



St Mary Redcliffe  
and Temple School

# Attendance Policy

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## 1. Introduction

It is the aim of St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School that students should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of students and is an integral part of our school.

Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance we will work together with them, their parents/carers and partner organisations to remove barriers, by building strong and trusting relationships. Therefore, improving attendance is everyone’s business.

We expect attendance at school to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

## 2. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by ensuring every student has access to the full-time, efficient education to which they are entitled; acting early to address

patterns of absence and creating a culture in which the importance of good school attendance is understood and valued by all parties.

This Policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents/carers must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly.

This Policy will be applied fairly and consistently, taking into account the individual needs of our students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We want our students to go to school every day unless they are really not well enough to attend. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education.

We want all our students to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the student's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

We will do all we can to encourage our students to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can, for any student who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents [Supporting students at school with medical conditions – December 2015](#) and [Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs – January 2013](#)

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents/carers.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our students' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents/carers, students and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- Support students back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality

## 2.1 Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

## 3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all students as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a student's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with Government guidance ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181955/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf), or as updated by the DfE) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our Safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any student who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the student's welfare. (Please see our school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for more information).

## 4. Legislation and Guidance

This Policy meets the requirements of the government guidance 2022 [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures](#). These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

The DfE's guidance on the [school census](#) explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a student as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. For students who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as 'severely absent'.

The school will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any student becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of students; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the Local Authority is required in line with the DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

## **6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance**

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all students and parents/carers are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents/carers, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a student or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support students and parents/carers by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support students and parents/carers to access any support they may need voluntarily.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the Local Authority and other relevant partners.

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents/carers to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these students face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period to support students to reintegrate back into education to access fulltime provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, Local Authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

## **7. Staff Training on Attendance**

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard students. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance
- and the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data and any additional training that would be beneficial to support students and student cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

## **What the Law Says and Our School Procedures:**

### **1. Contents of the Admissions Register**

The Admission Register (sometimes referred to as the School Roll) must contain specific personal details of every student in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents/carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter students on the Admission Register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent/carer, that the student will attend.

A student's name can only lawfully be deleted from the Admission Register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

It is vital that the Admission Register is kept up to date. Therefore, we encourage parents/carers to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the Admission Register is amended as soon as possible.

### **2. Contents of Attendance Register**

The law makes it clear that schools must take the Attendance Register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion the school must record whether each student is:

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

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to improve attendance and is supported by the use of our Management Information System to record attendance information.

### **3. Present at School (and Lateness)**

Students are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a student leaves the school premises after registration they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

The Pastoral Team will meet with parents/carers of those children who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

Our students must arrive by 8.30am on each school day.

Our morning register is taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.55am.

Our afternoon register is taken at 3.00pm and will be kept open until 3.15pm.

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (**L**) – which counts as present.

If a student arrives after the register has closed (8.55am) they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code "Late after registers close" (**U**) which is an unauthorised absence mark. However, if the student is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

### 3.1 Effects of Late Arrival at School

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

## 4. Authorised Absence

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

**The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:**

### 4.1 Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows Department for Education guidance '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' 2022 which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the student's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual student.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a student has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s/carer/carers aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent/carer on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

Parents/carers must notify the school that their child will be absent by emailing the attendance team or by telephone. The absence phone line is 0117 3772069 and the email address is [attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk).

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent/carer should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Parents/carers who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact their child's Head of Year for further information on the support available.

Parents/carers should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents/carers should dial 999.

### **Students taken ill during the school day**

If a student needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the student must be collected from the school office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

### **4.2 Medical/Dental Appointments**

Parents/carers should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a student must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult, and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

### **4.3 Religious Observance**

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

### **4.4 Traveller Absence**

The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller student of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent/carer who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents/carers as necessary. Parents/carers should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.



Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

#### **4.5 Suspensions**

If the school decides to send a student home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a Suspension. The school will follow the current <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>.

Any suspension **must** be agreed by the Headteacher.

The school will notify the parent/carer of the suspension in writing. If the student is a Child in Care, the school will notify the student's carer, social worker and the HOPE Virtual School. In other instances, where a student is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The student must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult, and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

#### **5. First Day of Absence Response**

When a student has an absent mark for morning registration and no phone call has been received, a text message will be sent to the parent/carer requesting that they contact the school immediately to give the reason for the absence.

Parents/carers will be asked to supply details of at least three people who can be contacted in an emergency and will be regularly reminded of the importance of keeping these up-to-date, through newsletters and other communications.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the student, we may request a Welfare Check from the police.

#### **6. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance**

Deputy Heads of Year oversee attendance and recognise the students in their year who have excellent attendance or whose attendance has improved after previous concerns. This recognition could be in the form of praise, phone call or letter home.

#### **7. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'**

**The law does not grant parents/carers the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The school will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents/carers will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents/carers should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our school's Safeguarding and Child Policy for more information.)

All term time absence for Children in Care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and the HOPE Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the HOPE Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

## 8. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if a student is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents/carers can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a student is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised
- Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions

## 9. Approved Educational Activity (AEA)

- When students are attending educational activities off the school site that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case. (See DfE 2020 School Attendance guidance.)
- If a student is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Student Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, our school will make arrangements for the student to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.
- If a student is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Student Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the student attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify us of any absences by individual students, to ensure

we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary. Attendance updates will be provided on a weekly basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative setting

Any attendance concerns will be followed up by us, in conjunction with the AP.

## **10. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in the law and DfE guidance)**

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record students as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by our school or the Local Authority is not available and the student's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the [DfE Home to school travel and transport](#))
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending school
- The student is in custody, but still on the School Roll. (If the school has evidence that the student is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as 'present at approved educational activity')

## **11. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)**

- Sometimes students can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents/carers and students to be open and honest with us about the reason for the student's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent/carer to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a student is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support students and parents/carers in the best way.
- When we have concerns about the attendance of a student, we will do our best to make the parent/s/carer/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents/carers do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.
- If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s/carer/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.
- We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents/carers fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s/carer/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.
- If our school has safeguarding concerns about a student who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

## 12. Students on Reduced (Part-time) Timetables

- Students are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a student with a full-time education due to the student's needs, we will work with the student, parent/carer and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the student's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

## 13. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered student at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents/carers who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent/carer but may have day-to-day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents/carers and children. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent/s/carer/s are guilty of an offence. Parents/carers with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a student's irregular attendance.

A student's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution)
2. Prosecution

Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#) for more information and Bristol City Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, available here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/education-welfare>)

Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent/carer with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents/carers with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

In addition to Penalty Notices, there is a range of other legal interventions open to schools: Schools, Trusts and Local Authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and Local Authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family.

These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

## **14. Children Missing Education (CME)**

Our school will add and delete students from roll in line with the law. The school will follow [Bristol City Council's Children Missing Education guidance](#), and make CME and Student Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the Children Missing Education Officer if unsure about any individual cases: [childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk)

## **15. Following up Unexplained Absences**

Where no contact has been made with the school, we will contact parents/carers by text, email, telephone or letter to try and establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within 5 school days, we will mark the absence as unauthorised, using the **O** code. If we are concerned about a student's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s/carer/s, we may contact the student's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the student's whereabouts.

## **16. Reporting to Parents/Carers**

Attendance records will be shared with parents/carers through the school's regular reports to parents/carers. If there are any concerns about the child's attendance, for example if a child's attendance drops below 90%, our school will contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

## **17. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence**

The School's Attendance officers keep records of the reasons provided by parents/carers on a secure spreadsheet, including details of who called and at what time. They then update SIMS with the appropriate absence code and a brief note.

## **18. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis (3 times a year). It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this Policy.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this Policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors. The

Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Attendance Lead**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead oversees whole school attendance, interrogating attendance data by cohort groups including students entitled to free school meals, pupil premium students, students with SEND, Children in Care, EAL children and by ethnicity.

### **Attendance Officers**

The Attendance Officers:

- Are responsible for recording the reasons for absence provided by parents/carers and first day contact for unexplained absences
- Report concerns about attendance to the relevant Heads of Year and Deputy Heads of Year
- Co-ordinate requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team) and advises the Assistant Head as requested.

### **Other pastoral roles**

- The Deputy Head of Year oversees attendance for students in their year and liaises with parents/carers where required
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual student level.

### **Class Teachers/Form Tutors**

Tutors are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information electronically.

## **19. Policy Monitoring Arrangements**

This Policy will be reviewed initially after 3 months, then annually by the Director (Attendance, Inclusion and Equalities), or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the Policy will be shared with the SAS Committee.

## **20. Links with other Policies**

This Policy is linked to:

Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

The link below will take you to the relevant page on the school website:

<https://www.smrt.bristol.sch.uk/key-information/policies>