St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

Attendance Policy and Procedure

Approved by	FGB	**Date** November 2026
Last reviewed	November 2025	
Next review due by	November 2027	

1. Introduction

We are inspired by Jesus' words 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness', John 10:10. We believe that 'The Glory of God is a Human Being Fully Alive'. Each member of our community is created by God, and our aim isto achieve our full potential. All we do is rooted in this Hope of who we are as people and what we can become. Safe Boundaries, Good Relationships, and Empowered Learning are fundamental to realising this potential. Our mission as a school is: **'To develop the skills, knowledge and Alive qualities so that all our students can make their unique contribution to the world.'**

Our aim is 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.

The principals of a 'support first approach' are adopted and we seek to:

Support First Approach	
Expect	Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and parents/carers and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school
Monitor	Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched
Listen and understand	When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents/carers to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them
Facilitate support	Remove barriers in school and help students and parents/carers to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
Enforce	Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education

Key Contacts

The names of key contacts can be found on the School website.

- Who to Contact
  - General Enquiries (via contact form or by phone)
  - Absences (by email or by phone)
  - School Leadership Team
  - Heads of Year
  - Sixth Form
  - Learning Support
  - Other Key Contacts (e.g. Learning Mentors)
- Keeping Students Safe (with a link to the names of our safeguarding team).

Parents/carers can also contact their child's Tutor using the enquiries@smrt.bristol.sch.uk email address.

Parent/Carers should contact the Attendance Team by 08:30 on the first day of absence if their child is too unwell to attend school, clearly stating the student's full name, and reason for absence.

Parents/carers should continue to report the reason daily until their child is well enough to return to school. School cannot assume that one day's absence is the same as the previous day for safeguarding reasons.

- Parents/carers can report their child's absence via the Study Bugs app, or the Study Bugs website
- Main school: If your child is unable to attend school email attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk or call 0117 353 2069
- Sixth Form: If your child is unable to attend school email 6thform@smrt.bristol.sch.uk**,** or call 0117 377 3465

2. Aims

Our School aims to meet its obligations regarding 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 the whole school community, students, parents/carers and staff.

This Policy sets out our position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents/carers[1] 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 parent/carer, who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in

[1] Education law defines parents/carers as: all natural parents/carers, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

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 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 can realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are 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.

DfE guidance documents are available as follows:
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

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.

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 a whole 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education 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 we cannot establish their whereabouts and are concerned for the student's welfare (Safeguarding Policy).

4. Legislation and Guidance

This Policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) guidance Working together to improve school attendance. This document is 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 School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Information about Individual Students) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2024

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 Parents/Carers 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 Parents/Carers 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. 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 strategy and procedures for tracking, following up, and improving attendance.
- The processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it.

Staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, will receive training to include:

- The necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data.
- 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 School along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents/carers, and details of the school last attended. We will enter students on the Admission Register at the beginning of the first day on which we have 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 9 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations.

It is vital that the Admission Register is kept up to date, it is a legal document. Therefore, we encourage parents/carers to inform us of any changes whenever they occur and ensure that 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 morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion the Register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every student. Staff and parents/carers can refer to the Working Together To Improve School Attendance guidance for the code descriptors and also Appendix 1 of this document.

We must record whether each student is:

- Attending
- Absent

Effective and timely use and sharing of Register data is critical to safeguard children, improve attendance, and is supported using our electronic Management Information System (MIS) to record attendance information. Our Registers will be preserved for 6 years from the date after the last entry was made.

3. Attendance and Absence Codes

Attending the 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 teams 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 08:25 on each school day.
- Our morning Register is taken at 08:30 and will be kept open until 09:00.

- Our afternoon Register is taken at 13.10, at the start of the first afternoon lesson.

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

The school day starts at 08:30 and students are expected in school for 08:30. Under the new legislation Registers can only be open for thirty minutes from the start of Registration. If a student arrives after 08:30 but before 09:00 they will be marked as late for school. If a student arrives after 09:00 they will be recorded as a U code (late after Registers close). A U code indicates an unauthorised absence and will affect the student's attendance. If a student has ten U codes within a ten-week period, parents/carers may be subject to a fixed penalty notice being issued (DfE guidance Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026.

Effects of Late Arrival at School
When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like tutor time in which the pastoral curriculum is undertaken, 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. Attending a Place other than our School

Students are marked as attending a place other than the school if they are present for the assigned session. These codes include:

- Code K Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
- Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
- Code W: Attending work experience
- Code B: Attending any other approved education activity
- Code D: Dual registered at another setting

Our School:

- Retains responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of students attending an approved educational activity.
- Must be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the student.
- Should ensure that we have in place arrangements whereby providers notify the school of any absence.
- Must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), for part or all their education, our School will arrange for the student to be dual registered with the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider arranged by our School, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), for part or all their education, we will mark the sessions which the student attends the alternative setting as code B (any other approved educational activity). We require 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 Alternative Provider (AP).

5. Absent – Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence means that we have given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away from the school. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence' which means the student's absence is with permission granted by the school. These codes include:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

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 necessary, in which case we 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 Reception by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and 'signed out'. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

As soon as required absence is known for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment, this must be supported by providing us with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter. Only then will the absence be authorised.

Part-time timetables - Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
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 (with a maximum length of 12 weeks) and will be regularly reviewed, whilst arrangements are made to support the student's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

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. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. School will consider each application individually, considering 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 requests must be sought in advance. We will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. We 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 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 by contacting a member of the Attendance Team (attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk).

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 the child is safe, rather than missing.** Parents/carers should be aware that they may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support their request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols (Safeguarding Policy).

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. We will contact the HOPE Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a Child in Care.

6. Absent – Other Authorised Reasons

'Absent due to other authorised reasons' means that we have 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. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence'. These codes include:

- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes such as travelling circus not for conferences
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Mobile student - Parent travelling for occupational purposes

School will authorise the absence of a mobile 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. We will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents/carers as necessary. Parents/carers should let us 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.

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, we 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 necessary, they should be requested in advance. Additional days taken without exceptional circumstances will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, we will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

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 the Department for Education (DfE) guidance Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026 which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, we may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment

card, or other appropriate form of evidence. Where a parent/carer cannot provide any written evidence, we will endeavour to have a conversation with the parent/carer and student, if appropriate, which may itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

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

If we are 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, we may require medical evidence of some description to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, we will make the parent/carer 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 School by the parent/carer on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

- Main school: If your child is unable to attend school email attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk or call 0117 353 2069 before 08:30 on every day of absence, giving a reason for the absence
- Sixth Form: If your child is unable to attend school email 6thform@smrt.bristol.sch.uk or call 0117 377 3465
- Parents/carers also have the recommended option of reporting their child's absence via the Study Bugs app, or the Study Bugs website.

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

Mental Health and Wellbeing
Parents/carers who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead (safeguarding@smrt.bristol.sch.uk) 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 Reception by a parent/carer or another authorised adult and 'signed out'. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Suspensions (also known as Exclusions)
If the School decides to send a student home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a Suspension. We will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions.

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

We will notify the parent/carer of the suspension in writing. If the student is a Child in Care, we 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, we will also inform their allocated social worker.

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

7. Absent – Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our School will record students as 'Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences and are not counted as possible attendances):

- Code Q: Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
- Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Code Y5: Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
- Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

8. Absent - Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reason for absence was provided.

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 our 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).
- 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. The unauthorised absence codes include:

- Code G – Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N – Reason for absence not yet established

- Code O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U – Arrived in school after registration closed

9. Administrative Codes

Where necessary and applicable, our School will use the defined administrative codes. These codes are not collected for statistical purposes and are:

- Code Z: Prospective student not on admissions register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

10. 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 us immediately to give the reason for the absence even if they think the information is incorrect.

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, through newsletters and other communications, of the importance of keeping these details up to date.

If we are unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and are concerned for the welfare of the student, we may undertake our own 'safe and well' checks and/or request a welfare check from the police.

11. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

We recognise good Attendance and improved attendance.

Deputy Heads of Year share attendance data with their tutor teams on a weekly basis and this is shared with students. This may include individual praise for students for both good attendance and improvements. Attendance certificates are awarded by year teams through assemblies and post cards are sent home to recognise good or improved attendance.

12. 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 into 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 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 parents/carers 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 relevant 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 parents/carers 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 Notice to Improve (attendance 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 us 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 parents/carers that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If we have safeguarding concerns about a student who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

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 a 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 several 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 their parents/carers 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.

We 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, e.g. 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 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 £80 per parent, per child payable within 21 days, rising to £160 per parent/carer, per child if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.) If a second Penalty Notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period

the penalty is £160 per parent/carer, per child if paid within 28 days. There will be no option to pay a lower amount.

2. Prosecution.

Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or up to 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance for more information and Bristol City Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.)

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 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. Our School abides by the DfE's Children Missing Education guidance. A student's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations. The School will follow Bristol City Council's Children Missing Education guidance, and make CME and Student Tracking referrals as appropriate. We will seek advice from the Children Missing Education Officer if we unsure about any individual cases (childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk).

15. Following up Unexplained Absences

Our School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code will be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10 (7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the student's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, we must amend the student's record to Code O.

Where no contact has been made with School our staff will contact parents/carers by text, email, telephone, or letter to try and establish the reason for a student'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 parents/carers, 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. We may also undertake a home visit/welfare check.

16. Reporting to Parents/Carers

This School reports on attendance records through termly gradesheets.

Where a student's attendance drops below 90% or dropping towards 90%, for whatever reason, our School will contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

16. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

Attendance records are recorded using our Management Information System (Bromcom) and received via Studybugs app in school. Studybugs is used across the school to monitor, support and help improve attendance at all levels.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

There are a range of school staff with responsibility for the attendance of students and liaison with parent/carers. Details of our key contacts are listed in Section 1 of this Policy.

The Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, Attendance, and Belonging) leads a weekly meeting with the Senior Attendance Officer and the Deputy Heads of year to analyse attendance data. Attendance trends are monitored so that appropriate actions are undertaken which may include liaison with home or a referral to outside agencies.

The Attendance Team work closely with the safeguarding team to ensure that vulnerable cohorts of students are identified and monitored accordingly.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis. 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 our 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.

Senior Attendance Champion/Senior Leadership Team

The Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, Attendance, and Belonging) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and is our Senior Attendance Champion. Attendance data is reported

weekly at Senior Leadership Team meetings, which includes information regarding year group/whole school attendance and identified cohorts of students such as pupil premium, SEND, Persistent/severe absentees, Ethnicity, and EAL students. The Senior Attendance Champion is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, as such, can identify students who may require additional support to attend school regularly.

Senior Attendance Officer
Some of the duties of the Senior Attendance Officer includes:

- Monitoring attendance data at the school and individual student level.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, Attendance, and Belonging)/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinating requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the Deputy Heads of Year, Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, Attendance, and Belonging)/DSL, and wider Safeguarding Team.
- Other pastoral roles.

Deputy Heads of Year support students and parent/carers alongside the Heads of Year and Learning Mentors who are attached to each year group.

Class Teachers/ Tutors
Year group tutors are responsible for recording daily attendance electronically (via our Management Information System) in morning tutor time, using the correct codes, and class teachers are responsible for recording lesson attendance throughout the day. If a teacher recognises that a student was present in the previous lesson but is absent from their lesson, after ten minutes this is logged on the Duty Call monitoring system.

Attendance Officers
Attendance Officers monitor attendance throughout the day and contact parents/carers where appropriate. They are also responsible for the attendance telephone line and attendance email inbox.

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents/carers about absence and record it on the school system.

18. Links with other Policies

This Policy is linked to these policies which can be found on our website:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Supporting Students with Health Needs who cannot Attend School

External documentation is linked throughout this Policy.

19. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed for its impact on equality and does not unlawfully discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has given due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all members of the school community, taking account of individual needs and circumstances where appropriate.

The Governing Board and Headteacher will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy to ensure it remains compliant with equality legislation and supports the school's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunity.

Appendix 1 – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance and Absence Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective student not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure