



Attendance and Absence Policy

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Statement of intent

St Stephen's Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

St Stephen's Primary School's attendance can be contacted by phoning 01274 731698, or emailing office@ststephens.bradford.sch.uk. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer in the first instance for queries or concerns about attendance.

Mr Elcock (Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead) is our school's Attendance Leader

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviours Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across St Stephen's Primary School.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through St Stephen's Primary School's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the Leadership Team to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in St Stephen's Primary School's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across St Stephen's Primary School.
- Appointing a member of the Leadership Team to the attendance lead role.

- Ensuring all parents are aware of St Stephen's Primary School's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during St Stephen's Primary School day.

The Attendance Leader is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Working with the Attendance Officer to monitor attendance on a weekly basis and agree appropriate follow-up actions.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing St Stephen's Primary School with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating St Stephen's Primary School if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed (9:25)
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which St Stephen's Primary School has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which St Stephen's Primary School has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which St Stephen's Primary School has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during St Stephen's Primary School day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

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

Missing education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

4. Attendance expectations

St Stephen's Primary School has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

St Stephen's Primary School day starts at 8:45am, when the class doors open. Pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time. Class doors close at 8:55am, after which time pupils arriving must enter through the main school doors, and will be marked 'late'.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout St Stephen's Primary School day:

- The morning register will be marked at 8:55am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at 9:25. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked at 12:45pm (Reception, Y1-4) and 1pm (Y5, Y6). Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close 30 minutes after these times. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

5. Absence procedures

Parents are expected to contact St Stephen's Primary School office via telephone before 8:45am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted St Stephen's Primary School by 8:45am to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by text and telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school, but usually by 9:30.

St Stephen's Primary School will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto St Stephen's Primary School census system.

St Stephen's Primary School will usually request evidence of medical appointments or procedures when these are given as reasons for absence.

In the case of Persistent Absence (more than 10%), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent(s).

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, St Stephen's Primary School may remove the pupil from the admissions register if St Stephen's Primary School and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Please see the Appendix for further information about absence procedures.

6. Attendance register

St Stephen's Primary School uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.

St Stephen's Primary School will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by St Stephen's Primary School
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register
- # = planned whole or partial school closure

When St Stephen's Primary School has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because St Stephen's Primary School has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, St Stephen's Primary School will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

St Stephen's Primary School will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, St Stephen's Primary School will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. St Stephen's Primary School is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave are unlikely to be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. St Stephen's Primary School cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by St Stephen's Primary School in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

St Stephen's Primary School will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises St Stephen's Primary School's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by St Stephen's Primary School for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not

fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from St Stephen's Primary School. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks advance, but St Stephen's School acknowledges that this is not always possible due to how some religious dates are decided.

St Stephen's Primary School will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. St Stephen's Primary School will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

St Stephen's Primary School may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

St Stephen's Primary School recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, St Stephen's Primary School will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. St Stephen's Primary School will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where St Stephen's Primary School has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, St Stephen's Primary School will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from St Stephen's Primary School for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

St Stephen's Primary School will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, St Stephen's Primary School will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

9. Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from St Stephen's Primary School premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will submit a request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and if appropriate will invite the parent into St Stephen's Primary School for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on St Stephen's Primary School premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent of their decision within one week of the request.

Pupils will leave St Stephen's Primary School premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than the end of lunchtime.

Parents will be required to meet their child at their building's office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the InVentry system. A member of staff will be available the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a yearly basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

10. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which St Stephen's Primary School has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:45 and 12:45pm, (1:00 in Y5-6) where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave St Stephen's Primary School during the day must sign out at St Stephen's Primary School office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. Missing children

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

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of St Stephen's Primary School premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - The Orchard and Digital Den
 - St Stephen's Primary School grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of St Stephen's Primary School premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- St Stephen's Primary School will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will record the incident on CPOMS, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure St Stephen's Primary School has effective procedures for managing absence, the Attendance Lead and Attendance Officer, supported by the Leadership Team, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Discussing barriers to attendance with parents.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices if appropriate.

St Stephen's Primary School will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

St Stephen's Primary School will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Through the promotion of St Stephen's Attendance HERO campaign, whereby all pupils who have been Here, Every day, Ready, On time each week are given a sticker for their HERO sticker book, and entered into a draw to win a £5 shopping voucher.
- Classes with the most Heroes each week are entitled to an extra 10 minutes' playtime.



13. Working with parents to improve attendance

St Stephen's Primary School will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents 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. St Stephen's Primary School will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

St Stephen's Primary School will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure St Stephen's Primary School has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

St Stephen's Primary School will ensure that parents 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 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. St Stephen's Primary School will inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality on a half-termly basis, and will ensure that parents 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 officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. St Stephen's Primary 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 the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer 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 St Stephen's Primary School's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

14. Persistent Absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

St Stephen's Primary School will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with pupils and parents to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Offering our Attendance Mini-bus or Attendance Walking Bus to collect pupils from their homes in the morning.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

St Stephen's Primary School will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, St Stephen's Primary School will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with St Stephen's Primary School's duty of care. St Stephen's Primary School will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Legal intervention

St Stephen's Primary School will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the Headteacher.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher may issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, St Stephen's Primary School will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

St Stephen's Primary School will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- St Stephen's Primary School cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across St Stephen's Primary School to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Leadership Team in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

St Stephen's Primary School will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

17. Training of staff

St Stephen's Primary School will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- St Stephen's Primary School's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- St Stephen's Primary School's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. St Stephen's Primary School's attendance target is 96 percent.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is February 2025

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

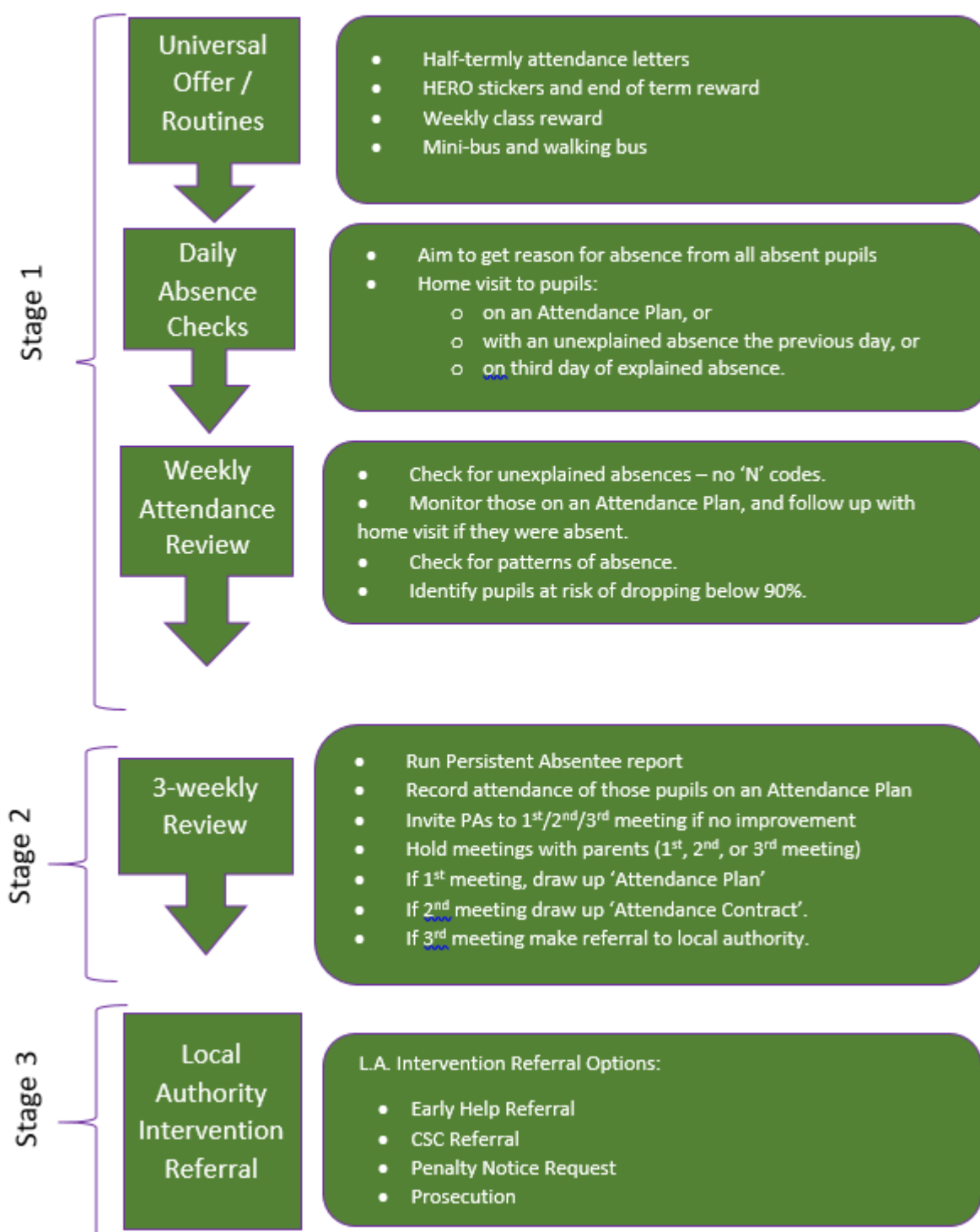
19. Appendices

The following documents are those most frequently used in our school to promote good attendance. There are other documents and letters that may be used less frequently. For further examples, please contact The Attendance Officer.

Appendix B – overview of attendance process



Attendance Interventions Overview



Appendix C – concerns letter

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Address: Gaythorne Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 7HU Telephone: 01274 731698
Email: office@ststephens.bradford.sch.uk Web: ststephens.bradford.sch.uk



[Date]

Dear Parent/Carer of «Name»,

I am writing to you because we are concerned about your child's attendance, and we would like it to improve.

Their attendance is now «Attendance» since September. Because your child's attendance is below 90%, they are classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' which is a government definition. We aim for 96% attendance for all pupils. Please make sure your child comes to school every day.

On [date], we will be reviewing your child's attendance, and if it has got worse, we will be inviting you to a meeting with Mr Khan (Family Welfare Champion) to discuss ways we can work together to help improve your child's attendance.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming. Poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older, and may affect their future life chances.

We would appreciate your support to make sure your child's attendance improves.

Thank you for your cooperation

Yours sincerely,

Mr Elcock (Deputy Head) and Mr Khan (Family Welfare Champion)

Concerns letter



ststephens.bradford.sch.uk

Appendix D – invitation to 1st meeting

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Address: Gaythorne Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 7HU Telephone: 01274 731698
Email: office@ststephens.bradford.sch.uk Web: ststephens.bradford.sch.uk



Date

Dear

Since we wrote to you at the end of last term, _____'s attendance has not improved significantly, and is now ____%. This is below what we expect - 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year – your child will spend more time at home than at school this academic year!

We wish to help _____ to improve their attendance.

Please come to a meeting in school with me, Mr Khan, on _____ at _____ to discuss what we can all do to help your child attend more regularly, and to make a plan for improved attendance.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming. Poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older, and may affect their future life chances.

We would appreciate your support to make sure your child's attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to Bradford Council for consideration of a fixed penalty notice fine or legal action if unauthorised absence continues to occur.

Thank you for your cooperation

Yours sincerely

Mr Khan (Family Welfare Champion)

(1st meeting invitation)



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Appendix E - Attendance Plan





Attendance Plan

(to be completed with parent(s) at first meeting)

School		Name of Pupil		Date	
Parent / Guardian		Main Concern		% Attendance	
Concern you're raising: e.g. Types / Freq of Absence. Any patterns.	Parent Guardian Explanation:				
Any family/ social difficulties which prevent or affect attendance					
What advice support is required or recommended?					
Parent made aware and understands legal implications?	Education Act 1996 section 444 states that all parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's attendance at school. Once all required support is in place, a failure to ensure regular attendance could result in the Local Authority pursuing legal action.				
Target to improve attendance	(Advise that the next unauthorised absence will trigger escalation)				
Agreed action for School					
Agreed action for other professionals (i.e. Attendance Officer)					
	Parent Signature			School Signature	

Appendix F – Intervention tracking form

 City of BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL		 St Stephen's CE Primary School		ATTENDANCE STAGE ONE – Intervention Tracking Form	
Child / Worker Details					
Child(ren)'s Name(s)	Date(s) of Birth	Year Group		Stage 1 End Date	
Staff Name	School				
School Attendance Intervention Actions					
				Date(s)	
Half-termly attendance letter					
Invitation to meeting 1 – School Letter 1 – Attendance Plan					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To invite parent to meeting to agree an Attendance Plan, using template. Letter 1 acts as a low level warning letter to remind parents of the impact of poor attendance and puts attendance into context whilst offering support 					
School Letter Med – After Letter 1					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For use if a pupil is recording levels of absence due to illness or medical absences (I or M codes) but no medical evidence has been forthcoming. 					
Invitation to meeting 2 – School Letter 2 – Parent Contract					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For use should unauthorised absence continue following the issuing of School Letter 1, and if Letter MED has not resulted in medical evidence being received Meeting 2 reinforces positives of regular attendance, offers support, highlights that attendance is being monitored, whilst warning of possible consequences i.e. PNs 					
Other meetings					
Contact Log – Summary of contact/actions relating to attendance					
Date	Details of Contact				Staff Initial

Appendix G – Application form for extended leave



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

St. Stephen's Primary School

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. St. Stephen's expects all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment.

At St. Stephen's Primary School, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to decide on whether or not leave will be authorised. Leave is only authorised in exceptional circumstances.

When leave is unauthorised, and in exceptional circumstances, a fine may be issued by Bradford Council and your child may lose their place at school. If this is the case, the penalty fine would be £60 per parent, per child.

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, please complete this form and return it to school at least 2 weeks before the intended departure. You may then be invited into school for a meeting with a member of the Attendance Team.

Thank you.

PARENT'S SECTION

First Name(s) of Child:	Last Name(s) of Child:
Class Name:	Year Group:
First Name of Parent/Guardian:	Last Name of Parent/Guardian:
Mobile Telephone Number:	Home Telephone Number:
Reason for Absence (please give as much detail as possible):	
Number of school days to be absent:	Destination:
First day of absence:	Date due back in school:
Parents/Guardian Signature:	Date:

SCHOOLS SECTION (to be completed by schools only)

Date of meeting:	Head Teacher's Signature:	Date:
Current attendance (year to date):	Attendance in previous year:	Dates of previous extended leave (if any):
Leave authorised?	Fine to be issued?	Notes:

Appendix H – Daily Attendance Routine

Daily Absence Responsibilities



Task	When	Who
Attendance Officer sends text to parents of children late the day before reminding what time school starts.	7:50	Attendance Officer
Administrator listens to any answer phone messages and record absences on Arbor .	8:00	Administrator
Attendance Officer marks driving bus pupils present on Arbor IF they will arrive after 8:55.	8:55	Attendance Officer
Administrators (from 8:15) – answer the phone, speak to parents, following guidance, and record reasons for absence.	From 8am	Admin Team
Administrator and Diane aim to enter reasons for absence from in person calls or voicemail, onto Arbor no later than 9:15.	Before 9:15am	Admin Team
Teachers start registers at 8:55, must be finished by 9am.	8:55-9:00	Teachers
Admin Team to update Inventory/Arbor lates from 9:05 (not before, as teachers doing register after a late mark has been entered will over-write any late marks).	From 9:05	Admin Team
Admin Team to update Arbor if a parent rings with a reason for absence after 9:15. If unable to add to Arbor , ring Attendance Officer after 9:15.	From 9:00	Admin Team
Attendance Officer to decide whether to ring back any parent leaving a message that has been recorded on Arbor , and follow guidance.	From 9:00	Attendance Officer
Attendance Officer supports Administrator in Willow Office from 8:55-9:10. Attendance Officer greets parents of late children, and helps them sign in , and asks if there's anything school can do to help them be on time. Attendance Officer walks late children to their classes.	8:55-9:10	Attendance Officer
Attendance Officer rings Administrators to check there is no more absence info to go on Arbor , then sends text to all pupils with 'N' code.	9:15	Attendance Officer
Attendance Officer copies any text replies to Arbor	From 9:15	Attendance Officer
Attendance Officer views absent pupils on Arbor , and decide on appropriate follow-up, either: - phone call - home visit (Attendance Officer) - Attendance Officer inform Medical Officer if they become aware of any 'notifiable diseases'. Medical follow up phone call from medical officer to parents if necessary.	9:15-9:30	Attendance Officer
Check no 'N' codes still on register	10:00	Attendance Officer
(If time) Phone children with 'I' code to see how they are and if they can be expected in next day.	Afternoon (if possible)	Attendance Officer
Record absence notifications on Arbor with: [method of receiving notification – phone call or in person] [Time] [Initials of person taking message] followed by summary of conversation, including who left the message.		

