



# ST GEORGE'S ACADEMY

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

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### 1. Rationale

#### 'Working together to improve school attendance'

##### The Importance of Regular Attendance:

At St George's Academy we recognise that positive behaviour and good school attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. 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.

Regular attendance is a critical pre-requisite to student progress. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and can result in students being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour, which is a safeguarding issue.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "Working together to improve school attendance" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance including the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing education or absent from school. This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- Work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.
- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the suitable, full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave.
- Our policy outlines the school's commitment to attendance.
- Our policy aims to provide clear guidance to all staff, parents and carers, pupils and governors/trustees about the responsibilities and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.
- Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:
  - Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.
  - Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
  - Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and



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consistently.

For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. 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.

### **Aims of the Policy:**

The Academy aims to maximise access for all students of the Academy to the educational process through encouraging regular attendance

We aim to develop in students, habits of good attendance and punctuality that will stay with them and support them in adult life.

## **2. Objectives**

- Achieving above 95% attendance across the Academy as a whole
- Minimising unauthorised attendance, accurately recording all absence and noting reasons for the absence
- Reducing Persistent Absence (students under 90% attendance)
- Supporting and signposting students with Severe Absence (under 50% attendance)
- Improved communications with parents / carers to inform them of any absence from the Academy

## **3. Guidelines**

- All students register with their form tutors in the morning and with their subject teachers at the start of the first period in the afternoon
- Students are required to be in their form rooms for morning registration by 8.45am and in their afternoon teaching bases by 1.25pm for afternoon registration
- Staff complete on-line registers promptly and correctly marked
- Students must bring in a note, or their parent/guardian must inform the Academy through the MCAS App, explaining any absence each morning by 8am
- Students must attend for all internal and external examinations unless the absence is for a genuine medical reason. In the case of external examinations students will be charged examination fees if they fail to attend for reasons other than medical
- It is illegal to authorise absence during term time for family holidays, any special consideration must be submitted via the 'Application for authorisation of absence for holidays in term time' form which can be found on our website
- Students absent without reason are contacted via a phone call on the first day of absence. We have clear procedures in place



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- Students are responsible for catching up on work missed through absence
- Regular contact will be made with parents in line with Academy procedures and County procedures
- The Attendance Officers, Form Tutors, Student Support Officers and Student Progress Managers monitor attendance and praise / reward good attendance and follow Academy / County procedures for those with poor attendance
- Governors' attendance panels may be convened as and when necessary. Parents /Carers of students who persistently absent themselves from lessons will be asked to work closely with the Academy to help fulfil their legal obligation to educate their child
- All staff are to keep a register of attendance for each lesson on the Bromcom system and notify the Student Progress Manager if any students are suspected of being absent without justification.

### 4. Our Aims

#### 'Support First'

##### **Voluntary Support**

It is vital that we build strong relationships together to support any students who are struggling with attendance. We will listen to our families and students and understand any barriers to attendance, in order to work in partnership to remove them.

Our Attendance Policy and effective day to day processes are in place to follow-up absence. We will regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data and identify students that require support. Effective strategies will need to be agreed to support the student to feel confident in attending school and all the benefits that brings. We may involve outside agencies to remove barriers, we will share information and work collaboratively with all parties.

We will be particularly mindful of students who are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health, or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support. We would very much hope that together we can improve attendance and the future opportunities of every single one of our students at the Academy. If through voluntary support we see no engagement or improvement in attendance figures, we would need to formalise attendance improvement efforts.

##### **Formal Support**

A formal attendance contract is agreed between the child, parent, school and/or local authority. Progressing to a legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court if there is non-engagement and deemed necessary. The law protects a young persons' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

##### **Attendance Prosecution**

Where all other routes have failed or not deemed appropriate the case may be considered for a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

##### **Statutory Children's Social Care Involvement**



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Where there are safeguarding concerns and an Education Supervision Order is not appropriate or has not been successful, the case should be considered for s.17 or s.47 statutory social care intervention.

#### **National Framework for Penalty Notice Fines**

These have changed -

- 5 or more consecutive days of term-time leave and irregular attendance OR 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.
- First offence— £160 per parent / per child / £80 if pay within 21 days
- Second offence (within 3 years) £160 per parent /per child
- Third Offence, and any further (within 3 years) Magistrates Court— £2,500 per parent / per child

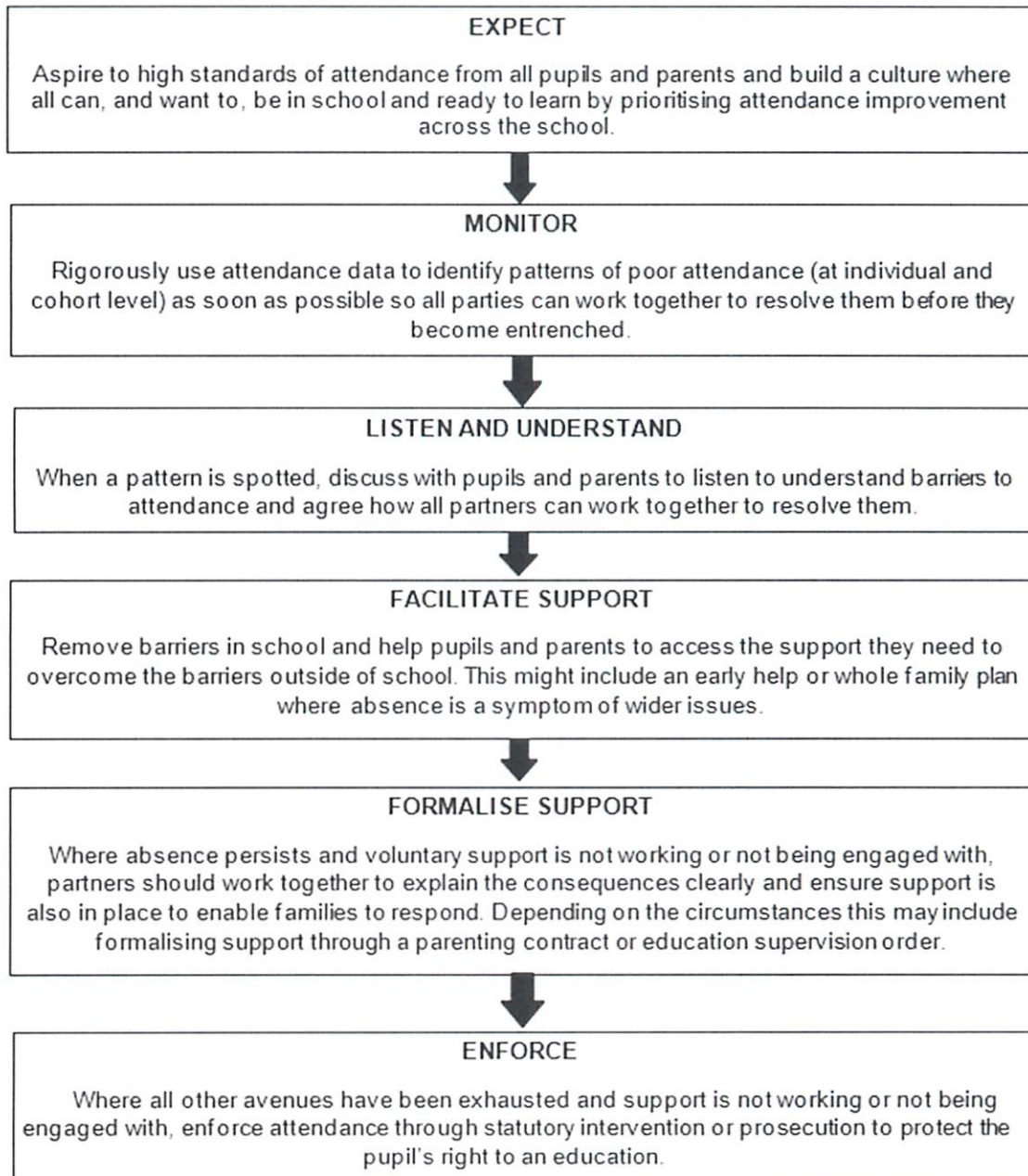
Our Attendance Procedure document is linked to this Attendance Policy for further details



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At St George's Academy we follow the DfE Working together to Improve School Attendance Approach:



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



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Policy Developed by: Claire Crawshaw, Senior Vice Principal

Date Adopted: *September 2025*

Reviewing Committee: Student Support

Frequency of Review: 2 Years

Date last reviewed: *September 2025*

To be reviewed by: *September 2027*

Name ..... *G. Arnold* ..... Signature ..... 

Committee: *Full Governors*