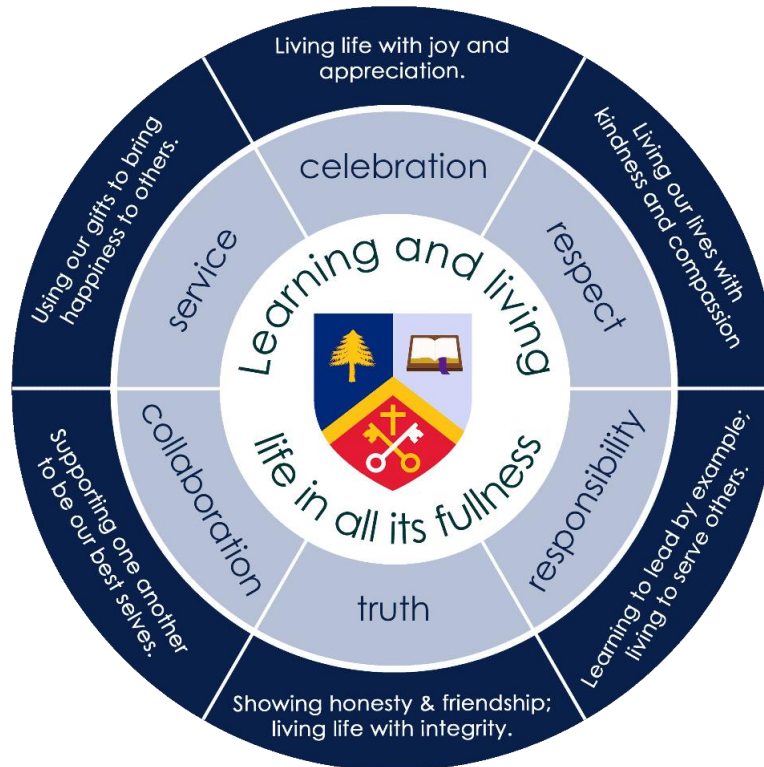




# St Peter's CE Junior School

*Learning and living life in all its fullness*

## Whole School Attendance Policy



### Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body/Trustees on at least an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in December 2025. It is due for review in September 2026.

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## 1. Introduction/Aim

At St. Peter's Junior School, we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity. Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Promote good attendance, enabling pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences, acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Promote positive support systems and advocate multi-agency approaches to improve attendance.
- Make parents aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly. In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents and carers are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not.
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

At St. Peter’s Junior School, we believe that improving school attendance is everyone’s business. It is a shared responsibility by governors, all school staff, parents, pupils, the wider school community and multi-agency partners. We aim to always work in partnership with our parents.

| Role                                   | Name                | Contact details  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Senior Attendance Lead/Champion</b> | <b>Diane Martin</b> | <b>01252 543320</b>  |
| <b>Attendance Officer</b>              | <b>Diane Martin</b> | <b>01252 543320</b>  |
| <b>Named Governor for Attendance</b>   | <b>Katy Harris</b>  | <a href="mailto:k.harris@stpetersjun.co.uk">k.harris@stpetersjun.co.uk</a> |

The Governors of St. Peter’s Junior School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it through the school’s ethos and across its policies. They may take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Prioritising attendance in strategies, such as raising attainment, behaviour and combatting bullying, special educational needs and disabilities, wellbeing, and safeguarding.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school’s attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.

- Ensuring the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring schools engage and work effectively with the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider local partners and services.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker, those pupils under the Virtual School and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring all school staff receive training about the safeguarding risks of poor attendance and children missing education.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education in line with statutory reporting deadlines.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy, which is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents and staff.

The Senior Management Team at St. Peter's Junior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form and maintain positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences, with a whole school culture that encourages all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Make sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and the risks associated with poor attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure the school have accurate, complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- 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.

- Ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Attend the termly school attendance supporting meetings with the local authority, focusing on those pupils with severe absence, making sure a regularly reviewed plan is in place.

All staff at St. Peter's Junior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Know the importance of good attendance and the risks associated with poor attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support.

St. Peter's Junior School requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Further information can be found at: [Attendance guidance for parents | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/attendance-guidance-for-parents)

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

## 4. Categorising Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

### 4.1 Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours. All absences associated with a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

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 times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional' circumstances. At St. Peter's Junior School, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional' circumstances. St. Peter's Junior School will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave (see Appendix 1). If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. St. Peter's Junior School will treat each application individually and discuss with you the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

The 1996 Education Act also sets out the circumstances in which a pupil has not failed to attend school regularly and therefore the parent has not committed an offence. 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 are examples of these. The full list is in the Appendix 5.

## 4.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. 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, they must be collected from the school office by an adult.

In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend a support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Hampshire policies regarding supporting children with health issues, [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

### 4.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

St. Peter's Junior School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) page 86

### 4.4 Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The pupil is a mobile child if their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

### 4.5 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniforms.
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes.
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation.
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend.
- Absences taken without the authorisation of the school.

## 5. Our Procedures

### 5.1 Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The school gates open at 8:30am and closes at 8:45. All children are expected to be in their classroom by 8:50am.
- Morning class registration will take place at 8:50am and closes at 9:15am
- Children arriving between 8:50 and 9:15 will be marked as ‘late before registration closes’ (L)
- Children arriving after 9:15am will be marked as ‘late after registration’ closes and the absence will be unauthorised (U).
- Afternoon registration takes place at 1:15pm

The school day finishes at 3:25pm and all children should be collected on time each day, unless they have completed a walking home alone consent form (upper school). Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time. The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

### **Reporting to parents**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child’s attendance and absence levels where there is a concern. As well as annually in their child’s school report. Children’s up to date attendance is also available to the parents at any time via the Arbor app.

## 5.2 Late Arrival at School

At St. Peter's Junior School all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school site opens at 8:30am. The register is taken at 8:50am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parent and provide a reason for their lateness. If their arrival is before 9:15am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9:15am. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment.

## 5.3 Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence **and** on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

### **First Day absence**

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of absence is always required.

If your child is absent, you must:

- Notify school as early as possible by email or telephone, before registration on the first day and any subsequent days of absence. The office is open from 8am but there is an option to leave an absence message at any time prior to this on the school answer machine.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day, and any subsequent days, of absence if we have not heard from you. This is because we have a duty of care to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Champion if absences persist or patterns emerge.
- Refer the matter to the Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team if absence is unauthorised and falls below 90%.

Please note: If your child is still absent and contact has not been established with you, or any of the named parent/carers, we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parent/carers and the child including making enquiries to known friends, wider family. We may also visit the family home or contact the police to complete a welfare check on the child. If your child has not been seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parent/carers, after three days of absence we are required to start 'child missing in education' procedure as stated by Hampshire County Council guidance.

### **Ten days of absence**

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any child who is absent without explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child has not been seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services staff will visit the known address and alert key services to locate the child. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number.

### **Continued or Ongoing Absence**

If your child misses 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as persistent absentees (PA). Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in their learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

If your child has had absence and their attendance level is falling below 90%, we will contact you, and, depending on the reasons for absence will:

- Issue an attendance monitoring letter and individual child attendance report, offering you the opportunity to rectify the situation in partnership with the school. We will hold a meeting with Parents/Carers if attendance does not improve.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or the absence is prolonged.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for Parents/Carers to speak to the Senior Attendance Champion. The school will inform the LA, regularly, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 5 school days (10 session) or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85%, the headteacher will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent/carer.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Should your child be absent for illness either side of a school holiday or for a period of 4 or more days, then we may request medical evidence. We may also undertake a home visit where there is a possibility of the threshold (10 sessions – 5 days for

unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks) being met for issuing a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil.
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to Inclusion Support Service for support, guidance, and advice.
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/inclusion-support-service) and [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/behaviour-and-attendance-resources-for-schools)
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Social Care or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.

## 5.4 Attendance Rewards & Interventions

### Rewarding Good and Outstanding Attendance

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

We will have weekly, termly and annual awards to encourage children to recognise the importance that we place on good attendance and for them to attend school regularly and on time.

#### Weekly

Each week during celebration assembly the class with the highest attendance overall for the previous week is awarded the Attendance Trophy. The class is then rewarded with an extra break time at a time convenient in the following week.

#### Termly

Every pupil gaining 100% attendance for a term is awarded with:

100% sticker for one full term

100% certificate for two full terms

Silver star badge for 3 full terms of 100%

#### Legal Intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance has not had the desired effect the Senior Attendance Champion

will notify Parents/Carers that once the threshold of unauthorised absences has been met, they will make a referral to the Legal Intervention Team (LIT).

### **The school may refer to the Legal Intervention Team when:**

- Absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not have to be consecutive (codes G, U or O).
- Persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed.
- Persistently late before the close of the register (code L), but the school has met with Parents/Carers and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met.
- Contacts with home have not brought any improvement in attendance.
- Poor communication from home regarding explanations for absence/lateness.
- Frequent patterns of illness.

Please note:

- The ultimate responsibility to authorise an absence will rest with the Headteacher
- An email or telephone call does not mean an absence will be authorised
- In the case of an illness the school has the right to request further information
- If a child suffers repeated bouts of illness the Headteacher can make a referral to the school nursing team
- Where there is a doubt about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, school can refer the matter to a school nursing team or GP

### **Monitor and Analyse attendance**

St. Peter's Junior School will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This should go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Benchmark attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.

- Monitor the data and the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings should then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the board or governing body and local authority when appropriate.

At St. Peter's Junior School, we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

“Severe absence” (SA) as:

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

## 5.5 Support Systems

At St. Peter's Junior School, we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example: bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child. Strategies we may use to support you include:

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with Parent/carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g., social services.

The school will ensure that there is a minimum of two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that Parent/Carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – Parents/Carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g., sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance.

The school will regularly inform Parents/Carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that the Parents/Carers are

aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Champion will work collaboratively with the pupil and their Parents/Carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to pupil's experience in school, e.g., bullying, the Attendance Champion will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g., the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of school's control, e.g., they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the Attendance Champion will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g., children's social care or the Local Authority, and will encourage Parents/Carers to access support that they may need.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

### **Voluntary Support**

Helping Parents/Carers to access services of their own accord and /or a voluntary whole family plan to tackle the barriers to attendance.

### **Formal Support**

A formal attendance contract agreed by pupil, parent and/or Local Authority. Progressing to a legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court if there is non-engagement and deemed necessary.

### **Statutory Involvement**

This can be consideration of statutory social care where there are safeguarding concerns or Attendance prosecution.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

## **5.6 Persistent Absence, Severe Absence and the use of legal interventions**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level could cause considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 190 sessions (95 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support. [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/inclusion-support-service)

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution via the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence. In line with Hampshire County Council guidance, we will notify the Inclusion Support Service of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

## 5.7 Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance and other Legal Measures

For national guidance refer to Working Together to Improve School Attendance - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working\\_together\\_to\\_improve\\_school\\_attendance\\_-\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf)

For Code of Conduct Issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence - <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/codeofconduct-IssuingPenaltyNoticesforunauthorisedabsencesfromschools.pdf>

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age (5years and over) at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

A penalty notice will be issued where a child has:

- Unauthorised absence for holiday of 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) over 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive and can span different school terms and years.

Updated September 2025 – *For pupils who may have been absent for less than 10 unauthorised sessions, a Penalty Notice may be applicable in some circumstances.*

- 1. Where a parent is repeatedly keeping a child from school for family events or special occasions, despite having been warned to stop this.**
- 2. Where a parent is taking term time holiday but has deliberately attempted to avoid the issuing of a Penalty Notice by only declaring 8 sessions on a Leave of Absence Form or is taking the holiday during the week of an INSET so only 6-8 sessions of unauthorised holiday are recorded.**

A notice to improve followed by a Penalty Notice will be issued where a child has:

- Unauthorised absence of 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) over 100 possible sessions – these do not need to be consecutive and can span different school terms and years.
- Persistently late (code U) for more than 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) after the register has closed – these do not need to be consecutive.

Where a child has unauthorised absence, the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from the link above.

Parents and Carers will be warned of likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence; the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to one or more parent/carers for each child. N.B. This could mean four penalty notices for a family of two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday, i.e., on PN for each child to each parent.

**Please note:** The maximum number of Penalty Notices that may be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child, in a three-year rolling period is two. If a third (or subsequent) offence is committed within the three-year rolling period, the Headteacher may wish to refer to the Legal Intervention Team for consideration of a prosecution if either of the thresholds above have been met.

## 6. Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential, the following policies are integral to this approach:

- Child Protection.
- Safeguarding.
- Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions.
- Admissions.
- Anti-bullying.
- Exclusions.
- SEND.
- Behaviour and relationships.

## 7. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(August 2024\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2025\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2023\)](#)

## 8. Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

### Appendix 1: Example leave of absence request form

#### Request to authorise absence from school due to exceptional circumstances

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional. **Please note:** There is no general right to authorised absence for a family holiday. If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised, and the local authority will consider legal action.

**You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.**

#### Section A – to the headteacher, I wish to apply for

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

To be authorised as absent from school (please include dates and time):

from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (inclusive dates)

If your child has siblings that are also applying for a leave of absence, please enter their name and school below:

Child's name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B** Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the **circumstances** which make your **application exceptional**; and therefore, the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific

event, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements. If you require additional space, please continue on the other side of the page.

**Section C** I am the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides. The information I have given on this form is correct.

Signature (parent/carer): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.**

**Section D – for school use only.**

**Tick as appropriate.**

Request approved for \_\_\_\_ number of days from the dates and times \_\_\_\_\_

A personal discussion with you is requested. Please contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Request not approved as the circumstances are not considered to constitute an exceptional reason and/or the impact of this absence will affect your child's educational progress.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This leave of absence form serves as a Warning to parent/carer. Any unauthorised absence during this period may be subject to a Penalty Notice OR may result in a prosecution if two previous penalty notices have been issued in a rolling three-year period

A Penalty Notice may be issued per parent/carer, per child (i.e. if two parents have two children this may result in four Penalty Notices – two Penalty Notices per parent).

Headteacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Current attendance rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation of section B (if required):

## Appendix 2: Example reply to leave of absence request

Dear Parent's name,

### **RE: Absence during term time – Child Name (Child DOB)**

Thank you for your application for absence in term time for Child's name. Whilst we appreciate your circumstances, St. Peter's Junior School do not approve any absences during term time unless they are due to exceptional circumstances as per the guidance from the Department of Education.

The rationale behind this decision is that the Government has provided evidence that satisfactory progress at school is highly dependent on attendance.

St. Peter's Junior School works closely with the Inclusion Support Service and if you choose to take your child out of school for the above unauthorised leave, we will notify the local authority and further action including legal action may be considered.

Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid after 28 days this may result in legal action be taken against you. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have noted the dates that Child Name will be absent from St. Peter's Junior School, Dates of leave and the registers will be marked with the G code (unauthorised family holiday) for this period.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact the school on 01252 543320 to speak with the Headteacher.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Appendix 3: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

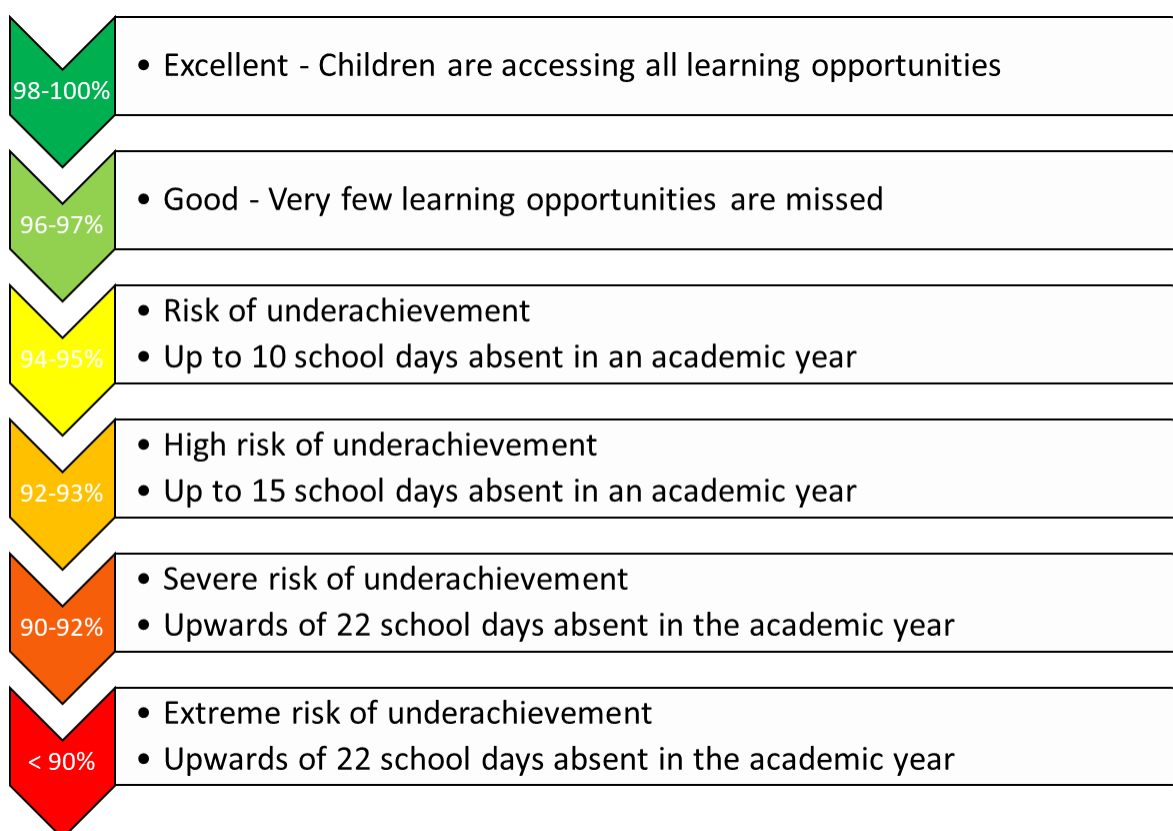
### Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

**You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:**

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Pupils must be in school by 8:50am.
- If your child appears to be only slightly unwell, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



### **‘On the day’ absences: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?**

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, please report this absence by phoning the school and leaving a message on the answer phone, to let us know. In the message you must leave your child’s full name, year and tutor group and give the **specific** reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register.

### **Leave of Absence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our ‘Leave of absence request’ form to make these types of requests. The form should be submitted in advance of the leave of absence, via [adminoffice@stpetersjun.co.uk](mailto:adminoffice@stpetersjun.co.uk) , or by hand to the school office. You will receive a letter in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined.

### **Punctuality**

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they are not in the classroom by 8:50 am when lessons start.

The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children’s attainment. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Please contact Diane Martin (DHT / Inclusion Lead) on 01252 543320 if you require any support with ensuring your child’s regular school attendance.

### **Appendix 4: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Students**

#### **Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Students**

##### **Roles and responsibilities:**

All members of the school community at St. Peter’s Junior School have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

##### **Role of the pupils:**

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

All pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive to lessons punctually.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

## Appendix 5: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from Working Together to Improve School Attendance

| Code | Definition  | Scenario  |
|------|---|---|
| /    | Present (am)  | Pupil is present at morning registration  |
| \    | Present (pm)  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration  |
| L    | Late arrival  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed   |
| B    | Off-site educational activity approved by the school. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity. | Examples of nature of activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) Attending taster days at college</li> <li>• 2) Attending courses at college</li> <li>• 3) Attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school</li> </ul> |
| D    | Dual registered   | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered  |
| K    | Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority. Schools must also record the nature of the provision             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending courses at college</li> <li>• Attending unregistered alternative provision such as, home tutoring</li> </ul>   |
| P    | Sporting activity   | The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity   |
| V    | Educational visit or trip   | An educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff  |

| Code                             | Definition  | Scenario   |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Absent – leave of absence</b> |   |  |
| <b>C</b>                         | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances<br>Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance | Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school |
| <b>C1</b>                        | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad   | All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours  |
| <b>C2</b>                        | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable   | All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs                              |
| <b>E</b>                         | Excluded  | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made  |
| <b>I</b>                         | Illness (not medical or dental appointment)   | The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness   |
| <b>J1</b>                        | Interview   | Attending an interview for admission to another educational institution  |
| <b>M</b>                         | Medical appointment   | Attending a medical or dental appointment  |
| <b>R</b>                         | Religious observance  | The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to  |
| <b>T</b>                         | Parent travelling for occupational purposes   | The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them   |
| <b>X</b>                         | Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school   |  |

| Code   | Definition  | Scenario   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b> |   |  |
| <b>Q</b>   | Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements    | This is linked to transport not other access arrangements  |
| <b>Y1</b>  | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available | The school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available |
| <b>Y2</b>  | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel                 |  |
| <b>Y3</b>  | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed        |  |
| <b>Y4</b>  | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed | Adverse weather  |
| <b>Y5</b>  | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention              | In police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.   |
| <b>Y6</b>  | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law       |  |
| <b>Y7</b>  | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause                 | An emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.  |

| Code                        | Definition                               | Scenario  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |  |   |
| <b>G</b>                    | Unauthorised holiday                     | Holiday not granted by the school   |
| <b>N</b>                    | Reason for absence not yet established   | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| <b>O</b>                    | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given   |
| <b>U</b>                    | Arrival after registration               | A pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.   |

| Code                        | Definition                                  | Scenario  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Administrative Codes</b> |   |   |
| <b>Z</b>                    | Prospective pupil not on admission register | To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. |
| <b>#</b>                    | Planned whole school closure                | Whole school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of whole school as polling station           |