

ATTENDANCE POLICY



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL

Educational excellence for our City

Responsible Board	Curriculum and Welfare Committee
Policy Officer	S Hall
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Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance.....	3
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	4
4. Recording attendance	10
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	12
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	15
7. Attendance Monitoring and Intervention	15
9. Sixth form attendance	18
10. Links with other policies	19

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 and the Guidance on working together to improve school attendance (2024) and from Birmingham City Council attendance strategy (2026 to 2029), 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
- To 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 *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (applies from 19 August 2024) and *School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures*.

It also reflects the expectations set out in the Birmingham City Council School Attendance Strategy 2026–2029, which promotes a city-wide, multi-agency approach to improving attendance and is underpinned by the principle that “*attendance is everyone's business*”.

The policy aligns with both national and local frameworks, recognising that effective attendance practice requires early intervention, strong relationships with families, and coordinated support from schools, the local authority, and wider partners.

The guidance is based on the following legislation, which sets 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

In addition, this policy reflects:

- Birmingham City Council Education Legal Intervention and attendance procedures
- Birmingham's graduated response model to attendance, including early intervention, targeted support, and statutory intervention as a last resort
- The expectation that schools work in partnership with families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance through a relational and restorative approach

The policy also refers to:

- School Census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Together, these frameworks ensure that the school delivers a **balanced approach**, combining statutory responsibilities with professional judgement and a strong emphasis on early support, inclusion, and safeguarding.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The school recognises that **attendance is everyone's responsibility**.

Improving attendance requires a whole-school, relational approach, with students, families, staff, and external partners working together to remove barriers and support regular attendance.

Professional judgement will be applied in all cases to ensure responses are proportionate, supportive and responsive to individual circumstances.

3.1 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and engage with their education
- Arrive on time to all lessons
- Communicate any barriers to attendance with staff so that support can be provided
- Take responsibility for catching up on missed work following absence
- Follow school procedures when leaving site during the school day

Students will be supported to meet these expectations through the school's graduated response to attendance, with increasing support provided where concerns arise.

3.2 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

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Notify the school of absence on the first day by 8:45am via Studybugs
- Provide valid reasons for absence and engage openly with the school
- Request planned absences in advance wherever possible
- Avoid unnecessary term-time absence
- Work in partnership with the school to remove barriers to attendance
- Engage with support and interventions where concerns arise

The school recognises that attendance difficulties are often complex. Parents will be supported through a relational and collaborative approach, consistent with Birmingham City Council's emphasis on early help and partnership working.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Providing strategic leadership and promoting a culture of high attendance
- Ensuring a **graduated and supportive approach** to attendance is implemented across the school
- Monitoring attendance data regularly to identify patterns, trends, and emerging concerns
- Ensuring early intervention where attendance begins to decline (typically below 95%)
- Overseeing targeted interventions and ensuring appropriate escalation where needed
- Applying professional judgement to determine the most appropriate support and, where necessary, sanctions
- Working in partnership with parents, students, and external agencies
- Ensuring the school fulfils its statutory duties, including liaison with the local authority
- Supporting staff to understand their role in improving attendance
- Ensuring that vulnerable students, including those with SEND or safeguarding concerns, receive appropriate support

The designated senior leader will also ensure alignment with Birmingham City Council procedures, engaging local authority support where school-based interventions have not secured improvement.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr S. Hall and can be contacted via email at S.Hall@ast.kevibham.org

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data to identify patterns, trends, and emerging concerns
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff, and highlighting concerns to the designated senior leader for attendance and the Headteacher
- Supporting the implementation of the school's graduated response to attendance, ensuring that students receive appropriate and timely intervention
- Arranging and coordinating formal attendance meetings with students and families where attendance becomes a sustained concern, ensuring that records are kept and actions are followed up
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records, including contributing to the School Attendance Tracker
- Working closely with Year Leaders, the DSL, and other staff to identify barriers to attendance and support appropriate interventions

- Supporting referrals to external agencies, including Birmingham City Council, where school-based interventions have not secured sufficient improvement
- Contributing to multi-agency working, including coordinating or supporting meetings where appropriate
- Undertaking home visits where necessary, as part of a supportive and safeguarding-informed approach
- Supporting the school in the appropriate use of legal interventions, including penalty notices and parenting contracts, in line with local authority guidance
- Liaising with the local authority and supporting legal processes where required

All actions will be underpinned by professional judgement, with a focus on early support, removing barriers to attendance, and ensuring that intervention is proportionate to the level of need.

3.5 Form tutors

Form tutors play a key role in the school's early identification and support (Stage 1) within the graduated response to attendance.

Form tutors are expected to:

- Monitor the attendance and punctuality of all students within their form on a regular basis
- Promote high expectations for attendance and support students to maintain strong attendance (typically 95% and above)
- Hold supportive attendance conversations with students where attendance begins to decline, identifying any emerging barriers
- Complete morning registers accurately and promptly by 8:50am, ensuring that no registration mark is left blank
- Follow up concerns about absence and seek clarification where reasons are unclear or inconsistent, referring to the Year Leader where appropriate
- Record relevant information on the School Attendance Tracker and/or CPOMS to ensure a clear record of concerns and actions
- Communicate attendance concerns to the Year Leader in a timely manner, particularly where patterns of absence or lateness emerge
- Work collaboratively with Student Services and pastoral staff to ensure that all absences are followed up appropriately
- Support students in catching up on missed learning following absence
- Monitor punctuality and address repeated lateness through early intervention, applying appropriate and proportionate responses in line with school procedures

All actions should be underpinned by professional judgement, with a focus on early intervention, positive relationships, and removing barriers to attendance before concerns escalate.

3.6 School Student Services Staff

School student services staff play a key role in the daily monitoring and early response to attendance, ensuring that absence is identified, followed up promptly, and communicated effectively.

They will:

- Ensure that all attendance registers are completed accurately for both morning and afternoon sessions, and follow up any missing marks promptly
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of absence (by 10:30am) where no reason has been provided, in line with safeguarding expectations
- Record and communicate absence information clearly to form tutors, Year Leaders, and relevant pastoral staff to support timely intervention
- Maintain accurate records of communication with parents/carers
- Monitor closely the attendance of students identified as vulnerable, including those on safeguarding or priority support lists, escalating concerns where necessary
- Work collaboratively with pastoral staff to support the school's graduated response to attendance, ensuring early concerns are addressed quickly
- Ensure that all students arriving after registration follow sign-in procedures and that an accurate record is maintained

Reception staff will maintain a log of students signing in after the close of registration.

3.7 Year Leader

Year Leaders play a central role in the school's graduated response to attendance, leading targeted and formal interventions (typically Stages 3–5) where attendance concerns persist.

The Year Leader is expected to:

- Promote and reinforce high expectations for attendance through tutor teams and year group systems
- Oversee the quality and accuracy of registration within their year group, ensuring that concerns are identified promptly
- Monitor attendance data regularly (at least fortnightly), identifying patterns, trends, and students requiring additional support
- Lead targeted attendance interventions where early concerns have not improved, working closely with form tutors and the attendance team
- Act as the main point of contact for parents/carers where attendance concerns become more significant
- Initiate timely and supportive communication with parents where attendance declines, applying professional judgement rather than relying solely on fixed thresholds

- Arrange and lead formal attendance meetings with students and families, identifying barriers and agreeing appropriate support strategies
- Develop, implement, and review attendance plans or contracts, ensuring these are monitored and adapted as needed
- Work in partnership with the Director of Inclusion, DSL, and attendance staff to ensure a coordinated response to attendance concerns
- Contribute to and maintain accurate records, including the School Attendance Tracker and CPOMS where appropriate
- Identify students who may require multi-agency support, and contribute to or lead referrals and meetings where necessary
- Plan for and support the reintegration of students following long-term absence, including coordinating academic and pastoral support
- Ensure that vulnerable students, including those with SEND or safeguarding needs, receive appropriate and tailored support

All actions will be underpinned by professional judgement, with a focus on:

- Early identification of barriers
- Building positive relationships with families
- Providing targeted and proportionate support
- Escalating concerns appropriately where improvement is not secured

Where school-based strategies have not led to improvement, the Year Leader will support escalation to senior leadership and, where appropriate, engagement with Birmingham City Council processes.

3.8 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy across the school and promoting a culture where attendance is a high priority for all
- Providing strategic leadership on attendance, ensuring that the school adopts a graduated, relational, and inclusive approach to improving attendance
- Monitoring whole-school attendance data and trends, and evaluating the impact of attendance strategies and interventions
- Holding staff to account for the consistent application of the school's attendance systems and expectations
- Ensuring that appropriate escalation takes place where attendance does not improve, including oversight of the later stages of the school's graduated response (Stages 5–7)
- Making decisions regarding the use of legal interventions, including penalty notices, in line with statutory guidance and local authority procedures
- Authorising the designated senior leader responsible for attendance to issue penalty notices where appropriate

- Ensuring that the school works effectively in partnership with Birmingham City Council and other external agencies, including engagement with attendance intervention processes where required
- Ensuring that vulnerable students, including those with safeguarding concerns or SEND, receive appropriate and proportionate support
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality clearly and regularly to students, parents, and the wider community

All decisions will be informed by professional judgement, ensuring that responses to attendance concerns are proportionate, supportive, and responsive to individual circumstances, while fulfilling the school's statutory responsibilities.

3.9 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations for attendance across the school, ensuring that attendance is recognised as a key priority linked to attainment, safeguarding, and wellbeing
- Ensuring that school leaders fulfil their statutory duties in relation to attendance, including:
 - Ensuring that attendance is recorded accurately and reported in line with DfE and local authority requirements
 - Ensuring that the school works effectively with local partners, including Birmingham City Council, to remove barriers to attendance and support pupils and families
- Promoting a culture where attendance is everyone's responsibility, reflected consistently across school policies and ethos
- Ensuring that the school's attendance systems, including its graduated response to attendance, are implemented effectively and consistently
- Ensuring that appropriate support is prioritised for pupils who need it most, including vulnerable groups and those at risk of persistent or severe absence
- Maintaining high aspirations for all pupils, while ensuring that support is responsive to individual needs and circumstances
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data, using this to hold leaders to account and focus improvement efforts on identified pupils and cohorts
- Working with school leaders to set strategic priorities and targets for attendance, and providing both support and challenge
- Monitoring whole-school attendance trends and evaluating the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions
- Where attendance is a concern, working with school leaders to develop and monitor a clear action plan for improvement

The governing board will also:

- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and development so they understand:

- The importance of good attendance and its impact on outcomes
- That absence is often an indicator of wider needs requiring support
- The school's legal responsibilities and procedures for recording and monitoring attendance
- The school's systems for early identification, intervention, and escalation, including partnership working
- Ensure that staff with specific attendance responsibilities receive targeted training, including the use and interpretation of attendance data
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the effective implementation of this policy and the impact of attendance strategies

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our AM attendance register during registration at the start of each school day and during period 5 for PM attendance. 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 8:40 am and ends at 3:35 pm

Pupils must arrive at school by 8:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session (AM) will be taken at the beginning of registration and will be kept open until 9:05. The register for the second session (PM) will be taken at the beginning of period 5 and will be kept open until 2:45.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45 or as soon as practically possible. This can be done via Studybugs

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should request planned absence via Studybugs as soon as possible.

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the 'L' code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the 'U' code

Students arriving late before the register has closed twice or more in a week will be issued a lunchtime detention

Students arriving after registers have closed will be issued with a same date lunchtime detention, and this will negatively affect their overall attendance.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school reserves the right to issue a notice to improve, a penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2) as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via their regular reports. Parents can also access their child attendance data at any time via the Edulink app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and before the absence has started. Leave of absence should be requested via Studybugs.

5.2 Sanctions and Legal Intervention

The school will use a range of strategies to improve attendance, including support, intervention and, where necessary, sanctions.

Sanctions are not used in isolation and will always form part of the school's graduated response to attendance, with a strong emphasis on early support, removing barriers, and working in partnership with families.

Decisions regarding sanctions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis, informed by professional judgement and in line with statutory guidance and local authority procedures.

Penalty Notices

The Headteacher (or a member of staff authorised by them), the local authority, or the police may issue a penalty notice (fine) for unauthorised absence where a child is of compulsory school age.

The school will work in partnership with Birmingham City Council before issuing a penalty notice and will provide all required documentation.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the most appropriate next step to improve attendance
- Whether appropriate support and intervention have already been offered and implemented
- Whether a notice to improve or further intervention would be a more suitable course of action
- Whether any obligations 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.

Each parent who is responsible for the offence may receive a penalty notice.

Payment must be made directly to the local authority. If payment is not received within 28 days, the local authority may decide to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

- A first penalty notice: £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days
- A second penalty notice: £160 if paid within 28 days
- A third offence within 3 years: a further penalty notice will not be issued, and alternative legal action may be taken

Notices to Improve

Where the national threshold has been met and support has been offered but not engaged with, the school may issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with the Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and associated concerns
- The legal responsibilities of parents under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of support already provided
- Opportunities for further support
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance does not improve
- A defined improvement period (typically 3–6 weeks)
- Clear expectations for what improvement looks like
- The circumstances in which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Use of Legal Intervention

Legal intervention will always be considered a last resort, used when:

- Support has been offered but not engaged with, or
- Support has not resulted in sufficient improvement, and
- The threshold for legal action has been met

The school will work in partnership with Birmingham City Council to ensure that any legal action is proportionate, appropriate, and in the best interests of the child.

5.3 Absences for religious reasons

The school recognises the importance of supporting students to observe key religious events.

Generally, up to 2 days' absence per academic year will be authorised for religious observance, where the day is exclusively set apart for that purpose by the religious body to which the parent and student belong.

Requests for absence due to religious observance must be:

- Made in advance, wherever possible
- Submitted via the school's leave of absence request process

For major and widely observed religious events (e.g. Eid), the school may provide a specific process (such as a dedicated email address) to streamline requests, and this will be communicated to parents in advance of the observance.

The school will authorise absence for valid religious observance in line with statutory guidance. However, requests for absence on days that are not formally recognised as days of religious observance by the relevant faith group will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and may be recorded as unauthorised where appropriate.

All decisions will be guided by professional judgement, ensuring that they are fair, consistent, and sensitive to the needs of students and families.

5.4 Work Experience (Sixth Form)

Sixth form students may have the opportunity to undertake work experience where this supports their educational progress, career aspirations, and personal development.

Any student wishing to undertake work experience during term time must:

- Submit a formal written request to the Head of Sixth Form in advance of the proposed placement
- Clearly outline:
 - The nature of the work experience
 - Dates and duration
 - How the placement supports their academic or career pathway
- Provide any required supporting information, such as employer details or risk assessment documentation where applicable

Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with approval granted at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form. In making a decision, the school will consider:

- The student's current attendance record and engagement
- The potential impact on learning and academic progress
- The educational value of the placement

- Safeguarding and health and safety considerations

Approved work experience will be recorded appropriately, and expectations regarding attendance at lessons outside agreed absence will remain in place.

Where a request is not approved, the student will be expected to attend school as normal.

All decisions will be guided by professional judgement, ensuring that opportunities are equitable, appropriate, and aligned with the student's best interests.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school actively promotes the importance of good attendance and punctuality as part of its commitment to high standards, student wellbeing, and academic success. Attendance expectations are communicated clearly and consistently to students and parents through a range of approaches, including:

- Regular discussion of attendance and punctuality in form time
- Assemblies highlighting the link between attendance, attainment, and future outcomes
- Ongoing communication with parents, including reports and attendance alerts where attendance begins to decline

The school adopts a proactive and positive approach, ensuring that concerns are identified early and addressed through supportive intervention in line with the school's graduated response to attendance.

Good and improving attendance is recognised and celebrated through:

- Certificates and awards presented in assemblies
- Positive communication with parents/carers
- Recognition of sustained improvement over time

This balanced approach ensures that attendance is both actively promoted and supported, with a focus on building a culture where all students understand the value of attending school regularly and feel encouraged to do so.

7. Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

Where monitoring indicates that a student's attendance and/or punctuality is below the expected standard, the school will implement a graduated and staged response in line with its Attendance Strategy.

This approach prioritises early identification, support, and intervention, ensuring that barriers to attendance are addressed promptly and effectively.

Interventions may include:

- Supportive meetings with the student and/or their family to identify and address barriers to attendance
- Targeted monitoring, such as daily attendance or punctuality reports

- Pastoral support, mentoring, or referral to appropriate internal support systems
- Adjustments or personalised strategies to support attendance, particularly for vulnerable students
- Engagement with external agencies and multi-agency support where appropriate
- Home visits, where necessary, as part of a safeguarding and support-led response
- The use of sanctions, where appropriate, as part of a proportionate and balanced approach

The school's response will be proportionate and responsive, with students moving through stages of support where attendance does not improve, and stepping back where improvement is sustained.

Where patterns of poor attendance persist despite appropriate support and intervention, the school will consider escalation to formal and legal processes, in partnership with Birmingham City Council and in line with statutory guidance.

All decisions will be guided by professional judgement, ensuring that actions are taken in the best interests of the student, while also fulfilling the school's legal responsibilities.

7.1 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. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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.

7.2 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

7.3 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 form tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the SENCO and DSLs and year leaders)
- 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is defined as a pupil missing 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 adopts a graduated, relational approach, ensuring early identification, targeted support, and appropriate escalation where necessary.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance closely and identify early signs of concern, typically where attendance begins to fall below expected levels
- Inform parents in a timely manner when attendance becomes a concern, with increasing communication where absence persists or worsens
- Hold regular, supportive conversations with students who are at risk of becoming, or are already, persistently absent
- Use attendance data to identify patterns, trends, and underlying causes of absence
- Consider potential safeguarding concerns and, where identified, respond in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Work in partnership with parents/carers through meetings and ongoing communication to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement
 - Understand and address barriers to attendance

- Explain the support available
- Outline expectations and, where appropriate, potential consequences
- Review and adapt existing interventions
- Provide access to appropriate support, including pastoral support and multi-agency involvement, in partnership with Birmingham City Council where appropriate
- Implement tailored strategies to remove barriers and support re-engagement, recognising that the causes of absence are often complex and individual
- Monitor the impact of interventions and adjust support as needed, with students moving between stages of support depending on progress
- Use sanctions where appropriate, as part of a balanced and proportionate approach (see Section 5.2)

Where attendance does not improve despite appropriate support and intervention, the school will escalate concerns in line with its graduated response, which may include formal intervention and legal processes in partnership with the local authority.

All decisions will be informed by professional judgement, ensuring that responses are proportionate, consistent, and in the best interests of the student, while fulfilling the school's statutory responsibilities.

9. Sixth form attendance

As with the rest of the school, good attendance in the sixth form is essential to ensure students achieve their full academic potential and are well prepared for their next steps. While post-16 education is not compulsory, students who choose to join the sixth form are expected to demonstrate a high level of commitment to their studies and attendance. As a general expectation, students should maintain attendance of at least 90%, unless there are exceptional circumstances, which must be discussed with the Head of Sixth Form. To comply with funding regulations, the school is required to withdraw any sixth form student from their studies if they are absent from lessons for 4 or more consecutive weeks without an agreed and valid reason.

Where a student's attendance causes concern, the school will implement a graduated and proportionate response, in line with the wider attendance policy and sixth form procedures.

In cases of persistently low attendance (typically below 90%), the following actions may be considered:

- Letters of concern sent home
- Formal attendance meetings with parents
- Formal attendance panels
- Withdrawal of examination fee payments (meaning the student would have to self-fund exam entries)
- Complete withdrawal from individual courses
- Complete withdrawal from all courses and permanent exclusion from the school

These actions will be applied proportionately and in line with professional judgement, taking into account individual circumstances, barriers to attendance, and the level of engagement with support offered.

Any student choosing to join the sixth form agrees to meet the school's attendance expectations. Students should speak to the Head of Sixth Form at the earliest opportunity if they feel they may be unable to meet these expectations so that appropriate support can be considered.

10. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Careers Policy

Attendance is closely linked to safeguarding, wellbeing, inclusion, and student engagement. These policies support the school in ensuring that barriers to attendance are identified and addressed effectively through a coordinated and inclusive approach.