# St. James' Church of England Primary School

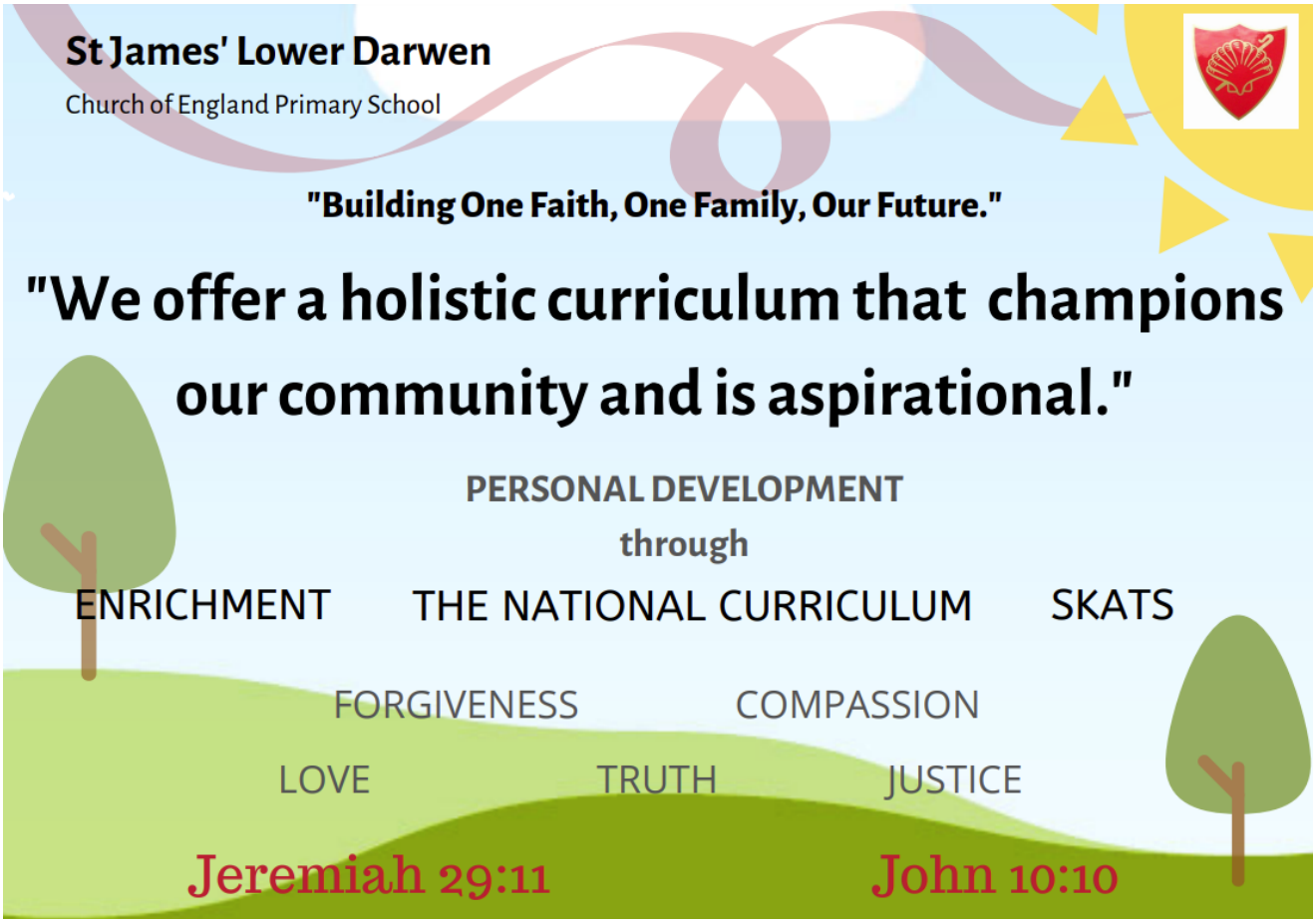
## 'Building One Faith, One Family, Our Future'

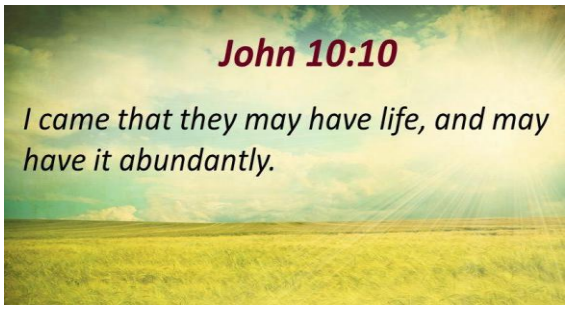
# Attendance Policy

Revised by M.Tindall, L. Jacques & J. Warwick - Autumn 2026
Approved by Governors – Autumn 2026

Review Date – Autumn 2027 (Resources Committee)

**Foundation, Vision and Intent**






We want our children to know that **God has a plan for them** that means **they live their best life possible.**

Each **policy** and procedure within school, alongside the ongoing **curriculum** delivery, our **SKATS** programme, **enrichment** and the **spiritual development** offered to our families through Worship, RE and our links with Church, work towards making this happen.

## Rationale

At St James' CE Primary School, we believe every minute in school matters. At St. James' we believe that children learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is also important that children arrive at school on time. It is equally important however, that children should not be at school if they are very unwell.

We want to ensure that all of our pupils receive their entitlement of a full-time education in order for each pupil to achieve their true potential. We recognise that poor attendance can result in lower attainment, and can impact on the personal, social and emotional development of pupils. Therefore, we strive to provide a welcoming and caring environment in which each member of the school community feels wanted and safe. Staff at St. James' will work alongside family members, and their children, to ensure that pupils at our school want to come to school every day and on time.

The school adopts a support-first approach to attendance. Where attendance becomes a concern, the school will work collaboratively with pupils, parents, carers and external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance before considering legal intervention wherever appropriate.

Parents have a legal duty to secure the regular attendance of their children at school. Local Authorities are charged with the duty of providing education and enforcing school attendance. It is in this context that absence is determined as authorised or not. Attendance registers are a source of evidence in legal proceedings for irregular attendance.

Children who are 'Missing in Education' due to non-attendance and children with low attendance may also be more vulnerable to CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) and CSE (Child sexual Exploitation).

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and continuity of learning, school places great importance in this area of school life.

## Identifying and Removing Barriers to Attendance

St James' CE Primary School recognises that poor attendance is often a symptom of wider barriers. The school will seek to understand the reasons behind absence and work collaboratively with families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance. Support may include pastoral support, early help, SEND support, mental health support, family support and multi-agency working.

Our Attendance Team:

# Attendance Team

Mrs. Jacques — Designated Safeguarding Lead

Miss Tindall — Headteacher

Mrs. Warwick — School Business Manager

Attendance Link Governor: Charlotte Cassidy-Garner

## Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance through:

- Fostering good habits of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieving a prompt and effective start to all school sessions.
- Keeping records of attendance in line with current legal requirements.
- Producing an active and effective monitoring system with strategies for encouraging good attendance.
- Working effectively with the LA and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and effectively.
- To safeguard children.
- To support families
- Acting early to address patterns of absences
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

## School Times

Our school opens at 8.45 am (Gates open at 8.40 am)
School closes at 3.15pm for all pupils.

## Legislation & Guidance

## 1. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) July 2026 Statutory Guidance, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 2. Roles & Responsibilities

2.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 2.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 2.3 The designated senior leader(s) responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Mrs Tindall & Mrs Jacques. Mrs Desai is the Attendance Admin Lead.

### 2.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. The register for the morning session opens at 8:45 am and closes at 9.15 am. The register for the afternoon session opens at 1pm and closes at 1:10pm.
- Promoting good attendance through supporting whole attendance strategies.
- Report any patterns/ absence concerns to the ISA.

### 2.6 School Office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/ listen to voicemails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to Mrs Jacques in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Conduct first-day call-backs/send text message to ascertain the whereabouts of a child who is absent
- Report any absence concerns to the ISA.

### 2.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day, and on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45 am on the day of the absence, or when reasonably possible, 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 school updated with changes to contact details.

### 2.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Be an attendance H.E.R.O (Here Every day Ready and On-time)

### 2.9 The Inclusion Officer (Blackburn with Darwen)

- The role of the inclusion officer is to work in partnership with school through a termly meetings to monitor impact of attendance strategies. When the final stage of the attendance escalation plan has been reached, it is the responsibility of the inclusion officer to utilise legal powers to enforce school attendance where necessary and appropriate.

## 3. Registers

The register is a legal document and is now electronically calculated twice a day. Only school staff have access to the register. No information from the register is to be shared with anyone other than authorised persons. All telephone queries must be validated before information can be provided.

The register has to be marked.

The school is required to record the attendance of every pupil on its roll and to show who is absent or late. For security reasons it is important that children arrive promptly as the doors are locked to ensure the safety of all the children in school. In the event of a late arrival, entry will always be via the main entrance to school. The register officially closes at 9.15am, however, the school expects children to be in school at 8.45am. If a child arrives after 9.15 it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (using code **u**).

## 4. Register Monitoring

Inclusion Officer: Once per term
Headteacher: Daily
Attendance Team: Daily
Class Teacher: Daily
Governors: Termly

## 5. Lates

Pupils will be actively encouraged to arrive at school within the prescribed times. The InVentry system is used at the main entrance to the school. It is used to record late arrivals and reasons for being late. If an unaccompanied child arrives late on a regular basis, their parent or carer will

be informed by letter, email, or phone call. Class teachers are to inform the Headteacher of any concerns they have or patterns that appear.

## 6. Absence from School

If a child cannot go to school because they are ill, parents should notify the school by telephone, text message, e-mail or by telling the class teacher before 8.45 am on the day of absence.

## 7. Attendance and SEND/Medical Needs

St James' recognises that some pupils face barriers to attendance related to SEND, disability, physical health, mental health or emotional wellbeing. In such circumstances the school will work with parents, relevant professionals and external agencies to identify appropriate support and reasonable adjustments. Time-limited phased returns may be considered where appropriate and in line with DfE guidance.

## 8. Young carers and children with a social worker

Particular consideration will be given to pupils who are:

- Children with a social worker
- Previously looked after children
- Young carers
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils experiencing mental health difficulties

## 9. Reluctance to go to School

Sometimes children get anxious about leaving home and going to school. They may tell parents they have a headache or tummy ache or that they feel sick. Parents my notice they are worried about school from things they say. Parents are encouraged to mention any concerns they have to the class teacher or Mrs Jacques our pupil wellbeing co-ordinator.

Things to remember if your child seems anxious about going to school:

- check any problems your child has told you with the class teacher;
- take any worries seriously but don't make them worse by seeming to be very worried yourself;
- don't give in and let your child stay at home. It is better to send them to school and have a word with the class teacher;
- try to talk about school in a positive way, for example, "What was good about school today?"
- be sensitive but firm about going to school.

## 10. Appointments

School expects that all non-urgent appointments e.g. Dentist or Optician will be made in the holidays, at the weekend or after school. Where an appointment is made during the school day and cannot be changed to a more convenient time. The school will not routinely require medical evidence. Medical evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness, or where it helps the school better understand and support a pupil's attendance needs.

## 11. **Recording attendance**

### 9.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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. See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The reason for illness
- 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45 am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open by the office until 9.15 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:10pm.

### 9.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### 9.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and parents must sign their children out of school and when they return, sign them back in.

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

### 9.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives after 8:45 am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. Pupils who arrive after 9:15 am will be marked as an unauthorised late arrival. A pupil who arrives after 8:45 am is required to use the sign-in system at the school office before going to class.
The office staff/ ISA will regularly monitor punctuality and conduct phone calls when appropriate. The ISA will also analyse data termly in relation to children who are persistently late and, alongside the designated Senior Leader for attendance, they will address any on-going issues.

### 9.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call/ text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the absence will be unauthorised and school will to monitor in the subsequent days
- 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
- Call/ text the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider conducting a home visit and email them about the home visit. Where school have been unsuccessful in ascertaining the whereabouts of a child, the police may be contacted and a welfare check requested.
- For vulnerable pupils, home visits will be conducted by the safeguarding team on the first day if necessary. During the home visit, they will observe anything suspicious, or a cause for concern. If deemed appropriate, these concerns will be passed onto external agencies for support.

### 9.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via:

- Parents evenings
- letters for attendance that meet threshold/ trigger points (see procedure flowchart)
- letters/texts when attendance has improved;
- informal and formal meetings when a child's attendance continues to drop.
- Letters of positive attendance termly.
- Praise postcards sent home.
- Home webpage

**Absence Due to Illness- 15 Days Alert Process**

The DFE's 'Working Together to Improve School attendance' guidance requires all schools to provide a sickness return to the Blackburn with Darwen Inclusion Team for all compulsory school age pupils who have been recorded with code I (illness). This alert will be made either when a pupil has had 15 days of continuous (or cumulative) absence for illness **or** where the school believes that they will miss 15 days because of this.
This is to help school and the local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs. This is in line with the statutory guidance on arranging Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (Section 19 duties).

**10 Day Absence Data Return**

School is required to submit 10 days (20 sessions) **unauthorised** absence data (with register codes G, O, or U) to the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Inclusion Team, in accordance with the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' guidance. This will be submitted to the school's Inclusion Officer at the end of every month, when applicable.

## 12. **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### 10.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be '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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request as well as previous attendance figures. It should be noted that authroised absences also affect a child's overall attendance.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 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.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments- although we strongly encourage that these are made outside of the school day
- Religious observance –

  St. James' Lower Darwen acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance, such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha and Diwali. In such cases, school will authorise 1 day of leave for pupils on the day of the celebration. Parents must notify school of the absence in accordance with the attendance policy or as soon as reasonably possible. A Discretionary Leave of Absence Form is not required for such an absence.

- Traveller pupils 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 a family decides to take Discretionary Leave of Absence without authorisation and the child does not return to school by the 21st day, the child may be removed from roll.

### 10.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.
The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent, for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days, with no option for a discounted rate.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

**13. Education Supervision Order**

An education supervision order (ESO) is a formal legal intervention once all voluntary support has been exhausted. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

Education supervision orders initially last for one year. The local authority will notify parents in writing of the intention to proceed to an ESO, and will set up a meeting to discuss it with the parent. Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000.

**14. Strategies for promoting attendance**

We actively encourage and promote good attendance throughout school. We treat attendance as everyone's responsibility. Some of the strategies we use for rewarding and improving attendance include:

- Celebrating class weekly attendance winners during celebration worship. The winners receive a trophy for the week and the news is shared on the school newsletter, the website and on attendance posters around school.

- School level intervention checklist is used to support families.

- Sharing weekly attendance on the school home page.

- Having a clear display for attendance in the entrance hall celebrating good attendance

- Leaders meet and greet children in the yard at the start of the day, and teachers meet and greet children at classroom doors. We do this to ensure that all children get a positive interaction at the start of the day.

- Planning engaging lessons, and ensuring there are many wider opportunities planned for the children such as a range of trips and visits, special themed days in school and outside agencies such as Rocksteady.

- Rewarding those with 98% or above attendance with a HERO praise postcard.

- Rewarding children with 100% attendance at the end of the year.

- Holding parent induction meetings regarding attendance to ensure that we all work together to improve attendance

- Encouraging pupils and parents through messages on class dojo/class emails and daily conversations if needed.

- Sending well done messages/letters when attendance improves.

## 15. **Attendance monitoring**

### 13.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor the attendance and absence data weekly at a class and school level.
- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly at an individual pupil level, and group level (Pupil Premium, SEND, Boys, Girls)
- Conduct daily/ weekly/ fortnightly/ or monthly checks as appropriate on a pupil who is causing concern and has been escalated.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### 13.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

### 13.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Extract regular attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 13.4 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.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Please see the Attendance Procedure Flow Chart for the procedures for dealing with poor attendance (appendix 2)

## 16. **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and annually by the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance.

## 17. School Procedures

Our benchmark attendance targets change and are monitored regularly by school staff, school leaders, the Inclusion Officers, Governors and the Local Authority. Expected attendance is at least 96% and to help achieve this we operate the following procedures:

1. Absences are reviewed daily. Office staff will confirm with class staff who the absent children are after the register has closed. For children where we have received no explanation, a text or email is sent home asking for reasons of absence. Where there is a response it is recorded on the register.

2. Where there is no response by lunchtime, children are recorded on the register as 'o'. Following this:
    - For those children whom persistent absence is and has been an issue through school, this will be recorded on C-Poms by the office staff and form part of the discussions at attendance meetings.
    - For all other children a phone call will be made to try to establish the reasons for the absence. Where the attendance team are concerned, a wellbeing home visit may take place. This will then be recorded on C-Poms.

3. Attendance is reviewed weekly to identify children or families who need support and to try to establish any patterns in attendance. From this, there may be a phone call home to establish reasons for absence and to support families. Families may at this point be invited to a meeting where school may seek to implement an 'Attendance Contract' (See Appendix A).

4. Persistent Absentees will be monitored closely and discussed at termly meetings with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer. They will check our registers and discuss actions to improve attendance. At this point discussions will take place and short term action plans made with the purpose of improving attendance. Actions will vary from family to family. After all avenues have been explored, school may make an official referral to the Inclusion Officer. This will mean the officer will contact the family and may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice.

## 18. Organisation

Office staff will monitor daily attendance and seek advice from the school 'Attendance Team' (M.Tindall, L. Jacques and J. Warwick) in line with this policy to monitor attendance accurately and effectively.

The Attendance Team will discuss cases and issues relating to pupil attendance at least weekly.

The Inclusion Officer should have access to a confidential and secure space for the purpose of monitoring registers on their termly visit. They will use this time to meet with the Attendance Team and plan for improving individual and collective attendance.

Managing requests for extended leave of absence from school are outlined in the Discretionary Leave of Absence' Policy.

Medical notes and letters from parents are kept in a secure place.

Rewards for attendance are reviewed regularly and may include individual certificates and class rewards. Some of these rewards are for punctuality as well as attendance.

St. James' school acknowledges that rewarding children for attendance can be something that divides opinion. Parents and carers are welcome to give feedback on this via the usual means and all feedback will be considered by school leaders.

The school governor Resources Committee will review the procedures and policy relating to attendance every two years.

## Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a unique Police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership which ensures that a child's school is informed, prior to the start of the next school day, that there has been an incident of Domestic Abuse to which the child or young person has been exposed, and which might then have an impact on them in school the following day.

Each school is informed of all Domestic Abuse incidents, not just those where an offence can be identified or those which are graded as high risk. The partnership recognises that all incidents of Domestic Abuse can be harmful to children and young people.

This information will be shared throughout the year, including school holidays and the weekends. Information will only be shared with the school by the police where it is identified that a young person was present, witnessed or was involved in a domestic abuse incident.

A nominated member of staff, known as a Key Adult, has been trained to liaise with the police. At St James' our Key Adult is **Mrs Jacques***.* She will be able to use information that has been shared with her, in confidence, to ensure that the school makes provision for possible difficulties experienced by children or their families. The Key Adults will keep this information confidential, and will only share it on a need to know basis, for instance, to teaching staff for the child or young person. It will not be shared with other school students.

## Children Missing from Education (CME)

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, all staff are aware that if children go missing, this can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. St James' CE Primary School knows that early intervention is key to identifying any risk and to prevent the risk of a child going missing in the future.

School are updated annually on the procedures which are to be taken in the case of a Child Missing in Education. School are required to inform the local authority about the details of:

- All children who are believed to have moved out of the Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) geographical area after the school has undertaken reasonable enquiries (to be completed within 10 school days) and the child's whereabouts have still not been confirmed.
- Children who have been absent without the school's permission for a continued period of 10 days
- Children who have failed to return to school for 10 days beyond the expected return date following a leave of absence period
- Children who have relocated abroad
- All Gypsy Romany Traveller children who school believes have gone travelling without securing prior agreement and/or confirming a return date
- Children who are withdrawn from school, but parents are unwilling or unable to say where or how their child will continue to be educated.

In a case of CME, the school needs to make reasonable enquires and the Attendance Team must:

- Obtain as much information as possible from parents before relocation
- Maintain contact with parents following relocation
- Confirm admission with the receiving school
- Make a home visit if possible
- Make general enquiries amongst friendship groups
- Establish contact with all named people on the child's record.

Relevant CME forms will be completed and sent to the Inclusion and Place Planning Team.

Circumstances when a CME notification is not required:

- Those children who move out of the BwD are and their whereabouts has been confirmed – these children will be reported to the Local Authority using a 'Deletion from School Roll Notification' form
- In 'truancy' cases where a child's unauthorized absence has already been formally referred to the Inclusion Officer
- Children with long-term medical or mental health needs whose absence has been verified by a health professional.

## Conclusion

The responsibility for attendance and punctuality lies with parents/carers. The school aims to share this responsibility with them by ensuring that all children are punctual and keen to attend. Where there are problems we hope to overcome them sensitively and in compliance with legal requirements.

## Links to Other Policies

Children Missing Education Policy
Discretionary Leave of Absence Policy
Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

## Appendix A – Attendance Contract (Example)

**Attendance Contract**
**(children of compulsory school age)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Child's name: | |
| DOB: | |
| School/NCY: | |
| Mobile number | |
| Parent's name(s): | |
| Address(es): | |
| Tel: | |

| |
|---|
| Senior staff member with overall responsibility: |
| Member of staff responsible day-to-day: |
| Contact number (and when is the best time to call?): |
| Local Authority Officer (if applicable):<br>Contact details: |

We are going to work together in making sure that the above named child improves their attendance at school over the next (three months).

**Current attendance (%) and other information, including number of absences and what has been tried before:**

……...

**The specific targets of our plan. What we aim to do by (date):**

**Achieving these targets**

**I/we (the parents) agree to:**
(please detail)

**We (the school) agree to:**
(please detail)

**Officers of local authority agree to:**
(please detail)

**Comments by the child/young person:**

……...

**<u>Agreeing to the contract:</u>**

**Consent by parent(s)**

I/we have agreed to this Parenting Contract and will

(a) work with the school (and council) as detailed above, to improve my/our child's school attendance, and

(b) carry out what we have promised to do.

I/we also agree to information being shared with other professionals and agencies as required to help us.

**I/we understand that if my child has any unauthorised absences from school in the next (three months), a Penalty Notice or prosecution may follow without further warning. This agreement may be given as part of the evidence.**

**Signed (Parent/s):**

**……**

**……**

**Signed (on behalf of the school/governing body/local authority)**

**……**

**……** **Date:-……**

*Appendix 1: DFE Codes*

Appendix 1: attendance codes
The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance- updated September 2024

| | |
|---|---|
| **Attending the school** | |
| / \ | 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 pupil not required to attend school |
| C2 | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil 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 pupil 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 pupil not on admission register |
| # | Planned whole school closure |

*Appendix 2: Attendance Flow Chart*

# Attendance Procedure Flow Chart

Attendance Monitored weekly. Under 96% data collected and monitored.

Vulnerable groups and known persistent absences monitored separately.

↓

**Attendance triggers 6 missed sessions (3 days)**

Attendance team to send out a letter to parent (s)/carers requesting improvement in attendance and offering support from school or school nurse or family support.

↓

**Attendance triggers 12 missed sessions (6 days)**

Attendance team to invite parent (s) for a meeting to discuss improving attendance.
Sign the attendance contract if needed.
No further
authorised absence for illness without medical evidence.

↓

**Attendance triggers 16 missed sessions (8 days)**

Attendance team to invite parent (s) for a meeting to discuss improving attendance.
Attendance contract signed.

Monitor improvement within 2 weeks intervals and discuss further absences.

If improvements have been made—phone calls to praise achievement.

↓

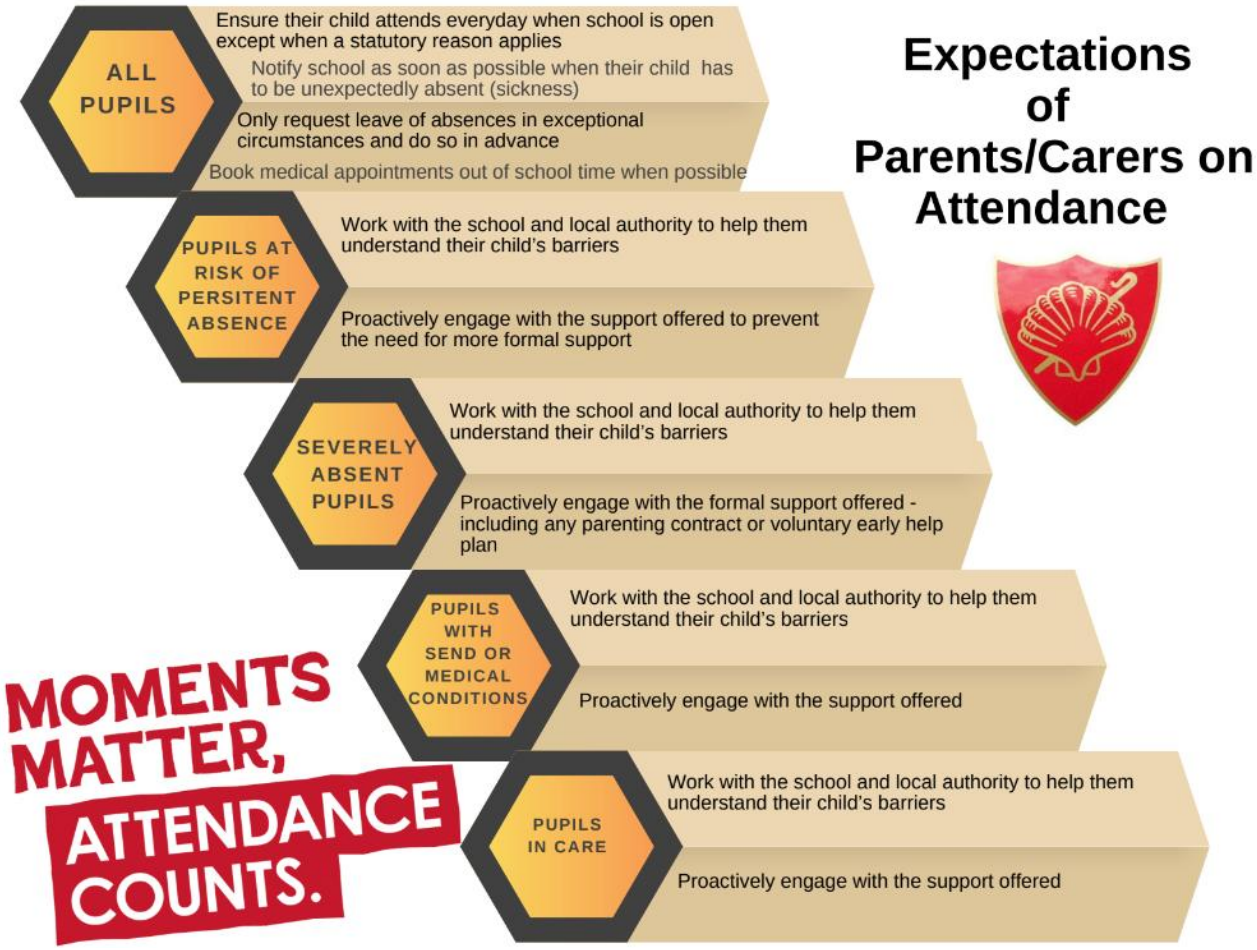
**Attendance triggers 20 missed sessions (10 days)**

Absence Team (MD) to contact Ismail requesting Inclusion Team's involvement.

Inclusion Team to contact parent and warn of consequences for further absence.

Inclusion Team to discuss legal consideration (complex case panel for legal sanctions.).

*Expectations of Parents/Carers*



*Summary for Parents*

# School Attendance - Parent/Carer Guide

## Our Mission

At St James' we believe good attendance is vital for a child to achieve their full potential. We aim to promote good attendance by providing a safe and motivating environment for all children.
As a team, we will together break down any barriers a child or family may have to accessing their education.
Every child matters, every day matters.

## 1 Parent/Carer Home agreement

Parents/ carers AND school both have a legal duty for attendance.
It is a legal requirement for each and every child to access regular education.

## 2 Support

If you need support with your child's attendance, please reach out to a member of the attendance team, or inform your child's class teacher.

## 3 What is PA?

PA stands for 'Persistently absent'. This is when your child's attendance is below 90%

What is risk of PA?
Risk of PA is when your child's attendance is at risk of dropping below 90%- we aim to offer early intervention support before this stage.

## 4 What is an EPN?

EPN stands for 'Education penalty notices'
EPN's are issued for unauthorised absences, this includes term time holidays.

## 5 I'll just go on holiday and pay the fine...

EPN's have now been capped nationally at TWO fines within any 3 year period. After this, other action like a parenting order or prosecution has to be considered- this could mean a fine of up to £2500!

E-mail: office@stjameslowerdarwen.blackburn.sch.uk
Website: https://www.stjameslowerdarwen.co.uk/

*Please also refer to the full attendance policy that can be found on our school website*

CONTACT US

## ATTENDANCE TEAM

Headteacher:
Miss Tindall

Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Mrs Jacques

Attendance Admin Lead:
Mrs Warwick

Telephone:
01254 698656

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## 6 What is an unauthorised attendance?

A child being kept off school unnecessarily or without good reason.
Term time holidays is not a justified reason to take your child out of school.

## 7 What happens if I keep my child off, and don't contact school?

School will call home to try and obtain a reason for absence- if no reason is provided school may carry out a visit to your home- this is to check on the welfare of you and your child.

## 8 Expectations

If your child is going to be absent from school- you must contact the school office before 9.00 am to provide a reason for absence.

## 9 Medical Evidence

If your child is absent from school and is at risk of becoming persistently absent (at risk of falling below 90%) you will be required to provide medical evidence for your child's absences.
This way, we can make sure absences are authorised.

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

## 10 Punctuality

If your child arrives to school after registration closes your child will receive an unauthorised late mark- this affects your child's attendance.
You must accompany your child to sign in at the office when arriving late.

## Every Day Counts

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 100% attendance | 0 days missed | No learning missed! |
| 97% attendance | 10 sessions (5 Days) | A weeks learning missed |
| 94% attendance | 24 sessions (12 days) | 2 weeks and 2 days learning |
| 90% attendance | 38 sessions (19 days) | 3 weeks and 4 days learning |
| 85 % attendance | 60 sessions (30 days) | 6 weeks of learning missed |
| 80% attendance | 80 sessions (40 days) | 8 weeks of learning missed |

## Every Minutes Counts

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Always on time! | No hours missed! | No learning missed! |
| 5 minutes late each day | 15 hours missed | 3 days, (6 sessions), learning missed |
| 10 minutes late every day | 32 hours missed | 6.5 days, (13 sessions), learning missed |
| 20 minutes late each day | 65 hours missed | 13 days, (26 sessions), learning missed |
| 30 minutes late each day | 95 hours missed | 19 days, (38 sessions), learning missed |

**90% attendance' or 'only 5 minutes late' may sound like small issues, but the amount of learning missed is huge!**
**Make each day count.**

# School Attendance - Parent/Carer Guide

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.....

## How do we celebrate good attendance?

Celebrating our children's attendance achievements is key to keeping our children motivated and engaged.

We celebrate attendance in so many ways such as:

Class of the week

Individual half termly praise postcards

Half termly class prizes

Individual attendance recognition awards

And most importantly celebrating our children's 'small wins' every single day!

.....

## Attendance HERO
## (Here Everyday Ready On time)