Pupil Attendance Policy 2026/27

Date policy was agreed	**Autumn 2026**
Policy review date	**Summer 2027**
Policy Approval body	Full Governing Body

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school is:

Lenesha Williams (Assistant Headteacher) admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk

NAME OF ATTENDANCE CHAMPION – Lenesha Williams

The name and contact details of the school staff members parents and carers should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis are:

NAME OF ATTENDANCE OFFICER – Vanessa Henry admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk

NAME of FAMILY Education Welfare Officer/ Family Liaison – TBC

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Vision

Learning to make the world a better place through Faith, Hope and Love

'Three things will last forever – faith, hope and love – and the greatest of these is love.'

1 Corinthians 13:13

Vision Statement

Learning to make the world a better place through, faith, hope and love.

We value all children as unique and welcome them into our safe, loving and supportive St John's family. We nurture children to flourish and aspire to reach their God given potential. We rejoice in our rich diversity and our broad, balanced curriculum provides opportunities for all to achieve excellence, open minds and inspire dreams both now and the future.

Faith

Faith gives us confidence, the resilience to challenge ourselves and achieve more.

'Faith can move mountains' Matthew 17:20

Hope

Hope gives us aspirations for our future; to do our best and support each other.

'But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles' Isiah 40:31

Love

We should Love one another, respect each other and work together.

'Love is more important than anything else. It's what ties everything completely together.' Colossian's 3:14

This is our Christian foundation which enables us to encourage and inspire one another so t hat we may all thrive in a safe and nurturing environment.

We value all children as unique and welcome them into our safe, loving and supportive St John's family. We nurture children to flourish and aspire to reach their God given potential. We rejoice in our rich diversity and our broad, balanced curriculum provides opportunities for all to achieve excellence, open minds and inspire dreams both now and the future.

St John's Angell Town C of E Primary School provides a happy, secure and stimulating learning environment where Christian values are embraced by all. We offer excellent pastoral care to our children, and our creative curriculum coupled with our strong sense of community ensures that we are a happy, forward-thinking and successful school.

Our mission statement says that we aim to achieve this through:

- ✓ Reflecting the teachings of Jesus Christ in our daily lives
- ✓ Providing a warm and welcoming environment for our school and the wider community
- ✓ Fostering a lasting love of learning
- ✓ Encouraging and celebrating achievement
- ✓ Expecting the highest standards of work and behaviour
- ✓ Effective teaching which develop independence and inspires creativity in a broad and balanced curriculum
- ✓ Addressing individual needs and diversity within an inclusive ethos.

Our Curriculum Drivers:

Our overarching school aims are shaped by our Curriculum Drivers. The drivers are the core teaching and learning principles that we value as a school.

We use our Curriculum Drivers as guiding principles ensuring that we offer a curriculum that is rich in its skills and knowledge base, is personalised and is geared to meet the interests and ambitions of our learners.

At St John's School we have the following Curriculum Drivers:

- Cultural Capital
- Knowledge Driven
- Language and Communication
- Faith, Hope and Love (Spirituality)
- Collectively our Curriculum Drivers help to foster high aspiration in our learners. This is the golden thread that knits all of the drivers together.

Our Curriculum Drivers work in tandem with the vision and values of the school.

Curriculum Drivers (st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk)

Curriculum Drivers v4.pptx - Google Slides

St John's Angell Town CE Primary School (SJAT) recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible.

At SJAT School, we aim for children to achieve at least 96% attendance for a full school year. If children are absent from school, they will miss key learning opportunities resulting in gaps in their knowledge and understanding and this can significantly impact upon their learning and development. Absence from school should only occur when a child is unfit to learn, where there is an exceptional circumstance or when the child has a day of religious observance.
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.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- It also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

1. Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
2. Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- 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 all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - 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

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors (or delegate to an appropriate staff member)
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Attendance Champion to be able to do so
- 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, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan 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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance – Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lenesha Williams and can be contacted via telephone number 0207 2744847 and/ email address admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer/Office member responsible for attendance

- The school attendance officer is responsible for:
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance updates to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue penalty notices in accordance with the national framework

The attendance officer is Vanessa Henry and can be contacted via [telephone number 0207 2744847 and/ email address admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk

3.5 Class Teachers

Welcome children to school at the beginning of each day and back to school when they have been absent. Class teachers are responsible for:

- taking the am and pm register using the correct codes (see appendix 1) and submitting this information to the school office.
- Ensuring messages from parents, are recorded, and sent to the school office

3.6 School staff

School admin/office staff will:

Receive and document daily absence data.

- Make calls, send text messages, letters, and emails to parents/carers.
- Ensure individual pupil data is recorded on Arbor our attendance management system
- Provides attendance data to HT, AHT, Attendance Champion
- Compile attendance data reports for HT, AHT Governing Body and EWO
- Are the first point of contact for all parents to provide reasons for absence

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

Parents are expected to:

- ensuring that their children are punctual and ready to learn at school each day.
- informing the school of the reasons on the first day of any absence and any subsequent days.
- booking medical and dental appointments out of school hours (where possible)
- providing medical evidence when required to support reasons for absence.
- informing the school of any changes to their contact details.
- collecting their children on time
- arranging family holidays during the school holidays and not during term time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before time, e.g. 8.55am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 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 and/or local authority

Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Headteacher (Patrick Williams or Ava Wildman lead EWO/ family liaison officer], who can be contacted via [telephone number 0207 2744847 and/ email address admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Be in school uniform and ready to engage in learning activities

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.
We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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.

The school day starts at 8.55am and ends at 3.25pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day (school gates open from 8.40am)

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.30am. It will reamin open for NO longer than 30 minutes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.55am , or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school Attendance Officer / School Office staff, who can be contacted via telephone number 0207 2744847 and/ email address admin@st-johns.lambeth.sch.uk or via the Arbor messing service. Parents must state clearly:

- The child/ children's names
- The reason for absence (including updates of any medical interventions)
- Expedited return date

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. Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents should notify the school via letter, email, class dojo or via telephone call. Details of the appointment will be recorded on our Arbor database.

However, we encourage parents 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 must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Attendance and punctuality records are checked on a regular basis. The parents and /or guardians of children who have ongoing issues regarding punctuality will be subjects to:

- Informal meetings to seek strategies for improvement
- Informal warnings
- Formal letters.
- Invitation to attendance meetings and possible referral to the EWO

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent 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 assign a member of staff to visit the family home, inform social services or contact the police , if this is deemed necessary and it is believed that there is a significant safeguarding risk to the children and family members.
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with a Penalty Notice or referral to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action to secure the regular attendance.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels e.g. via parent conference meetings and via half-termly written reports. if deemed necessary].

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. 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. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website / office. The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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

5.2 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.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a member of staff authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- 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).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued

The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and require the recipient to pay a fixed amount. These circumstances are stated below:

1. Pupils identified who have incurred unauthorised absences.

2. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, 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.

3. 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. 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.

4. 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.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (Paragraph 2 above) 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.

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

1. 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 the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to the child/children since 19 August 2024, the 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 the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to the child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – The Local Authority will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We use a range of strategies to improve attendance at SJAT:

- -Individual attendance awards presented in whole school worship
- -Whole class attendance competitions/ trophy presentation in whole school worship
- -Additional playtime
- -Regular communication and updates to parents regarding attendance matters via class dojo and via newsletters
- -Instant attendance updates to parents (and staff) via Arbor platform
- -Attendance matters signage around the school
- -Recognition for families that have good attendance or for families that have made significant improvements
- -Soft Start to the school day (gates open from 8.40am)
- -Invitation to free Magic Breakfast Club
- -Informal conversations with parents, for example at the school gate.
- -Formal attendance warning letters
- -Fisrst stage attendance meetings with parents
- -Attendance contracts
- -Attendance Panel meetings with Education Welfare

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Supporting pupils with complex barriers to attendance requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach that addresses the underlying causes of absenteeism and provides tailored interventions. We use a range of strategies to support pupils and families with complex needs , which have been outlined below:

1. Identify and Understand the Barriers
Conduct Assessments: Collaborate with the pupil, their family, and other professionals to identify the root causes of attendance issues. Barriers could include mental health issues, family challenges, socioeconomic factors, or learning difficulties.
Regular Monitoring: Track attendance patterns and gather data to identify trends and triggers for absenteeism.

2. Build Strong Relationships
Develop Trusting Relationships: Establish a positive, trusting relationship with the pupil. This can make them feel more connected to the school and more likely to attend.
Family Engagement: Work closely with families to understand their perspectives and involve them in creating solutions. Offer support and resources to address family-related barriers.

3. *Provide Tailored Support*
Personalised Interventions: Design individualised support plans based on the specific needs of each pupil. This could include counselling, mentoring, or academic support.
Flexible Learning Options: Consider offering flexible schedules, online learning options, or part-time attendance to accommodate the pupil's needs.

4. *Address Mental Health and Well-being*
Mental Health Support: Ensure access to mental health resources, such as school counsellors, psychologists, or external services. Provide a safe space where students can discuss their issues.
Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Incorporate SEL programs to help pupils develop resilience, coping strategies, and emotional regulation skills.

5. *Create a Positive School Environment*
Inclusive Practices: Foster an inclusive, supportive school culture where all students feel valued and included.
Safe Learning Environment: Address bullying, discrimination, or any negative behaviors that may contribute to school avoidance.

6. *Multi-agency Collaboration*
Involve External Agencies: Work with social services, healthcare providers, and community organizations to provide comprehensive support for the pupil and their family.
Team Around the Child (TAC): Establish a multi-disciplinary team to coordinate efforts and ensure all aspects of the pupil's life are considered.

7. *Provide Academic Support*
Catch-Up Programs: Offer academic catch-up programs or tutoring for pupils who have fallen behind due to absenteeism.
Differentiated Instruction: Modify teaching methods to meet the pupil's learning needs and reduce academic pressure.

8. *Regular Communication and Review*
Frequent Check-Ins: Maintain regular communication with the pupil and their family to monitor progress and adjust support as needed.
Review Meetings: Hold regular meetings with all stakeholders (teachers, family, external agencies) to review the effectiveness of the interventions and make necessary changes.

9. *Positive Reinforcement*
Reward Attendance: Implement a system that rewards improved attendance or engagement, focusing on positive reinforcement rather than punitive measures.
Celebrate Small Wins: Acknowledge and celebrate any improvements in attendance or engagement to motivate the pupil.

10. *Address Practical Barriers*
Transportation: Assist with transportation if getting to school is a barrier.
Basic Needs Support: Provide access to breakfast clubs, uniforms, or other basic needs if socioeconomic factors are impacting attendance.

11. *Involve the Pupil in Decision-Making*
Student Voice: Involve the pupil in creating their support plan. Giving them a say can increase their commitment to attending school.
Goal Setting: Help the pupil set realistic attendance goals and provide them with the tools and support to achieve them.
Supporting pupils with complex barriers to attendance requires patience, persistence, and a collaborative

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Supporting Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupils with attendance requires specialised strategies that address both their educational needs and the specific barriers they may face in attending school regularly. Here are some key approaches that we may deploy:

1. *Individualised Support Plans*
Develop or update Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) to include attendance goals and strategies. These plans reflect the pupil's specific needs and challenges.
Reasonable Adjustments: We will make reasonable adjustments to the school environment, curriculum, and timetable to accommodate the pupil's needs. This could include flexible start times, sensory breaks, or quiet areas.

2. *Build a Supportive Environment*
Inclusive School Culture: We will foster an inclusive atmosphere where all pupils, regardless of their needs, feel valued and supported. We will encourage understanding and empathy among staff and students.
Safe and Predictable Environment: We will ensure that the school environment is predictable and safe, which can help reduce anxiety and make school attendance less daunting for SEND pupils.

3. *Address Health and Well-being*
Health and Therapy Support: School staff will work closely with healthcare professionals (e.g., occupational therapists, speech therapists, physiotherapists) to ensure that the pupil's health needs are met. This can reduce absenteeism due to medical appointments or health issues.
Mental Health Support: We will provide access to mental health services within the school (e.g Place2Be, Lambeth Mental Health Team) or through other external referrals. The school will support pupils in managing anxiety, stress, or other mental health challenges that may impact attendance.

4. *Tailored Communication Strategies*
Clear Communication: Clear, consistent communication methods tailored to the pupil's needs, whether through visual aids, social stories, or simplified language we be used.
Regular Check-ins: We will establish regular communication with the pupil and their family to discuss attendance issues and address any concerns promptly.

5. *Family and Multi-Agency Collaboration*
Family Engagement: SJAT will engage with families to understand their concerns and work together on strategies to improve attendance. Support will be offered and resources will be deployed to address any home-based challenges impacting attendance.
Multi-agency Collaboration: Collaboration with external agencies will be evident (e.g., social services, health services, SEND support services) to provide a holistic approach to the pupil's needs.

6. *Flexible Learning Options*
Partial Timetables: We will consider temporary or permanent part-time schedules if full-time attendance is too challenging. These will be regularly reviewed and we will aim to increase attendance gradually.
Home-School Hybrid Models: SJAT will offer a combination of in-school and remote learning if appropriate, to ensure the pupil continues to receive education even when not physically in school.

7. *Prepare for Transitions*
Transition Support: We will provide additional support during transitions, such as moving from primary to secondary school, or when returning to school after a period of absence. This can include visits, meetings, and gradual reintroduction plans.
Visual Schedules: Visual timetables will be used to help SEND pupils understand their daily routine, reducing anxiety about what to expect at school.

8. *Monitor and Review Progress*
Regular Monitoring: We will track attendance closely and look for patterns or triggers of absenteeism. Use this data to inform interventions.
Review Meetings: We will hold regular review meetings with the pupil, their family, and involved professionals to assess the effectiveness of the strategies in place and make necessary adjustments.

9. *Positive Reinforcement*
Celebrate Achievements: SJAT will recognise and celebrate improvements in attendance, no matter how small. This can include praise, certificates, or other forms of positive reinforcement.
Incentive Programs: Implement incentive programs tailored to the pupil's interests to motivate better attendance.

10. *Practical Support*
Support with Daily Routines: Offer assistance with daily routines such as dressing, eating, or using the bathroom facilities, if these are barriers to attending school.

11. *Address Social and Sensory Needs*
Social Skills Support: We necessary provide support for developing social skills, which can reduce anxiety and improve the pupil's comfort in attending school.
Sensory-Friendly Spaces: Create sensory-friendly spaces within the school where pupils can go if they are feeling overwhelmed.
By implementing these tailored strategies, we belive that we can help SEND pupils overcome barriers to attendance, ensuring they receive the education and support they need.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan 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.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Supporting pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence requires a thoughtful and sensitive approach to help them reintegrate successfully. Support may come in the form of the following:

1. *Pre-Return Planning*
   - Pre-Return Meeting: Organise a meeting with the parent (and pupil if deemed appropriate), and relevant staff to discuss the return. This helps identify any concerns, set expectations, and plan appropriate support.
   -Personalised Reintegration Plan: Develop a tailored reintegration plan outlining the pupil's specific needs, any adjustments, and a phased return if necessary. This plan will be flexible and regularly reviewed.
   - Gather Information: Ensure that wehave up-to-date information on the pupil's situation, including any medical, mental health, or family circumstances that may impact their return.

2. *Gradual Reintroduction*
   - Phased Return: Consider a phased return to school, starting with part-time attendance and gradually increasing as the pupil becomes more comfortable.
   - Modified Schedule: Temporarily adjust the timetable or reduce the workload to ease the transition back into school life.

3. *Social and Emotional Support*
   - Emotional Check-ins: Provide regular opportunities for the pupil to express how they're feeling about being back at school. This can be through informal conversations, mentoring, or counselling.
   - Peer Support: Assign a peer buddy or encourage supportive friendships to help the pupil feel connected and less isolated. This can be particularly helpful during unstructured times like playtimes and lunchtimes.
   - Re-establish Routines: Help the pupil re-establish school routines gradually, focusing on creating a predictable and safe environment.

4. *Academic Support*
   - Catch-Up Support: Provide tailored academic support to help the pupil catch up on missed work. This could include tutoring, one-on-one sessions, or extra help during class.
   - Flexible Expectations: Be mindful that the pupil may need time to readjust academically. Set realistic goals and allow flexibility in completing work tasks.
   - Collaborative Learning: Encourage group work or collaborative projects that allow the pupil to engage with peers without feeling overwhelmed by individual tasks.

5. *Communication and Collaboration*
   - Regular Communication: Maintain ongoing communication with the pupil's family to monitor progress and address any emerging concerns. Involve them in decisions about the pupil's

reintegration.

- Multi-Agency Involvement: If applicable, involve external agencies (e.g., healthcare providers, social services) to provide additional support and ensure a holistic approach.
- Staff Awareness: Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the pupil's situation and the support plan in place. This ensures consistency and sensitivity in their approach.

6. *Addressing Anxiety and Concerns*

- Anxiety Management: Offer strategies and resources to help the pupil manage any anxiety or stress related to returning to school. This could include mindfulness techniques, relaxation exercises, or access to a quiet space.
- Social Stories: For younger pupils or those with additional needs, use social stories or visual aids to explain what to expect and reduce uncertainty.
- Open Door Policy: Encourage the pupil to share any concerns they have about returning to school. Make sure they know who they can talk to if they're struggling.

7. *Positive Reinforcement*

- Celebrate Milestones: Recognise and celebrate milestones in the pupil's return, such as completing a full day or re-engaging in a particular subject or activity.
- Focus on Strengths: Highlight the pupil's strengths and achievements, helping to rebuild their confidence and self-esteem.

8. *Monitoring and Review*

- Regular Check-ins: Schedule regular check-ins with the pupil to assess how they're coping and to make any necessary adjustments to the support plan.
- Progress Reviews: Hold review meetings with all stakeholders to evaluate the pupil's progress and adjust the reintegration plan as needed.

9. *Practical Support*

- Resource Provision: Ensure the pupil has access to necessary resources, such as learning materials or assistive technology, to support their return.

10. *Flexibility and Patience*

- Allow Time for Adjustment: Understand that the pupil may need time to readjust to the school environment, socially and academically. Be patient and avoid rushing the process.
- Adaptable Support: Be prepared to adapt the support plan based on how the pupil responds to their return to school. Flexibility is key to ensuring a successful reintegration.

By providing a structured, supportive, and individualised approach, you can help pupils returning from a lengthy absence reintegrate into school life, rebuild their confidence, and catch up academically and socially.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

At St John's Angel Town Primary School, we will respond to attendance concerns in the following way:

1. **If the Attendance level is 96 - 99.9%**

Attendance will be monitored as part of the weekly attendance meetings

2. **Attendance level is 95.9 to 94 %**

As soon as a pupil's attendance falls below 96%, **Attendance letter 1** will be sent to the parent/carer advising them that their child's attendance must improve and that their attendance will be closely monitored. The child to 'unwell for school' information will also be sent out.

3. **Attendance level is 93.9% - 90%**

The school will send **Attendance Letter 2** - no improvement letter with a date for a meeting. At the meeting with parent/carers support will be discussed if required to secure the pupils improvement in their attendance. Possible support to be considered and not limited to early help referral /signposting/in school support

4. **Attendance drops Below 90% (PA)**

Attendance intervention Letter 3 is sent to the parent/carers with a date for a meeting with the Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer. Support will be discussed again with the parent/carer to ensure an immediate improvement. Parent/carers will be reminded of their parental responsibilities and the legal requirements regarding school attendance

Attendance will be monitored and If there is no improvement over a 3-week monitoring period and there are 10 unauthorised absences in 10 weeks, a Penalty Notice may be requested if parent/carers are not engaging with support or there is no improvement. A referral to the commissioned Education Welfare Officer or Local Authority Education Welfare Officer will also be made.

Monitoring across the year

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. 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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- 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
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 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 severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- 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

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

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 trust considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and 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
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- 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
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
- Whole class attendance competitions/ trophy presentation in whole school worship
- Additional playtime
- Regular communication and updates to parents regarding attendance matters via class dojo and via newsletters
- Instant attendance updates to parents (and staff) via Arbor platform
- Attendance matters signage around the school

- Recognition for families that have good attendance or for families that have made significant improvements
- Formal attendance warning letters
- Attendance Panel meetings with Education Welfare

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
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

DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. Sept 2022

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers. Have robust daily processes to follow up absence. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance. Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice. Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act 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.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a termly 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. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where 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.

Persistently absent pupils

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

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continued support as for persistenly absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: 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. 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.

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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. 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. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	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. 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.

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:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area. Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children. Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.