



Governor Lead: Juan Pemberton
Nominated Lead Member of Staff: Vicki Chiverton
Status & Review Cycle: Statutory Annual
Next Review Date: September 2027



St Jude's Church of England Schools Federation

ATTENDANCE POLICY

With effect from September 2026

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. **Objectives**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To promote good attendance and punctuality.
- To reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- To ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- To build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- To act promptly to address patterns of absence and work with external agencies, to overcome them.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.

2. **Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of St Jude's C of E Schools Federation are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, Local Advisory Committee and the Local Education Authority (LEA), to building a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud. We expect that pupils attend 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

3. **Legislation and guidance**

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations on school attendance, including those set out in [Working-together-to-improve-school-attendance](#) (DfE) published with effect from 19 August 2024.

This document refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures, 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.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- The Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

It also covers responsibilities referred to in:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2026
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

4. Parent Responsibility and the Law

The *Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7* states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) To any special needs he/she may have
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day-to-day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

Under the provision of the *Education Act 1996 (Ss 434 and 458)* and *The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*, the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

We will keep an electronic attendance register onto which all pupils will be entered.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and again after lunch, at the start of the second session. It will be marked using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024* (See Appendix 1) whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office or completing an entry on Studybugs.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer 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 and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence by completing a leave of absence application form.

6. Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

6.1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

6.2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

6.3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

7. Registration & Lateness

The school day:

INFANTS:

Begins at 8.30am with the opening of the school gates. Morning registration will take place at 8.45am and the registers will remain open in the office until 9.00am. Any pupil who arrives after the gates are shut at 8.45am and class teachers have taken registers but before the close of registers at 9.00am will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late. Any pupil arriving after 9.00am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport (for those arriving in Surrey taxis) was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration for Years R, 1 & 2 will be taken at 1.00pm.

JUNIORS:

Begins at 8.20am with the opening of the school gates. Morning registration will take place at 8.50am and the registers will remain open in the office until 9.05am. Any pupil who arrives after the gates are shut at 8.50am and class teachers have taken registers, but before the close of registers at 9.05am, will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late. Any pupil arriving after 9.05 am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport for those arriving in Surrey taxis) was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration for Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 will be taken at 1.10pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before 9.05am will be treated, for statistical purposes, as present but will be coded as late before registers close.

8. Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending without reason, the school will:

- Make a call asking for the reason for absence.
- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit and call the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session for which the pupil was absent.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Attendance Advice Officer (formerly known as the Inclusion Officer).
- Offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance, where appropriate.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Issue a notice to improve, a penalty notice or other legal intervention, where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with.

9. Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day, in conjunction with [Children-missing-education: Statutory guidance for local authorities \(2016\)](#)

Staff are alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

10. Persistent and severe absence

10.1 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. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

10.2 The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - discuss attendance and engagement at school.
 - listen, and to try to understand barriers to attendance
 - explain the help that is available
 - explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - review any existing actions or interventions
- Support families with attendance issues via the Surrey Attendance Service
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Notify parents by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary.

10.3 Severe absence

Particular focus will be given by all staff to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

The school will monitor and target these children and work with these families. The school may also look at the needs of the children, for example if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

11. Approval for term-time absence

11.1 The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. To ensure children do not miss out on their education during term, we ask parents to take due consideration of these prior to booking a holiday. We expect that pupils attend 100% of the time as per Surrey CC's guidelines, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

11.2 Grant for Exceptional Leave of Absence

Parents are not entitled to leave of absence for their child/ren as a right and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, e.g. for compassionate reasons, and once the Headteacher has considered:

- the child's record of attendance.
- the time of the leave, ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important examinations/assessments/school events.

If leave of absence is granted *it shall not exceed five school days* in any one year, as agreed by the school's governing body.

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

Leave of absence, for exceptional circumstances, will not be granted if additional leave is taken either side of this time without previous approval. Proof of flights or other documentation supporting the request must be produced if asked for.

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. The link between a pupil's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.

Where a parent wishes to **request a leave of absence** (see Appendix 2), a formal request must be made as far in advance as possible in writing, by completing a leave of absence application form, to the Headteacher, who will consider the application.

If a leave of absence is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence**.

Absences during mock SATs and SATs examinations ***will not be authorised***.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

12. Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

12.1 Penalty Notices

The Surrey Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and this requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount. 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 take into account:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

12.2 Circumstances when Penalty Notices may be issued

For pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks (which may span different terms or school years). The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

Section 103 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

12.3 Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

If a parent/carer has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If a parent/carer has incurred a penalty notice relating to the same child/children since 19 August 2024, a rolling 3-year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If 2 penalty notices relating to the same child/children have been incurred in the rolling 3-year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then the parent/carer will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

12.4. Notice to improve

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a 'Notice to Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

The Notice will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

In the case of unauthorised leave of absence during term time, a specific Penalty Notice warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents/carers have previously been warned through school newsletters; parent mail; posters, policies etc. available on the school website, that such absences would not be authorised, and that they would be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if they persisted with any such unauthorised leave of absence.

13. Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer

The Inclusion Service monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer will work with school staff and parents/carers to promote good attendance. S/he may contact parents if children are consistently late or there are concerns about attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could, following prosecution, result in a community order, a fine not exceeding £2500 per parent/carer and/or imprisonment for up to three months.

14. Monthly Attendance Letters

Monthly letters are automatically produced and sent to all parents whose children are late 4 times or more in a month. Monthly letters will also be sent to all parents whose children have an attendance below 90% and for those with attendance between 91% and 94%.

15. Rewards

Five minutes of extra break are awarded weekly to the class with the best attendance.

16. Roles and responsibilities

16.1 We expect that all **pupils** will attend school:

- 100% of the time.
- punctually.
- prepared for the day.

16.2 We expect that all **parents/carers/persons** who have parental responsibility for or day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that the child/ren in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/ren are unable to attend school.
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, before 9.30am, and on each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem that may keep the child away from school occurs.
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school.
- seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Inclusion Leader, Mrs Rhian Hutchinson, who can be contacted via the school office or using the email: rhian.hutchinson@stjudes.surrey.sch.uk

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of our school community must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

16.3 The **Headteacher** will:

- implement this policy at school.
- monitor school-level absence data and report it to the Governing Board.
- support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- issue fixed-Penalty Notices, where necessary.
- ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
- appoint key staff to:
 - monitor and evaluate attendance with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer
 - provide appropriate access to attendance data for Surrey and the DfE.
 - consult and liaise closely with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay.
 - work in close collaboration with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis.
 - set whole school attendance targets.
- have a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- evaluate and monitor expectations and processes.
- Have an oversight of data analysis.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.

- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

16.4 The designated staff member with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is the Inclusion Leader, Rhian Hutchinson, who can be contacted via the school office.

The **Inclusion Leader** is responsible for:

- leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents 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
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

16.5 Office Attendance Officers (Mrs Jane French and Mrs Kate Hall) will:

- oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually.
- record all reasons for absences in the register.
- liaise with the Surrey Attendance Service as required to reinforce good practice .
- share the class teacher's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Inclusion Leader
- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis, recording them on the school system, and check Studybugs for absences
- monitor and analyse attendance data.
- provide regular attendance reports to the leadership team.

The attendance officer can be contacted via the school office.

16.6 We expect that **teachers** will:

- complete registers accurately and punctually twice daily
- monitor every pupil's attendance.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Leader.
- be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Inclusion Leader.
- encourage good attendance.
- provide a caring and welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment, provide a sympathetic response to any pupil concerns.

- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school and LA expectations with regard to regular school attendance.

16.7 The Governing Board will be responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
 - Ensuring the school records attendance accurately in the register and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
 - Ensuring the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure staff understand the school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

17. Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner:

17.1 Unexplained absences

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.30am, the school will endeavour to contact them that day by telephone, email or text. If the family are not on the telephone and have not provided an email address a letter will be sent.
- **Three Days Absence:** If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer plus any additional contacts the school has been given. If, by the end of the third day, there has still been no contact made, the school will usually make a welfare check (with written prior notification to parents/carers) or request the Police or Social Services to conduct a welfare check.
- **Six Days Absence:** The school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and any other relevant contacts and. on the sixth day of unexplained absence. the school will usually make a further welfare check (with written prior notification to parents/carers) or request the Police or Social Services to conduct a welfare check. Procedures in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will then be followed.
- **Ten Days Absence-** If any pupil is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days a DSL will call the C-SPA consultation line for advice and proceed in accordance with advice received. The Local Authority Inclusion Service will also be notified if appropriate.

- **Twenty Days Absence** - If a child is missing from school for twenty school days, they may be taken off the school role and it will be necessary to reapply for a school place through Surrey County Council.

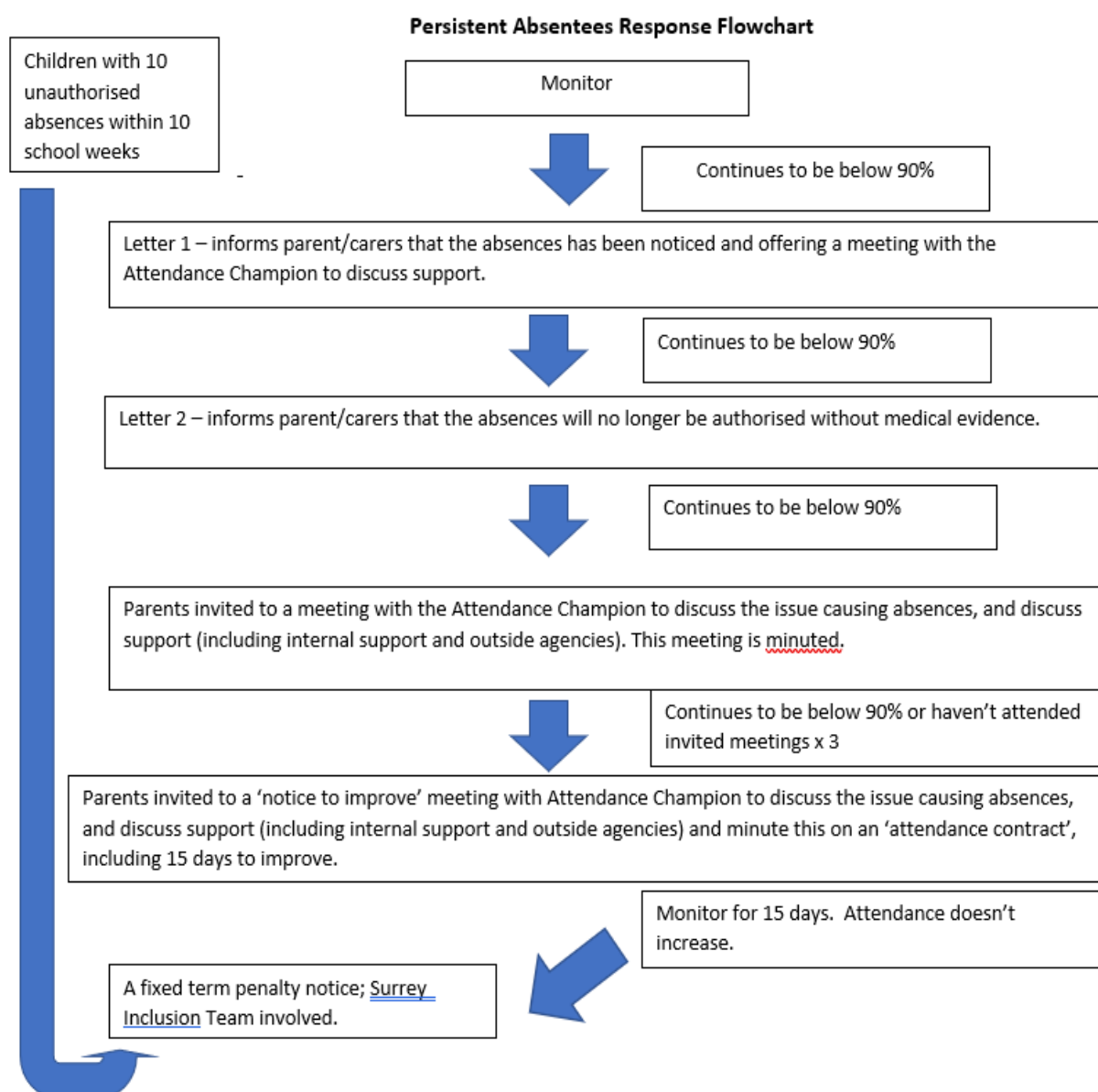
17.2 Attendance between 90% and 94% and late arrivals

The Attendance Officers will analyse data on a monthly basis and send out letters to the parents/carers of children who have been late four or more times over the past month; to the parents/carers of children whose attendance is between 90% and 94%; and to parents/carers of children whose attendance is less than 90%. The letters will both inform and offer support to parent/carers.

Children who arrive late after registers have closed will be coded as unauthorised absence.

17.3 Persistent Absentees (under 90%)

The Inclusion Leader and the Attendance Officers will meet each half term and analyse the previous half term's attendance data. Children whose attendance is less than 90% or/and have had ten unauthorised absences in ten school weeks will be identified during this meeting and the steps below followed.



18. Changing Schools

It is important that, if families decide to send the child/ren in their care to a different school, that they inform St Jude's School office staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until they start at a new school. The following information will be required and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known/relevant

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Surrey's Inclusion Service.

19. Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.
- 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. The school will compare/bench mark attendance data to local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the Governing Board.

20. Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance.
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

21. Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

22. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

We are aware that some pupils may be absent due to complex barriers to attendance, or due to mental or physical health or SEND. We are also aware that some pupils may have lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence.

22.1 We work hard with our parent / carer community to put in place strategies and support in place to ensure good attendance, including the following:

- If the school have not been informed of a child's absence via Studybugs, parents will receive a phone call before 9.30am
- The school may carry out home door step visits, make a C-SPA referral and/ or Police Welfare checks if parent uncontactable
- Attendance letters are generated automatically and sent monthly
- The school liaises with other services for support such as Traveller Services/ Refuge / Social Care/ Family Support to provide Early Help.
- We track where pupils go when they leave St Jude's
- We offer support to parents to discuss any concerns, supporting them through signposting and referrals. Members of the Leadership Team are on both gates in the morning for parents to arrange a convenient time to talk.
- Parenting courses are offered to support specific blockers for children's attendance e.g. Managing your child's anxiety; 4-week parenting course, ASD/ ADHD courses and Emotional Coaching for parents; Bespoke activities for reluctant children are provided with the Inclusion Leader or SENDCo
- Alternative access arrangements
- Breakfast provided for those who need it
- Our monthly newsletter highlights online safety considerations for parents and parenting courses (school based and local community)
- Weekly celebration in assembly of class attendance and extra break time reward given
- Children with SEMH anxieties receive targeted support at lunch/ break times/ transition times

22.2 We have thorough systems in place to ensure high attendance is encouraged and we have procedures and policies in place to manage the absence of children. Off-rolling of children does not take place at our school.

22.3 Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

23. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. The policy will be approved by the Governing Board.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

All pupils must be given a registration mark each day. There are two sessions that require a registration mark. Registration will be taken by teachers twice a day. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
I	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective

		employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances



St Jude's Church of England Schools Federation



Excellence in education, kindness in the community, courage through faith.

Headteacher: Mrs Vicki Chiverton

As parents/carers, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday period and are NOT an exceptional circumstance for an absence.

Please submit this form at least **2 weeks in advance** if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for **exceptional** circumstances. We may ask for proof to back up your request. You are strongly advised to request the leave of absence before confirming your arrangements.

If you take your child out of school without the approval of the school, you may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure your child's regular attendance. Please note that the Penalty Notice is from Surrey County Council and all monies go to them and not the school.

Each parent may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who is taken out of school for 5 days or more if this absence is recorded as unauthorised by the school (e.g. a holiday). Please note it includes cumulative absences over a 3-month period (several absences that total 5 days within a 3-month period.)

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the local authority is obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular attendance.

If the absence exceeds 20 days, your child's name will be removed from the school roll and you will have to reapply for a place on your return.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully, taking into account the effect on the continuity of your child's learning as well as your child's overall attendance rate, and may then authorise up to 5 days of absence.

The Headteacher will notify you of the decision within 5 working days of receiving the application.

For further information, please refer to our school Attendance Policy, which can be found on the school website.

Name of child:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child (name)	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
Please attach a letter explaining the exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested and why it cannot be taken during school holidays.	
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO	
If YES, please give dates and details:	
I also have children at the following school(s):	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:

To be completed by the Headteacher		
Child's attendance level over the last 12 months:		%
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed: (Headteacher)		Date: