Attendance Policy

Version 6 – March 2025

Success Criteria:	
Context/Aim: Attendance benchmarks set for whole school and sub-groups by Head and Governors, and supported by EWS, are met or surpassed, with specific focus on: improved tracking, earlier intervention, strengthened school support systems for parents and students, reduced Persistent Absenteeism and increased motivational and/or rewards to model best practice and encourage a spirit of aspiration and ownership.	

Monitoring Procedures:		
By Whom: Governors' Pastoral and Ethos Committee	**When:** Termly	**How:** Reports to the Pastoral and Ethos Committee

Evaluation:		
By Whom: Head teacher and the Pastoral & Ethos Governors Committee	**When:** Termly	**How:** SLT and the Pastoral and Ethos Committee to review Policy

Revision History:

Version	Approved and Ratified	Review Date	Additional Notes
6.0			
5.0	September 2022	September 2023	Revised policy with DfE updated advice and guidance Sept 22
4.5	September 2021	September 2022	Update following policy changes
4.4	September 2020	September 2021	Re-write to reflect staffing update and COVID 19
4.3	September 2019	August 2020	Update following appointment of SL for attendance
4.2	April 2018	April 2019	
4.1	March 2017	March 2018	None
4.0	November 2015	November 2016	Re-Write
3.0	January 2014	November 2015	-
2.2	November 2012	November 2013	-
2.1	November 2011	November 2012	-
2.0	November 2010	November 2011	-

Vision Statement:

With God's love and inspiration, we aspire and achieve excellence.

Vision: St. Joseph's aspires to be an exceptional, inclusive Catholic school where every individual feels a **profound sense of belonging and recognises their spiritual gifts.** In a safe, trusting, and respectful environment, everyone can thrive.

The St Joseph's family is dedicated to providing and receiving **outstanding educational opportunities, enabling each member to achieve excellent progress and outcomes** in every aspect of school life to ensure the highest level of academic results. We are committed to nurturing God-given talents and encouraging everyone to reach their full potential, fostering spiritual and moral character development.

Other SJCS Policies that relate to this Policy:

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Child Protection Policy

Key Personnel:

Headmaster	**Mr M. Higgins** The Head teacher is the only person who can authorise leave in exceptional circumstances
Safeguarding Policy	Mr K. McGuinness
Child Protection Policy	Mrs E. Oakley

Attendance Policy

1. Aims

"If schooling is to be effective, regular attendance is a prerequisite, hence securing it must be a high priority for all. A school's rate of attendance can be regarded as a significant indicator of its effective performance, hence the vigilance with which attendance is monitored and the effectiveness with which absences are followed up can have far reaching consequences.

Consequently, it is the extent of the rate of unauthorised absences which indicates how well a school is doing and what scope exists for improvement." (DES 1989).

At St Joseph's we believe that education is the basis that underpins a positive successful adult life. The aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to attend school every day (190 days per academic year) and therefore to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and there is clear evidence that shows strong links between excellent school attendance and excellent GCSE results.

St Joseph's believes that parents and teachers are in partnership working together for the good of the students. Therefore, our expectations are high regarding attendance and punctuality. Poor attendance affects a student's learning and poor punctuality affects the whole class learning. Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success and therefore it is important to deal with this as soon as possible.

The Government reiterate that regular school attendance is essential and that students without good reason for absence may present a safeguarding concern; they may become victims of crime or abuse or may be drawn into criminal activities themselves or be subject inadvertently to neglect if low/non-attendance is not challenged.

At St Joseph's we believe that in challenging attendance and punctuality that falls below what is expected, and doing this at the earliest point possible, appropriate support can be made available. These expectations and interventions ensure that student chances of underperformance are minimised and the vital skills of self-discipline, responsibility and consequences for one's own actions and choices become habit forming, attributes that are essential for when learners enter the world of work.

We are committed to the principles laid out in Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

Within this they state:

> **"Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families."**

The stages of this process state that all partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to 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

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

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

Enforce

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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The above will be overseen by the SJCS Pastoral & Ethos governing committee who receive regular feedback from the Pastoral Deputy Head and Senior Leaders with responsibility for attendance.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising [role] to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils

with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)

The Pastoral Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Provide regular feedback for Headteacher and school Governing Body
- Liaising with DSL, SENCO and Senior Leader responsible for Disadvantaged Learners regarding attendance of vulnerable groups.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr. K McGuinness. All attendance related queries should be directed to attendance@sjcs.org.uk.

3.4 Heads of Year

The Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Regularly liaise with the Attendance Officer regarding any potential attendance issues within their year group
- Monitor attendance data for their year group

- Oversee intervention for poor attenders within their year group and track progress of this intervention
- Oversee recognition and rewarding of outstanding attendance within their year group
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.5 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Mrs E. Oakley and can be contacted via All attendance related queries should be directed to attendance@sjcs.org.uk.

3.6 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office at the start of each session.

3.7 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Monitor calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents and pupils to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Be responsible for the signing in and out of students arriving to / leaving the school site

3.8 Parents/carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

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

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time
- Report their child's absence before 08:55 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Communicate appropriately with staff when required.
- Ensure that holidays are not booked during term time.

The school must be notified every day the student is absent. You can do this by:

- Our preferred method is through the ClassCharts App
  Or
- by emailing attendance@sjcs.org.uk, or phoning the school on 01722 335380

3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.
  (See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:50 and will be kept open until 09:20. The register for the second session will be taken at 14:20 and closes and 14:30.

4.2 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 08:50 or as soon as practically possible by:

The school must be notified every day the student is absent.

- Our preferred method is through the Class Charts App

Or

- by emailing attendance@sjcs.org.uk, or phoning the school on 01722 335380

We are committed to the principles laid out in Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

- *"Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences.*
- *Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the session in question.*
- *In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern.*
- *Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence."*

- *"Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, schools should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available.*
- *Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional.*
- *Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account.*
- *Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence."*

With this guidance in mind, we will mark absence due to physical or mental 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 may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 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.

- Send details of absence request to attendance@sjcs.org.uk
- Attach any necessary evidence (photos of documents are fine).
- Student must report to reception to be signed out.

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.

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. Go 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 appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Students who arrive late to school and class sessions will receive a Behaviour Point for lateness and sit a 15-minute detention.

Students who present persistent punctuality issues will receive intervention initially from their Form Tutors, Head of Year and Attendance Officer.

This intervention will alert parents / carers to the issue, identify possible causes and offer strategies to help improve punctuality.

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:

- Following the taking of AM registers by form tutors, any student who is absent without contact from a parent will be contacted via email asking for communication as to reason for absence. Any parent who fails to respond to this will receive a phone call from the school to follow up.

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact police
- 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: [issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate]

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via the Progress Reports which are sent home periodically during the school year.
We encourage all parents to download and register for the Class Charts app which will allow them to monitor their child's attendance on a daily basis.

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. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview

- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave **may** be granted during term time are as follows:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states ''on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs'';

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted to attendance@sjcs.org.uk as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

If an absence has been supported by a note from the parent and the absence is recorded as unauthorised the parent must be informed immediately. Examples are:

- Known truancy
- Working (this is reported to the Headteacher and DSL)
- Time off for birthdays, family celebrations
- Holidays
- Looking after siblings (this must be reported to the Headteacher and the D/DSL)
- Errands for parents (e.g. shopping, dropping off younger siblings to primary school - this is reported to the Headteacher and the D/DSL)).
- Persistent absenteeism without documentary medical proof.
- Absence adjacent to a school holiday.

5.2 Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.
If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

- If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.
- If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National

Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve
If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.
Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

It is important that good attendance is acknowledged, celebrated and rewarded. Achievement in attendance is as important as achievement in subjects and this should be embedded within the ethos of the school. St Joseph's is committed to rewarding those students who maintain outstanding attendance. These rewards include, but are not limited to:

- A live weekly MSTEAMS broadcast every Friday at the end of the day, whereby students with improved or consistently good attendance are celebrated and rewarded.
- Qualification for rewards (such as cinema experiences or trips to theme parks) for those students who show improvement in their attendance over a set period of time or sustain outstanding attendance across the school year.
- Celebration of outstanding attendance in school assemblies.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

In order to understand and overcome complex barriers to attendance we may use a range of strategies including:

- Reduced Education Plans (REP's)
- ELSA Support
- Teaching and Learning adjustments
- Reasonable adjustments to school policy
- Pastoral Team support meetings

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

In order to understand and overcome ill health or SEND barriers we may use a range of strategies including:

- Those listed above
- Pupil Passport adjustments

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

In order to support pupils returning after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence we may use a range of strategies including:

- Those listed above
- Pastoral Classroom access
- Mentor / Buddy support

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data daily, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to HOY/ form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.
The school will:
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    o Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    o Explain the help that is available
    o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    o Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

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

Saint Joseph's
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing,

		or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays