



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved: 19/7/24

Review Date: 19/7/25

At St Stephen's CE Primary School, our Christian values run through our school like a golden thread and enable our children to flourish and ASPIRE in life. Our Christian vision: '*for with God, nothing is impossible*' (Luke 1: 37), helps support and guide our whole school community in striving to beat our previous best endeavours.

Throughout the year, we re-focus on a Christian Value in order to keep God in the centre of our lives. By linking these to key events within the Christian calendar our children will all take turns in leading key collective worships for our whole school community at St Stephen's Church, once a year.

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Thankfulness	Respect	Hope	Forgiveness	Trust	Love

ASPIRE Curriculum - Key Principles:

A whole school curriculum with high expectations and excellence delivered rigorously through well sequenced subjects, progression in generative knowledge, rich vocabulary, concepts and skills,

Stimulating enquiring minds by providing rich and relevant experiences, purposeful and connected learning, and creative thinking


Placing nurturing, lifelong learning behaviours – resilience, risk taking, independence, perseverance, and pride in success - at the heart of our curriculum

Inclusivity and flexibility which allows us to cater for individual needs, abilities and interests

Revisiting key knowledge, skills and vocab, so pupils know more and remember more

Encompassing the Whole Child – developing their faith, values, spirituality, health and well-being, and understanding of the world we live in, their future role in our culturally diverse community and country where equality and tolerance is promoted

Luke 1:37 "For with GOD nothing shall be impossible"

#ASPIRE 

The key principles of our ASPIRE vision support our decision-making process at St Stephen's CE Primary School for the curriculum. With these principles in place, our children are able to know more and remember more across development of our broad and balanced curriculum.

Aims of the Policy

This policy is intended to outline the expectations, procedures and key staff in relation to attendance as well as strategies and support in place to ensure pupils maximise their attendance at school.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

In line with the latest DFE Guidance on Working Together to Improve School Attendance, our school is committed to working in collaboration to:

Expect high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor attendance by rigorously using attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen to and understand - When a pattern is spotted, school will listen to pupils and parents to understand barriers to attendance and punctuality and agree how we can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support to remove barriers in school and to help pupils and families access appropriate support needed to overcome any barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise Support - Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce- Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, to improve attendance enforcement through statutory intervention may be implemented: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

How this area of our school community supports our ASPIRE school vision	
A	Having a good education is vital in ensuring that children have the best opportunities to flourish and thrive. St Stephen's CE aspires to high standards of attendance from all pupils and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school. Research shows that regularly attending school has a positive impact on many aspects of a child's development and attainment as well as on future career success. We understand that children learn at different times and pace and are committed to ensuring all children access a curriculum that encourages them to be curious, actively engaged and interested and where all children can and want to be in school and ready to learn.
S	We strive to deliver purposeful curriculum opportunities that support all children wanting to come to school and engage in their lessons including promoting learning through exploration and feeling connected. A sense of belonging, engagement and participation in all that school has to offer can often be dependent on the relationship between the children and staff and between the children. Staff are committed to continue to build positive relationships between staff and pupils/ families and children and their peers - key factors in children wanting to/ feeling able to attend school.
P	Lifelong learning behaviours include 'resilience, feeling able to take risks, learning to persevere, to be equipped and resourceful, working within a team and taking pride in success. We learn best when we not being afraid to fail or make mistakes. So much of our learning in school builds on previous teaching. It is essential therefore that attending school each day is promoted, encouraged and celebrated and barriers to attending are sensitively addressed. With appropriate, compassionate support, scaffolding and adaptations, children experience success in their learning which builds a positive sense of self and can be a motivating factor for children to attend school.
I	Research shows that for the vast number of children, attending school has a positive impact on learning, wellbeing, engagement and attainment. For the most vulnerable children, regular attendance is also an important protective factor. Good attendance begins with children believing that school is a place where they are safe, heard, valued, well- supported and belong. Barriers to attending school are explored and identified, with bespoke plans tailored to meet the needs of individual children. We are adopting a whole school, hope-filled approach to improving attendance for all our children, including those who are anxious about coming to school, by strengthening relationships, listening to families and having an empathetic approach grounded in the belief of God's compassion and love for all people.

R	Children are reminded often of the importance of attending school to learn and to be with friends. They know that when they are absent, they are missed by peers and staff. The importance of coming to school and our high expectations we have for children's attendance is celebrated each week when the class with the highest attendance win a prize. Attendance improvement is a priority and is a weekly agenda item at Inclusion meetings. Attendance data is sent daily to all staff. Through ongoing training and concerted efforts, we as a school are further developing our understanding of the interrelationship between attendance and our ethos of inclusivity and being child centred, safeguarding, the quality of the curriculum, special educational needs -including medical conditions or disabilities, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing and understanding behaviour as a form of communication.
E	School's vision for attendance is rooted in the hope that children will experience life "in all its fullness" (John Ch 10 v10) and fulfil their potential. Our vision is for all relationships and interactions between children, families, staff, volunteers, governors and the wider St Stephen's family to be consistently respectful, trusting and non-judgemental within a culture that promotes kindness, compassion and feelings of safety -essential in children wanting to come to school. School attendance is crucial for academic achievement but also in supporting the holistic development as young citizens within school, church and the wider community. Our school values of Trust, Love, Thankfulness, Respect, Forgiveness and Hope are the foundations that relationships with our children and their families are built on. Creating an environment where children can flourish, feel valued, cared for and connected allows fears and worries to be shared and empowers our children to become loving, forgiving friends, generous and able to make wise decisions. Be kind and help one another, forgiving each other, as you are forgiven (Ephesians 4).

When it comes to school attendance, it is easy to think that 90% attendance is at a positive level, but the reality is that this is equivalent to one day off school per fortnight or 95 hours of learning missed across a year. Children who have less than 90% attendance are regarded as 'persistent absentees' from school by government standards.

Attendance %	School Days Missed in a Year	Hours of Learning Missed in a Year
100	0	0
95	9.5	50
90	19	100
85	28.5	150
80	38	200
50	95	500

It is our expectation that our pupils should only miss school when it is necessary and should aim for a minimum of **97%** attendance over the course of a year. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Strong school attendance for every child is in everyone's best interests and it is the responsibility of us all. We are committed to working collaboratively with pupils and their families to find the most supportive routes to facilitate this.

<u>Staff Member</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Role</u>
Mr Guy Lovgreen	Head Teacher	Ensures that there is a strong culture of promoting excellent attendance and a strategy which is led effectively. Authorises absences.
Ms Amanda Doan	Attendance Champion	Strategic leadership of whole school attendance including policy development, staff training, data analysis and liaising with Education Welfare around any legal proceedings/fixed penalty notices.
Mrs Sarah Costin	Attendance Lead	Daily monitoring of attendance, ensuring each pupil is accounted for. Identifying trends and areas of concern. For students with attendance below 90%, create individualised attendance plans and provide support and interventions including meeting with families.
Mrs Barbara Bancroft	Attendance & Admin Support	To work with the Attendance Lead with the daily attendance and absence procedures, including updating registers and contacting parents via phone calls.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to considerations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and statutory legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- DfE Guidance on Parental Responsibility Measures
- DfE Guidance on Children Missing Education
- DfE Guidance on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School
- DfE Summary of Responsibilities Where a Mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance
- DfE Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions
- DfE Guidance on Alternative Provision • Is my child too ill for school? – NHS

Parental Responsibility and how to Support your Child's Attendance at School:

The law (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996) entitles all children of compulsory school age to a full-time education that is suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure their child receives that education by attendance at a school unless they are home educated. Where parents have decided to register their child at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. The school day is split into two sessions – a morning and an afternoon. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open unless an absence has been authorised by the Headteacher.

The following are some ways in which parents can support their child's attendance:

- Be aware of the legal responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school regularly
- Ensure that their child arrives to school punctually every day
- Reinforce to their children the importance of education and how attending regularly leads to higher achievement
- Ensure that any medical appointments are booked outside of school hours wherever possible
- Ensure that any leave of absence request is only made in the most exceptional of circumstances
- Support their child's attendance (and therefore achievement) by not taking holidays during term time
- Notify school immediately if there are any changes to details of named contacts for their child
- Work in partnership with school staff to support any improvement plans for their child's attendance

Arrangements for absence:

The Headteacher authorises absence; St Stephen's C.E. Primary School adheres to the DfE guidelines in authorising absence.

Authorised absence include:

- Illness – school does seek advice from the school health service re: expected absence times and medical evidence may be required for persistent or extended absences.
- Religious observance
- Attendance at medical appointments which cannot be made outside school hours. Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment. A note or copy of the appointment letter should be sent / shown to the school if a child has a medical appointment.

- Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances: sudden, serious circumstances do occur when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that the school is informed by the parents of the circumstances so that the appropriate code can be written in the register.

Arrival and registration:

School side gates open at 8.40am to enable children to be in their classrooms and ready to start the day. (Main gates open at 8.30am) The gates close at 8.50am, when the register is taken. (Registers are taken at the start of the morning and the start of the afternoon session (12.30pm or 12.45pm class dependent) which means that a day counts as 2 attendance sessions.) Children who arrive after 8.50am will enter school through the office when they will be given a late mark. Children who arrive after 9.30am will be given an unauthorised absence mark. Pupils who are regularly late to school will be supported to understand the barriers to punctuality and strategies will be put in place to overcome these. It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent / guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out at the office. The signing in / out register in the office is used to update the class registers codes taken by the class teachers. Registers are checked regularly by the Education Welfare Officer to ensure they are kept accurately by teachers and to assess the reasons and incidence of any absences.

Medical appointments:

Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, the fire register will be updated.

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is paramount at St Stephen's, and we will use registers to facilitate where there may be issues outside of school and families may need support. It is our statutory duty to safeguard all our children and following up any attendance concerns falls within our safeguarding duty.

After the official morning registers have been taken, we add to the registers all illness / circumstance we have been informed about and all late arrivals so we have an accurate picture of which pupils are present in school and that all children are accounted for. Calls from parents/ family members regarding absence are logged. If a child is unable to attend school, parents should ring school by 9.15 am to inform school of the reason for absence. It is important that the cause of illness given is specific (e.g. 'vomiting' or 'fever' rather than 'unwell' or 'a bit under the weather') as this enables us to track patterns of absence more effectively with individuals and particular groups of pupils, therefore enabling more effective support. When parents are considering whether their child is too ill to attend school, they may wish to consult NHS guidance- Is my child too ill for school? – NHS.

Depending on the child's attendance profile and/or the nature of the absence, a phone call may also be made to ascertain whether the child could be brought to school.

For those children for whom we do not know the reason for absence, telephone calls are made to parents/ contacts of children to ensure that children are safe - this forms part of our Child Protection procedure. A phone call to the first contact will be made to priority parent/carer contacts on the school system requesting a response. We endeavour to do this within an hour of the school day starting aside from in exceptional circumstances which may impact this (e.g. significant travel disruption). If no response is received, we will make phone calls to other priority contacts on the school system throughout the morning.

If we have been unable to ascertain why a pupil is not in school a home visit may take place. If school is still unable to establish the reason a pupil is absent, where necessary, we may engage with external agencies such as the Police to request a welfare check and/ or Children's Social Care if we are concerned that a child may be at risk.

Where a pupil is absent from school for ten consecutive days and no reason has been provided, this will result in a referral to Tameside Education Welfare for further support as they could be deemed as a Child Missing in Education according to local authority procedures.

Persistent absence:

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored. The attendance lead contacts the parents to discuss this. The pupil's attendance is monitored for a half-term and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school to set targets for improving attendance and/ or punctuality (Improvement Attendance Plan). If there is a

lack of engagement, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who may then conduct a home visit. After the monitoring period, and if targets are met, improved attendance is acknowledged via a telephone call or letter home. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to 96 percent. If targets are not met, the attendance lead makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional four weeks, formalised support will be drawn up.

The new regulations state that schools must consider issuing a penalty notice for any instance of a pupil having 10 unauthorised absence sessions within a rolling 10-week period. A school week is defined as any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be reached with any combination of unauthorised absence within ten school weeks such as holidays taken in term time and arriving late after the register closes (30 minutes after it is opened). These sessions can be consecutive or not. The period of ten school weeks can also span different terms or school years (for example, two sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further eight within the Autumn Term).

Where these are sporadic absences, however, it will be expected that schools are able to demonstrate that they have taken a support first approach before submitting a penalty notice request to the local authority. This is not the case for term-time holidays where support is not appropriate.

The new guidance states only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a three-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within three years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those three years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other attendance legal interventions. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

Once three years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued, a further penalty notice can be made.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parent(s) allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. We must have notified you of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance. These penalty notices are charged at £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Tameside Council is required to have a local Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance at school. These must be adhered to by all schools, the police and any local authority officer issuing a penalty notice.

Other legal routes- which are a last resort once all other informal and formal support has been exhausted- include:

Education Supervision Order - Where a voluntary early help plan or attendance contract has not secured the desired improvement in attendance, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be issued by the Family or High Court as a formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. Where parents persistently fail to comply with directions given under an ESO, they may be guilty of an offence and face a fine of up to £1000.

Parenting Order This can be imposed by the court as a mandatory order on parents to attend guidance sessions and improve their child's attendance at school. Parental agreement is not required and they may be utilised where a parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance. Similarly to an Education Supervision Order, a breach or non-compliance with a Parenting Order could result in a fine of up to £1000.

Attendance Prosecution - Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is a last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case. The decision to prosecute a parent who has failed to ensure their child attends school regularly under the Education Act 1996 rests solely with the local authority. Depending on the severity of the case, consequences could be a fine of up to £1000, a fine of up to £2500 and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Registration Codes

Present Codes

These are used when a pupil is present in school or is at an approved off-site educational activity. They include:

- / = Morning present mark
- \ = Afternoon present mark
- L = Arrived late but before registration closed
- B = Present at an approved off-site educational activity (e.g. at alternative provision)
- D = Dual-registered and expected to attend their other provision
- K = Education provided by the local authority
- P = Approved sporting activity (e.g. a pupil who plays for the academy of a professional football club)
- V = Educational visit (e.g. where pupils are out on a school trip)

Authorised Absence Codes

These are used when a pupil is absent from school for an authorised reason. These marks count negatively against a pupil's attendance but are not included in any considerations of formal legal proceedings related to a pupil's absence. They include:

- I = Absent due to illness (please note that in line with Tameside's Local Authority guidance, medical evidence may be required to authorise this type of absence if a pupil's attendance is less than 90%)
- M = Absent due to medical appointment (please try to make these outside of school hours wherever possible)
- C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances (e.g. to attend a funeral)
- C2 = Absence agreed in line with a temporary modified timetable
- E = Absent due to being issued with a suspension from school
- R = Leave of absence due to religious observance.
- Y = Unable to attend because of an unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised Absence Code

These are used when a pupil is absent from school for an unauthorised reason. These marks count negatively against a pupil's attendance and may also inform any legal proceedings related to a pupil's absence (see section on Legal Proceedings for more details). They include:

- N = Absent without a reason being provided. As detailed above, we will make all efforts to contact parents to find out why their child is absent. If we are unable to do so, 'N' marks will be changed to 'O' mark.
- O = Absent from school without authorisation. Some examples that would fall into this category include: No reason being provided for an absence, missing a full day for a medical appointment where attendance could have occurred before or after, birthday treats
- G = Absent due to holiday in term time
- U = Arrival after the closing time of the official morning register.

Requests for leave of absence:

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are *exceptional circumstances* where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school in advance for school to consider whether the request can be authorised. If a pupil misses more than 20 days of school, then the school will consider removing the child from the school roll. The school has the right to do this under government legislation. Parents needing exceptional circumstances for absence to be considered should make an appointment to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Holidays in Term Time

Important amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013 and remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days which Headteachers used to be allowed to grant. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*.

This means that, from 1st September 2013, the Headteacher of St Stephen's CE Primary School cannot authorise any holidays in term time other than in *exceptional circumstances*. These occasions will be extremely rare.

Exceptional circumstances may include significant family occasions involving a close family member (e.g. – funeral, wedding). The Headteacher will determine the limit of days to be granted under this heading (usually no more than 2 days).

Any granting of leave does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency / duration of such leave periods will be considered as factors in any decisions.

The Headteacher of St Stephen's will not consider authorising a request if:

- It is during transition time as a pupil is settling into the school. This means during the autumn term for both Reception and in Year 1. Also, throughout the whole school during the first two weeks of September.
- It is before or during SATs or any other public examination.
- The pupil already has any unauthorised absences.
- It is due to the availability of desired accommodation or cheaper holidays.

Monitoring and Tracking of Attendance Data

In order for all stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, governors and external agencies) to work in partnership to ensure excellent attendance for pupils it is important that we track the attendance of pupils and share this information. This will be done by the following means:

- Attendance data will be shared on a weekly basis with class teachers
- Parents will be informed about attendance in relation to their child individually and/ or the school more widely through newsletters, academic progress reports, telephone call/ letter.
- Attendance data by class will be shared with pupils in Collective Worship on a weekly basis. This will feed into reward systems.
- Attendance data of different cohorts will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis. Examples of cohorts include year groups, boys and girls, pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and pupils eligible for free school meals. This will then enable leaders to plan specific intervention to support any cohorts whose attendance is below expected.
- Attendance data of different cohorts will also be shared with the whole staff on a regular basis in briefings so that teachers are aware of which pupils may need extra support.
- Attendance data will be shared with Governors on a termly basis so they can fulfil their responsibilities in supporting and challenging senior leaders in relation to the attendance strategy and the impact it is having.
- Attendance data will be shared with the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team on a termly basis. They will then provide support, advice, and guidance to school on how to make further improvements.
- Daily school attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education in line with the mandatory expectation stated within the statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance.
- Where attendance interventions are implemented with pupils to help them improve their school attendance, we will use data to monitor the impact and assess the efficacy of the intervention.

Whole School Attendance Strategy

Pupils whose attendance is below 90% are regarded as 'Persistently Absent Pupils' by the government and pupils whose attendance is below 50% are regarded as 'Severely Absent Pupils'. In order to motivate and support pupils to maintain excellent attendance or improve their attendance, we will utilise a range of strategies which include:

- Awarded rewards in line with the school policy
- Positive communication home
- Support meetings with parents and carers
- Communication home so parents are aware of concerns and need to improve
- Referrals to external agencies (e.g. CAMHS, Tameside's Education Welfare and Children's Social Care).

Under DFE Guidance on Working Together to Improve School Attendance it is mandatory that schools inform the local authority where a pupil misses 15 school days within an academic year. In line with guidance, the local authority will be notified when any pupil misses fifteen school days and for pupils who it is believed will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to sickness during the course of an academic year.

Where a pupil's attendance is an ongoing concern, we will work with families and make referrals to external agencies to secure support in removing barriers to attendance and establishing strong attendance routines. This support includes:

- Attendance Contracts- A voluntary, but formal, agreement between parents and school aimed at outlining expectations and support relating to attendance improvement. These are not legally binding and cannot be agreed in a parent's absence but allow a more formal route to securing engagement and support. They are not a punitive tool and should always be considered before an education supervision order or prosecution.
- Early Help Assessment- The Early Help Assessment is a way of working with families. It involves listening to you and your child to find out your child's needs, and what is working well in your child's life. An action plan, agreed with you is also put in place to make sure your child gets the right sort of help. The Early Help Assessment is voluntary.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

Children can miss large amounts of education, or be unable to attend school at all, because of having a medical condition. It is for this reason Governing bodies are required to make arrangements for supporting pupils to ensure they can access all aspects of the curriculum including PE and school trips. Statutory guidance states that schools should have a medical policy which covers provision for pupils. In developing this policy, schools should liaise with health care professionals.

Where appropriate, schools should develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for pupils. This will detail what specific arrangements will be put in place and which member of staff will be responsible for supporting pupils. IHCPs should be written after gaining advice from health care professionals, parents / carers & pupils.

Where a pupil with a medical condition is absent for 15 school days in an academic year and the absence relates directly to the medical condition, school staff should notify the LA via medicalenquiries@tameside.gov.uk.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school but their medical condition allows them to access education, the LA may provide alternative provision. This may include online learning, home tuition or other appropriate measures.

At times, pupils may experience mental health difficulties that impact their attendance at school and we are mindful of the DFE 'Summary of Responsibilities Where a Mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance' when supporting these pupils. In these circumstances, we will work together with families and other professionals involved in supporting the child to ensure that any necessary reasonable adjustments to this policy are made. Supporting families with medical and SEND needs including appointments and absence due to illness: Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend school-led support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition or SEND need, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support. We will also consider whether an Educational Health and Care Plan is required. When a child is struggling to attend school due a SEND need, a huge amount of compassion is needed when working with the family. We will therefore create a bespoke plan to support the child and family ensuring that this is then discussed at any further review meetings about the child's needs. We may consider a reduced timetable, remote learning or further support from the LA Welfare Attendance team.

Pupils who fail to attend the allocated school

School staff must be proactive in their attempts to contact parents by phone calls, letters and home visits within a 15-day period of being informed that a pupil has been allocated a place at their school. All attempts of contact should be evidenced on any future Child Missing Education (CME) referral if the pupil's whereabouts turns out to be unknown.

Where school staff have evidence that the pupil no longer lives at the last known address, a CME referral form should be submitted. If a family are outside of Tameside borough and a school place has not been allocated in the identified borough, a CME referral form should be submitted.

Pupils should not be removed from school roll until notified to do so by the CME Tracking Officer.

The CME team exist to ensure that children and young people missing education are re-engaged in appropriate education provision in the shortest possible time, with lasting success and that 'no child slips through the net'.

Where a pupil's whereabouts are unchanged from that provided on the school application form but parents are refusing to ensure attendance at that school, the pupil must be added to the school roll no later than the expected date quoted in the allocation letter. School staff will then follow their attendance procedures to address the non-attendance. The Education Welfare Service will assist school staff to prepare any legal paperwork should this become necessary. It should

be noted that for a parent to be guilty of the offence in The Education Act 1996, which requires parents to ensure regular attendance, the pupil must be on a school roll otherwise no offence is being committed by a parent and therefore no enforcement action can be taken.

Where the non-attendance is a result of the pupil not being allocated their preferred schools, parents should be advised to use the school appeals procedure in the first instance.

In the case of Reception pupils that are not statutory school age, school staff should make every attempt to contact the parent / carer as detailed above. If there is no response after 10 days, a CME referral form should be submitted.

If the pupil has not been located after 20 school days, school staff are asked to send a letter, to the last known address, advising parents /carers that the pupil will be removed from the school roll.

If a parent of a non-statutory Reception pupil chooses not to allow their child to attend the allocated school as they are prepared to wait for a place at their preferred school, the allocated school is required to send parents a letter stating that the child will be removed from the school roll. Once the pupil reaches statutory school age, enquiries will commence by the CME Tracking Officer to establish if the pupil has re-applied for a school place. If parents refuse to submit an application form once the pupil reaches statutory school age, legal proceedings may take place.

Parents of summer born pupils are permitted to defer admission of their child until they are compulsory school age. This must be done with prior arrangements and schools will be notified to make special arrangements.

Missing children

Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched: – All classrooms – All toilets – The library – The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
 - The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.

If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a Child Cared For, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.

Young carers

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers. We will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school. We will take a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

Rewards for good attendance:

The main benefit gained from regular attendance and good punctuality is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured, social skills develop and friendships are made and maintained. This is incentivised in several ways:

- The class who achieves the best attendance, above the school's target of 97% attendance in the preceding week will earn a class prize.
- All children who achieve 100% attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance. There are special awards for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year, including a prize.
- Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child will take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made. It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child's attendance.