parents/carers can also call or email the school office on the first day of absence and any subsequent days, as soon as possible on 02380 772968 or absence@st-marks-southampton.org.uk ensuring to communicate the following key information:

- Your name and relation to the child
- Name of the child
- Class name / Tutor Group
- The reason they are not coming to school

If a child is not in school and we have not received communication about a child's absence, the parent/carer will be emailed by the automated truancy system asking them to contact the school.

Safeguarding notice:

Where the school is concerned about a lack of contact/communication from a parent/carer in relation to the absence of a child, and in their best interests, we will trigger actions such as:

- contacting all the parent/carer approved contacts provided to the school on our management information system (SIMS), this includes landlines, mobiles or work phone numbers and email addresses;
- attempting contact with child using our school communication mechanisms;
- carrying out a home visit in person to the registered home address of the child by a school representative/s and where no answer, neighbours sought and information gathered for any known whereabouts;
- contact with local authority practitioners working with the family, such as a social worker;
- contacting the police using 101 or the online reporting service for Hampshire Constabulary <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/>;
- contacting the police using 999;
- contacting the Children's Resource Service Southampton via the appropriate method via <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/children-families/childrens-social-care/report-a-concern-about-a-child/childrens-resource-service/>
- contact with the Local Authority Education Support team;
- contact with the Local Authority Child Missing in Education team;
- contact with known education settings linked to the child such as previous schools, schools where siblings are known to attend.

Tutors, Class teachers, Key Stage Leaders, Heads of Department, Heads of Years, Attendance Team and Education Welfare Officers and the School Leadership Team, the Governing Body and the Local Authority will monitor attendance and absence with support and interventions – see Appendix A.

14. Punctuality

Secondary students start at 8am.

Gates open at 7.50am and students are expected to be in school at 8am to be registered by their Form Tutor. Late students will be met at the main office by a member of staff.

If your child is late, they will be marked as late (L) and issued a break time detention for every minute they are late up until 8:15am, to be completed at the start of break time that day*. They will be dismissed once they have completed their time by the supervising member of staff. If they do not complete this, they will be set a 30 minute after school detention that day. Those students who arrive after 8:15 will be set a 30 minute after school detention that day.

Form Tutors, Heads of Years, Attendance Team and Education Support Officers supported by senior staff will monitor punctuality in the same way as attendance and absence with support and interventions. **See the school behaviour policy for further actions taken regarding lateness, punctuality and truancy.*

The registers officially close at 8.30am (secondary). Any child late after this time will be marked with an unauthorised absence (U) and a number of these can be considered for a penalty notice in line with the local authority code of conduct.

Primary students start at 8.30am.

For children arriving after 8:30am, names are taken between 08.30 and 08.40 on the playground, along with a lunch request. A late (L) mark will be recorded.

Children arriving after 8:40am when the gate closes need to arrive to the school office to be signed in.

The registers officially close at 9.00am (primary). Any child late after this time will be marked with an unauthorised absence (U) and a number of these can be considered for a penalty notice in line with the local authority code of conduct.

Tutors, Class teachers, Key Stage Leaders, Heads of Department, Heads of Years, Attendance Team and Education Welfare Officers and the School Leadership Team, the Governing Body and the Local Authority will monitor attendance and absence with support and interventions – see Appendix A.

15. Late collection/pick up*

Primary School finishes at 3:00pm, our school gates for collection open at this time and close at 3:10pm. When a child is not collected, they are taken to the school office and their name is recorded and contact with parents/carers and or relatives are made where possible in the first instance.

There may be occasions when you are delayed in your attempt to collect your child on time. If this happens, we ask that the parent/carer contact the school in advance with the reason why and an expected time of arrival – we will not release a child to an unknown adult without prior agreement and in-school safeguarding checks completed.

If you are late to collect your child three or more times we will ask you to attend a meeting to discuss this and explore how we can support you and the family in ensuring you are on time in the future. If this persists, this meeting will increase to a meeting of concern with key staff.

This lateness of collection will warrant a safeguarding concern being recorded and actions taken, see below.

Safeguarding notice:

Where the school is concerned about a lack of contact/communication from a parent/carer in relation to the late collection of a child, and in their best interests, we will trigger actions such as:

- contacting all the parent/carer approved contacts provided to the school on our management information system (SIMS), this includes landlines, mobiles or work phone numbers and email addresses;
- attempting contact with child using our school communication mechanisms;
- carrying out a home visit in person to the registered home address of the child by a school representative/s and where no answer, neighbours sought and information gathered for any known whereabouts;
- contact with local authority practitioners working with the family, such as a social worker;
- contacting the police using 101 or the online reporting service for Hampshire Constabulary <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/>
- contacting the police using 999;
- contacting the Children's Resource Service Southampton via the appropriate method via <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/children-families/childrens-social-care/report-a-concern-about-a-child/childrens-resource-service/>
- contact with the Local Authority Education Support team;
- contact with the Local Authority Child Missing in Education team;
- contact with known education settings linked to the child such as previous schools, schools where siblings are known to attend.

****This applies mainly to primary students, however, may apply to secondary students in circumstances such as off-site visits, residentials, clubs etc.***

16. Attendance prosecution

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority (DfE's Working together to improve school attendance).

17. Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence). They must also be issued in line with Local Codes of Conduct which are drawn up and maintained by each local authority. (DfE's Working together to improve school attendance).

Unauthorised absences and persistent lateness that meet the criteria or when a suspension has been issued and the child is not at home without reasonable excuse during school hours, may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice.

- i. **The first penalty notice** issued to a parent in respect of a particular student will be charged at **£160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.**
- ii. **A second penalty notice** issued to the same parent in respect of the same student is charged at a flat rate of **£160 if paid within 28 days.**
- iii. **A third penalty notice** cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. (DfE's Working together to improve school attendance).

Appendices A - Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE) Published: 29 February 2024 Applies from: 19 August 2024 [check the DfE website for any updates]

All pupils			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>
Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent			
Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area; developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. • Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. • Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p>	<p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p>	<p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. • Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. • Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. • Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
<p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and/or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p>	<p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p>

Appendix B (Source: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> [Accurate at the time of publication])

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about health protection and managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, *it's important to follow the school's absence reporting procedures.*

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their *teacher/tutor/office know.*

What to do about other conditions?

High temperature: If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

Feeling anxious or worried: It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse.

Coughs and colds: It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Chickenpox: If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores: There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis: You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis, unless they are feeling very unwell. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

COVID-19: Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either: have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities.

If your child has mild symptoms (e.g. not a high temperature or not feeling well enough to go to school or do their normal activities), such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school.

What to do if your child has tested positive to COVID-19 - Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Ear infection: If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease: If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits: There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

Impetigo: If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

Measles: If your child has measles, they'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.

Ringworm: If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever: If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease): You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

Sore throat: You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

Threadworms: You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhoea: Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).