



St Michael's
C.E. Primary School

Attendance Policy

Date	September 2024
Date for Review	September 2025

Our Theologically Rooted Christian Vision

Courage to Flourish in the Love of God

‘I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full’ (John 10:10)



[Therefore],




‘Be strong and courageous... the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.’ (Joshua 1:9)

These biblical texts underpin our vision summary, ‘Courage to flourish in the love of God’. Jesus’ words from the New Testament describe his desire for everyone to be a full and flourishing version of their created selves, experiencing life in all its vibrant fullness, individually and in community. Our ambition is for everyone to encounter this fullness through the life and work of the school, whatever their background, beliefs or circumstances. God’s words to Joshua from the Old Testament illustrate how life, and learning, can be challenging, bringing setbacks and discouragement. These words inspire us to keep on going in those circumstances, confident that God watches over us and walks beside us.

The joining of these biblical texts is meaningful for the particular circumstances of our school community. It gives coherence to our aspirational vision that will grow courage and resilience as enablers of ‘life in all its fullness’ for everyone. To support our vision, we have seven overarching Christian values.

Our Core Christian Values

<u>Value</u>	<u>Biblical texts that underpin our values</u>
	Philippians 4:13 ‘I can do all things through him who strengthens me.’
	John 1:5 ‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.’

	<p>1 Corinthians 13:4-8</p> <p>‘Love is patient and kind... it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.’</p> <p>1 John 1:9</p> <p>‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us’</p>
	<p>Proverbs 3:5-6</p> <p>‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.’</p>
	<p>Hebrews 10:24</p> <p>‘Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good.’</p>
	<p>1 Thessalonians 5:18</p> <p>‘Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you’</p>

Introduction

The Governors and staff at St. Michael’s Church of England Primary Academy are united in their belief that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Helping them to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. As a result, the school aims for a 100% attendance with the minimum attendance target figure of 96%.

St. Michael’s values all children. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the barriers to achieving and maintaining excellent attendance and offer the right service at the right time to try to resolve any difficulties.

The Attendance Team (SLT, Family Liaison Office, Attendance Officer and all class teachers) will monitor attendance and use attendance data to identify any patterns of concern, whilst also celebrating success! Where we have concerns, or lack of engagement from families to improve attendance, we will follow the schools escalated approach to improving attendance. The schools escalated approach is child-centred and prioritises support and developing strong

working relationships with families. We will use the Early Help process to provide support prior to escalation and consider how we can work with families to enable your child to access their right to education (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 28).

Our aim is to always to work in partnership with parents.

To support good attendance, and safeguarding, at St. Michael’s we:

- Ensure the school is welcoming and every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Ensure the school site is open at the stated times.
- Ensure the regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance is complete by every class teacher each day. This further supports our approach to safeguarding within the school.
- Take safeguarding seriously and we will always contact you on the first day that your child is absent from school, this includes before and after-school clubs. If your child arrives late after the close of registration, we will record their arrival at reception and transition the child to class.
- Consider any requests for leave in term time individually. This will be aligned to the Local Authority code of conduct.
- Notify the Local Authority within 5 days if a new child is joining the school roll.
- Inform the Local Authority of children whose parents have notified the school in writing and have opted for Elective Home Education.
- Work closely with the School Attendance Support Team.
- Notify the Local Authority of Children Missing in Education – aligned to the DfE 2022 Attendance paper.

There are 190 days of learning during the course of an average school year. The table below summaries how many days absence equates to lost learning.

Attendance as a percentage	Numbers of days absence	Numbers of lessons missed
99% or better	3 or less days off	15 or less lessons missed
98%	4 days off	20 lessons missed
96%	7 days off	35 lessons missed
95%	10 days off	50 lessons missed
93%	13 days off	65 lessons missed

92%	16 days off	80 lessons missed
90% or less	19 days off or more	95 or more lessons missed

A whole school approach to supporting attendance at St. Michael's

Securing good attendance at St. Michael's cannot be achieved in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve working closely with other Leaders within the school. The Attendance Team will work alongside class teachers, pastoral staff, the Pupil Premium leader and the Inclusion Lead to facilitate a whole school approach.

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.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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. Strategies for promoting attendance

At St Michael's CE Primary School, we are committed to promoting excellent attendance and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed. Our approach includes a variety of strategies designed to recognise and celebrate good attendance, provide incentives, and address any issues that may affect a student's ability to attend regularly.

Celebrating Good Attendance and Incentives to Encourage Attendance

- **Collective Worship:** We hold termly Collective Worships to celebrate students with outstanding attendance. We recognise individual students and classes who have achieved high levels of attendance, reinforcing the value of being present in school.
- **Display Boards:** Our school features a dedicated display boards that highlights class attendance. This is in the dining hall.
- **Stickers:** Each week, the children who have achieved 100% attendance for that week, will be celebrated in class and receive a 100% Attendance Sticker.
- **Awards:** Each week, the children with 100% attendance, have their name added to a tombola. At the end of Autumn Term and Spring Term, a name is pulled at random, and this child will receive a voucher. There will be one voucher for EYFS/KS1 and one for KS2. So, if a child has 100% attendance, 6 weeks out of 7, their name will be entered 6 times.
- **Attendance Awards:** At the end of the academic year, there is a special 'Attendance Extravaganza' for those children who have achieved 99% and above. Parents and children are invited to this.

Improving Attendance

- **Early Intervention:** Our staff closely monitor attendance data and identify students who may be at risk of falling behind. We proactively reach out to these families to provide support and address any issues that may be affecting attendance.
- **Parent Communication:** We maintain open lines of communication with parents regarding their child's attendance. Regular updates and reminders about the importance of attendance are sent via newsletters and emails.

Home-School Agreement

- **Purpose and Use:** Home-School Agreements are formal agreements between the school, the student, and their parents or guardians. These contracts are presented at the beginning of every year. Where a student's attendance is regressing, an attendance agreement is made through a SARM process and a contract is drawn up. The contract

outlines specific attendance goals, support measures, and consequences for non-compliance.

- **Implementation:** If a student's attendance falls below acceptable levels, the school will invite the parent(s) to a SARM meeting to discuss the issues and draft an attendance contract. This contract will include:
 - **Attendance Goals:** Clear targets for improvement.
 - **Support Measures:** Strategies and resources the school will provide to help the student achieve the goals.
 - **Review Dates:** Regular check-ins to assess progress and make adjustments if necessary.
 - **Consequences:** Clear explanation of the actions that will be taken if attendance does not improve, which may include involvement of the local authority.
- **Follow-Up:** The school closely monitors the student's attendance as per the contract and provides ongoing support. Regular meetings with parents will be scheduled to review progress and adjust the plan as needed.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The Local Academy Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- 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.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- The link governor for attendance as part of our safeguarding processes is Elizabeth Flannagan.

4.2 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.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Reporting families to Birmingham City Council so they can issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- 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.

4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader Mrs Roberts (Headteacher) 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 Mrs Roberts (Headteacher) and can be contacted via 0121 464 4345.

4.4 The Attendance Officer/Family Liaison Officer

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 reports 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 (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Victoria Cockell and can be contacted via 0121 4644345.

4.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office. **To access the school day, we ask parents to ensure that their children are in school for 8.35am where there are a range of educational activities and interventions. The formal school day starts at 8.45am (September 2024).**

Children arriving after 8.45am will be late for school and must report to the school office.

If a pupil arrives between 8:45am and 9:20am they will be marked as late.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes (9:20am) this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

Registers are also taken in the afternoon:

- EYFS at 12:30pm
- Year 1 at 1.20pm
- Year 2 at 12.40pm
- Year 3 at 1.30pm
- Year 4 at 1.00pm
- Year 5 at 1.10pm
- Year 6 at 1.55pm

The registers are monitored daily to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

4.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to an SLT member where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

4.7 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:

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time (8:35am) and be in school ready for the register by 8:45am
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am 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 through a SARM or the local authority.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by a member of the senior leadership team, who can be contacted via 0121 464 4345.

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time.

5. Recording attendance

5.1 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 8:35am ends at 3:15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school before the register starts at 8:45am on each school day. The school gates close promptly at 8:45am. Any child who needs to go through the main entrance due to this will be marked as late.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 8:50am. The register for the second session will be taken at different times for different year groups (see section 3.5).

5.2 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 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 0121 464 4345.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes.

If you are unsure if your child should attend school, please contact the school who will offer advice and guidance and signpost you to the relevant service.

It is the Headteacher's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In most cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance. In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Child is absent and there are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness.

- Child has had three periods of absence due to illness.
- Child is absent and the same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.
- Child is absent and attendance is below expected levels and there is a concerning pattern of absence/reasons for absence.
- Where there is a medical problem, and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may 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.

5.3 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.

Requests for Leave of Absence (exceptional circumstances)

- The Government issued new guidance in August 2024 regarding leave of absence.
- Head teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances, and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by those with parental responsibility. We would always notify parents with parental responsibility should such a request be made.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Education Legal Intervention Team.

- The Education Legal Intervention Team have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence.
- Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.

The resident parent should complete a Leave of Absence Request form available from the school office. The head teacher may ask parents to provide supporting evidence when assessing a parent’s case for exceptional circumstances.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

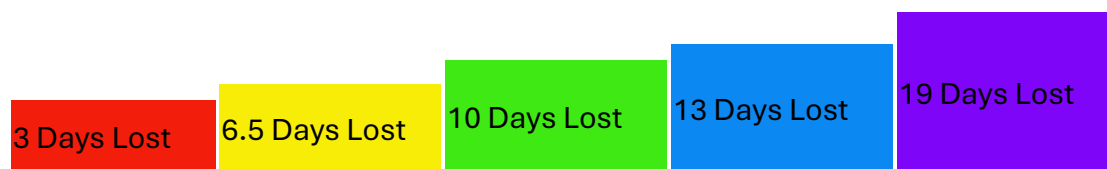
A pupil who arrives late:

- 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.

The registers are monitored daily to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

The following procedures are put in place to resolve poor punctuality:

- 10 Late arrivals in half term – Letter
- 6 U codes in half a term = a letter sent home, offer of school support
- 10 U codes = Stage 2 attendance letter, Meeting, Action Plan, and review.
- Further U codes and attendance below 90% - referral to Education Legal Intervention Team and Safeguarding Team.



5 Minutes Late 10 Minutes Late 15 Minutes Late 20 Minutes Late 30 Minutes Late

(Over one academic year)

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every-day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call or message via Arbor 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 will follow the process of safeguarding. This includes telephone calls to other emergency contacts, home visits, and referrals the police for a safe and well check.
- Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated (Attendance guidance 2024).

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.

Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (KCSIE 2024) Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

Additionally, the school will:

- 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 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 there will be contact with the Birmingham Local Authority whereby the following will be carried out:
- A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of ten sessions (usually equivalent to five school days) for any unauthorised absence within a rolling ten school week period. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years. For example, two sessions of unauthorised absence in the summer term and a further eight during the autumn term.

- An increase to the rate of a penalty notice from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at £80.
- A national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool must be considered (such as prosecution or another attendance legal interventions).

5.6 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. The school will issue attendance letters if the child’s attendance falls below 92%. This will additionally be reported on school reports and within parent meetings.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 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
- 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 four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may 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 (one day) – 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, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

6.2 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 someone 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.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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.

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

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

At St Michael's CE Primary School, we are committed to supporting students facing complex barriers to attendance. We address these challenges through the following strategies:

Early Identification and Assessment

- **Monitoring:** Track attendance patterns to identify students with frequent absences.
- **Assessment Meetings:** Discuss barriers with families to understand and address specific needs.
- **Resources:** Provide access to early help, health services, counselling, and academic support as needed.
- **Supportive Environment:** Ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive classroom setting with allocated key workers for pupils if needed.
- **Family Support:** Work closely with families, offering home visits and workshops to address challenges.
- **External Partnerships:** Collaborate with community organisations such as early help and social services for additional support.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Continuously review and adjust support plans based on the student's progress and changing needs.
- **Feedback:** Maintain open communication with families to ensure effective support.
- **Respect:** Handle all information sensitively and confidentially, focusing on solutions rather than blame.

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

St Michael's CE Primary School is dedicated to supporting students with mental or physical health issues and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Our approach includes:

- **Personalised Adjustments:** Make necessary accommodations such as alternative learning methods.
- **Regular Check-ins:** Maintain ongoing communication with families to understand and address the child's needs.
- **Specialist Services:** Provide access to school pastoral staff, health professionals, and tailored academic support.
- **SEND Provision:** Implement specific strategies and interventions as outlined in the child's SEND plan.

- **Partnership:** Work closely with parents and carers to ensure their child's needs are met both at home and school.
- **STICK Referrals:** For further support, we can seek a STICK referral through Birmingham City Council to access additional resources and assistance.
- **Progress Tracking:** Regularly review the effectiveness of support plans and make adjustments as necessary.
- **Feedback:** Ensure open lines of communication with families to support the student's well-being and academic progress.

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

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning, and positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects.

Key Principles:

- We should always keep in touch with a student/and his/her family during a long absence.
- We should always make sure he/she is welcomed back

Head Teacher and SENCO to consider a phased return where appropriate. This needs to be considered in line with Birmingham LA process and procedure, which includes seeking expert advice from relevant professionals and co-ordinating a multi-agency meeting. Consideration needs to be given to any special needs the pupil may have, and appropriate support identified.

Class Teachers should ensure that the pupil feels welcomed back to school in an appropriate way and take any necessary steps to support their re-integration.

8. Attendance monitoring

At St Michael's CE Primary School, we take a proactive approach to monitoring attendance and absence data to ensure students are attending school regularly and on time. Our strategies include:

Weekly Monitoring by Attendance Officer

- **Systematic Review:** The Attendance Officer reviews attendance and punctuality data on a weekly basis to identify trends and address any emerging issues.

Data Analysis

- **Detailed Analysis:** We systematically analyse attendance data to monitor patterns, identify persistent absentees, and evaluate the effectiveness of our attendance strategies.

- **Punctuality Tracking:** Punctuality is tracked alongside attendance to address any issues with late arrivals.

Regular Reporting

- **Reports:** Attendance and absence data is compiled into regular reports for review by SLT, the school governor responsible for attendance, and other relevant staff members, such as class teachers.

Parent and Student Engagement

- **Feedback:** We provide feedback to parents and students about their attendance records and work together to resolve any concerns.

Use of Attendance Software

- **Technology:** We utilise FFT and Arbor attendance management software to track and analyse data efficiently, ensuring timely identification of attendance issues.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

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

The school will:

- 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 severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- 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/or local authority) 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)

Procedures for persistent absence

We will follow the following process for addressing attendance concerns of all pupils. Whole School attendance will be monitored at a minimum of half termly. The attendance of pupils falling to persistent absence levels (below 90%) will be monitored weekly.

Step 1- Early Help- When there is a concerning pattern of attendance:

- Letter of concern will be sent home advising of the concerns and who to contact in school if support required.
- Offer of school-based support/Early Help made.
- Attendance will be monitored

Step 2- The School Attendance Review Meeting- child has at least one session of unauthorised absence:

- The School Attendance Liaison Person will call a formal School Attendance Review Meeting (SARM) at the school
- Offer of Early Help and support
- If a child has more than 3 periods of absences due to illnesses a medical letter is to be sent out saying proof is now required for future absences to be authorised
- Meeting with parent/ cares held to agree action plan, set targets, put an attendance contract in place and review dates.
- Reminder of parent's legal responsibilities.

Step 3- The Formal Warning Notice- Attendance fails to improve and there are further unauthorised absence:

- Formal Warning Notice sent

Step 4- Refer to ELIT (education legal intervention team)- Attendance fails to improve and targets are not met:

- School will complete an ELIT FAST-track referral form to begin the fine process

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by Mrs Roberts (Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Positive relationships and behaviour policy

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	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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