



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP

As we grow with God, we learn from each other



ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Aims

St Dunstan's Catholic School is dedicated to promoting a distinctive Catholic ethos by upholding the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are committed to developing the full potential of every individual, regardless of culture, race, religion, disability, or special need by creating a safe, orderly environment where all members of the community work diligently in a spirit of co-operation and treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times. St Dunstan's Catholic School places high priority on good attendance and punctuality, believing that it promotes effective learning and has a significant impact on personal development, progress and attainment, whilst at and beyond school. Regular attendance is crucial if students are to reach their potential and be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic success. St Dunstan's Catholic School will strive to provide a welcoming environment for all students and staff and will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends regularly and is punctual to both school and lessons.

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

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



3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governors

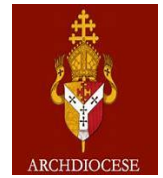
Governors are responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Sharing attendance updates with Link Governor for attendance

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

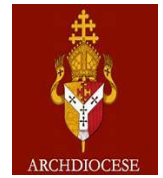
- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the senior attendance champion to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels



3.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis and monitoring attendance across St Dunstan's Catholic School on a regular basis
- To set and review challenging targets for attendance and support all staff and students to achieve them
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- To ensure electronic mechanisms for gathering attendance data are working effectively and staff are trained and supported in using them
- To ensure that all students are registered accurately
- Ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by getting in touch with parents/carers.
- To liaise with the Attendance Officer/ admin staff and ensure that attendance data is updated regularly, and feedback is provided to parents, staff, governors and DfE on a regular basis
- To provide compulsory attendance data to the DfE as and when requested.
- To lead the rewards policy for excellent and improved attendance.
- To ensure strategies to encourage high attendance receive a high profile with students, parents, staff and governors.
- To ensure strategies to address lateness work effectively.
- Liaise with the appropriate bodies over persistent absences.
- To liaise with external education providers and ensure regular attendance feedback is given to the school and the LA for students receiving off site provision.
- Liaise with agencies and the police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.
- The designated senior leader for attendance (Senior Attendance Champion) is Mrs C Keating and can be contacted via the school office or by email enquiry@stdunstans.bham.sch.uk
- To line manage and support senior attendance champion to ensure implementation of above



3.4 School Attendance Officer

The school Attendance Officer is responsible for:

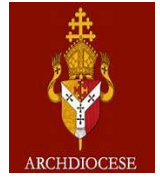
- Producing, monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior attendance champion responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with the Family Support Officer to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Senior attendance lead when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Daily administration for absences and first day contact.
- To operate the electronic attendance software daily.
- To ensure any 'paper' registers are transferred to the electronic system after registration when required.
- To print off registers (am and pm) in case of emergency evacuation.
- Contact parents/carers where there is unexplained absence by phone/text
- Pass on relevant information to the appropriate Phase Leader regarding unusual or long-term absences.
- To provide class teachers with weekly updates of attendance to allow them to clear unauthorised absences.
- To record reasons for absence and transfer information on to the attendance system.
- To amend registers accordingly
- Monitor and review student attendance looking for patterns and trends regarding absences.
- Monitor and review student punctuality.
- Generate letters
- Seek support from the Senior attendance Champion where there are concerns about student attendance/punctuality.
- Generate half termly letters of praise for students with excellent attendance/punctuality.

3.5 Phase Leaders

- To encourage an ethos of excellent attendance and punctuality with all students.
- To monitor the attendance of all students within the Phase.
- To analyse patterns of non-attendance and address these appropriately.
- To identify students in need of further support and use appropriate referral systems where necessary.
- To place attendance and punctuality on the agenda for Phase meetings and support class teachers with their monitoring of attendance
- To seek the support of Senior Attendance Champion as required.

3.6 Family Support Worker

- To work with identified pupil and their parents/carers to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance as directed by the Senior Attendance Champion.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, to signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. If



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners.

- To meet with students at risk of persistent absence to put support in place looking at removing any in-school barriers to attendance and completing attendance improvement plans with student and parent/carer, monitoring attendance for a period of time following this.

3.7 Class Teacher

- To take the register during morning and afternoon registration using the assigned system.
- To use a paper registration sheet to communicate all absences when the electronic system is not available.
- To ensure all students are aware that they must sign in at reception if they arrive after 8.50am.
- Inform the Senior Attendance Champion of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.
- To positively encourage all students to be in school, on time, every day.
- To proactively speak with pupils/parents/carers regularly regarding attendance concerns / reasons for absence.
- To update attendance monitoring information on SIMS/My Concern as appropriate.

3.8 Parents/Carers

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Section 444 of the Act states that: 'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence.' Parents (or the person with parental responsibility) are primarily responsible for ensuring that their child attends and stays at school. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at the School on time, correctly dressed and prepared to learn. If a student is prevented from attending St Dunstan's Catholic School because of sickness or other unavoidable cause then it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of the student's absence, ideally this should be by telephone on the first day of absence and confirmed in writing. Wherever possible, parents should avoid making non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. Parents do not have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time.

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

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

Parents are expected to:

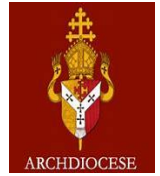
- Make sure their child attends every day on time, correctly dressed and prepared to learn
- Where a student is prevented from attending St Dunstan's Catholic School because of sickness or other unavoidable cause call the school to report their child's absence before 9am, (or report using School Gateway app) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with **more than one** emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Following the correct procedures when arriving late to the school.
- Problems with attendance should be discussed with the class teacher, Attendance Officer, Family Support Worker, SENDCO or Senior Attendance Champion.

3.9 Pupils



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

Students are responsible for making sure that their attendance and punctuality is maintained at the highest level. They will do this by:

- Attending the school and all their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.
- Following an absence, bringing in a note explaining the reason for their absence.
- Following the correct procedures when arriving late to school.

3.10 Children of Non Compulsory School Age (under 5)

Children of non-compulsory school age (under 5) who would benefit from a staggered approach over time to transition into reception, will be supported with a bespoke integration pathway to meet their individual needs. This can look like a reduced time attending the provision with a plan to increase their time in school in line with meeting individual needs in conjunction with the Local Authority.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to agreed exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment (See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.50am and ends at 3.30pm Monday-Friday. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.20am. The register for the second session will be taken during afternoon in final lesson of the day at 3.15pm.

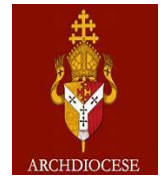
4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am.



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

Absence can be notified using the School Gateway app or by leaving a message on the Attendance answer machine 01214644648 option 1, which is available 24 hours per day.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a hospital or orthodontic appointment that cannot be changed will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Absence due to medical or dental appointments that have to be made during the school day will not be authorised. (See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes). We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Any student arriving after 8.50am must be signed in at Reception giving a reason for their absence, **by a responsible adult**. They will be recorded as late and marked as such in the official register.
- Students who continue to arrive late to school will be identified as part of our Lates Initiative Group where the school will work with parents/students to help reduce lateness and further sanctions put in place where lateness continues.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Contact the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If a child is absent for three consecutive days, or where the school has a wellbeing concern, the school will conduct a home visit.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not. It is the duty of the school to decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. An explanation does not itself authorise an absence, only the school's acceptance of the explanation offered authorises it.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent.
- Contact the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

- Identify whether the pupil/family need support from outside agencies, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

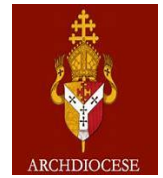
4.6 Reporting to parents

St Dunstan's Catholic School follows Birmingham City Council's 'Support First' school attendance framework. The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through regular communication of where your child is on the graduated scale.

Provisional timeline of communication shown below.

5 Foundations Timeline AY 2025/2026





5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable. It is the responsibility of the school to determine whether an absence in this category should be authorised or not. Each application would be considered separately. Absences for social occasions such as birthdays and family outings are unauthorised by the school.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

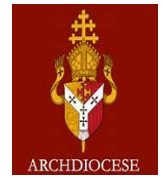
Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated before the absence and in accordance with any **leave of absence request form**, accessible via the school website. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

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

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

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

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

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

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

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

The local authority do not send reminders to parents regarding payments and there is no facility for parents to pay a Penalty Notice in instalments. Payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, parents are generally prosecuted under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 calendar days, or £160 within 28 calendar days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

St Dunstan's Catholic School uses the following strategies for rewarding, incentivising and improving attendance, these include:

6.1 Strategies for improving attendance

- Weekly attendance meetings with Senior Attendance Champion and other key staff including SENDCO and DSL team.
- Strategies for Maintaining and Improving Attendance and punctuality are always discussed at weekly meetings between class teachers and Phase Leaders.
- Regular communication sent home with updates on each pupil's number of days absence according to communication above.
- Where a student has not been in school for three consecutive days a health and well-being home visit will be conducted by school staff.
- Where students are persistent absentees (90% or below), or senior staff have other wellbeing concerns, home visits may be conducted earlier.
- Year group attendance and individual concerns highlighted at Academic Monitoring Meetings.
- Strategies are discussed concerning levels of intervention.
- Attendance improvement plan in place for students identified as needing further support with attendance and punctuality

6.2 Strategies for Rewarding and incentivising Good Attendance

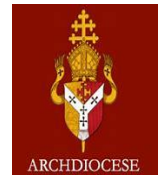
- All classes are part of the Attendance Premier League which is celebrated in assemblies, on newsletters and on the school website.
- All pupils are part of the Punctuality 'Spin the Wheel' incentive

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

For pupils with complex barriers to attendance St Dunstan's Catholic School will do the following to work with families and strategies for removing in-school barriers.

- Rigorous use of attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible.
- Layered level of school support in to provide strategies for removing in-school barriers. This includes:
 - monitoring attendance
 - 1-1 conversations with class teachers
 - meetings with Phase Leaders to include student voice, attendance improvement plans and further monitoring
 - meetings with parents and offer of early help assessment where required.



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

For pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND St Dunstan's Catholic School will work with families in the following ways:

- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.
- School will meet with students and parents to discuss in-school support with other school professionals including our Family Support Officer and SENDCO. A plan will be put in place and reviewed moving forward.

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

To support pupils back into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence St Dunstan's Catholic School may decide to:

- Put in place strategies to support the student on their return to school.
- Implement a buddy system where appropriate to support return to school.
- Offer support in catching up with work missed.
- Offer of a 6 week modified timetable where appropriate, reported to the Local Authority

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely. Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

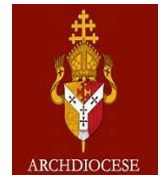
8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:



As we grow with God, we learn from each other

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and Phase Leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

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

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP

As we grow with God, we learn from each other



Agreed by Governors July 2025

To be reviewed July 2027



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP

As we grow with God, we learn from each other



Appendix 1: DFE approved attendance codes



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CODES - DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved educational activity
K	LA arranged provision at a place other than a school	Approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
C	Absent with leave (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
C1	Absent due to participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Part-time timetable	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Interview	Authorised absence
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence



St Dunstan's Catholic School

Drayton Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, B14 7LP

As we Grow With God, We Learn From Each Other



D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
Q	Lack of transport or boarding access arrangements arranged by LA	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Transport normally provided by LA or school not available	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel due to local, national or international emergency	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	School partially closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	Travel or attendance contrary to public health guidance or law on transmission of disease	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils (planned closure)	Not counted in possible attendances

KEY

Present
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Not counted in possible attendances