



**ST TERESA
of CALCUTTA**
Catholic Academy Trust

St Gabriel's
Roman Catholic High School



**STRENGTH
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St Gabriel's Roman Catholic High School

Policy for Promoting Good Attendance

Date of Creation: January 2023

Name: Claire Cull

Signed:

Position: Deputy Headteacher

Date of Most Recent Review: November 2023

Date of Next Review: September 2024



St Gabriel's

Roman Catholic High School



Contents

Introduction	3
Expectations of pupils and parents/carers	4
Daily routines	5
Reporting absence	6
Requesting leaves of absence	6
Managing attendance	7
Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action	10
Fixed penalty notices	12
Appendix 1 St Gabriel's RC High School Informative Poster	13
Appendix 2 Flow chart showing how schools and local partners work with families to improve attendance	14

1. Introduction

1.1 At St Gabriel's RC High School, we expect all pupils to:

- Attend every school day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school prepared for the day

1.2 We believe that attending school, on time, is key to enabling children to make the most of the opportunities we offer to prepare them for their future.

1.3 We will work in partnership with our families to identify the reasons for poor attendance, supporting them in addressing any barriers to attendance for their child.

1.4 Promoting good attendance is a matter for the whole school community. This policy sets out our expectations and our approach. Our approach is in line with the Department for Education's guidance (May 2022) [Working together to improve school attendance](#) which we have implemented since September 2022.

1.5 This policy takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010 and the 1996 Education Act.

1.6 Our approach to securing good attendance is based on the principle of support first. In line with Ofsted's research, our approach can be summarised as *'Listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate.'*

1.7 Every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers.

1.8 In the case of specific illnesses that require pupils to be kept off school, parents/carers should follow public health advice to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community. These illnesses are Chickenpox, Diarrhoea and Vomiting, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Scabies, Scarlet Fever and Whooping Cough – see ['How long should you keep your child off school – checklist poster'](#). Parents should follow the latest public health advice in relation to COVID-19.

- 1.9 This policy will be applied consistently and fairly. In applying this policy, we will take into account the needs of individual pupils.
- 1.10 This policy is supported by other school policies and procedures (e.g. Admissions, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-bullying, Behaviour and SEND).

2 Expectations

- 2.1 It is our responsibility to maintain a culture that promotes good attendance which is supported by consistently applied systems.
- 2.2 Our dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is Mrs C Cull – Deputy Headteacher.
- 2.3 Other key staff in school who support attendance on a day-to-day basis are:
- Mrs Rosa (Headteacher)
 - Mark Eaton (Attendance Officer)
 - Sally Aldred (Attendance Officer)
 - Heads of Year
 - Pastoral Managers
 - Form Teachers
- 2.4 **All staff** will provide support on attendance. Staff will demonstrate and understand that parental engagement in children's learning is a highly effective means of improving attendance. They will also understand that it is a duty of school staff to find meaningful, inclusive and accessible ways to involve and engage parents and carers in their children's learning.
- 2.5 Parents / carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs and/or disabilities they may have by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents / carers can be supported to engage with their children's learning, both in and out of school, through information leaflets, use of social media, virtual learning platforms, links to online learning materials and information about outside educational experiences in the community.
- 2.6 We are committed to working with parents and carers to promote positive attendance. We expect all our **parents/carers** to:
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.



- Contact the school as soon as possible if your child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. This should be followed up with a written note as soon as possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. For example, pre-planned medical/ dental appointments should take place outside of school hours.
- Inform us of any change in circumstances that may impact on your child's attendance.
- Support us by becoming involved in your child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school.
- Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for your child including attending all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.
- Providing accurate and up to date contact details in case of emergency (there should be two emergency contacts recorded for every child).

2.7 We expect all our **pupils** to:

- Be aware of when they should attend school.
- Arrive at school on time (8.40am start).
- Attend form and all lessons on time, ready to learn.
- Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Communicate with parents / carers to encourage a written explanation to be shared with school to explain any absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late.

3a Daily routines

- 3a.1 At St Gabriel's RC High School, our Attendance Officers (Mr Eaton and Mrs Aldred), Pastoral Managers and Heads of Year meet and greet our pupils at the front of school at the beginning of the day. The school day begins at **8.40am**. Pupils are then required to go directly to their form room for registration and form time, or to line up for assembly. Pupils who arrive to school early are welcome to use our Resource Centre/Library or enjoy breakfast in our dining hall from 8.00am.
- 3a.2 Attendance registers are taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. Registers are also monitored at the start of each lesson.
- 3a.3 Our school day begins at 8.40am. The morning register will open and be taken at 8.40am. Any pupil arriving after 8.40am is required to report to the Attendance Office to sign in and provide a reason for lateness.

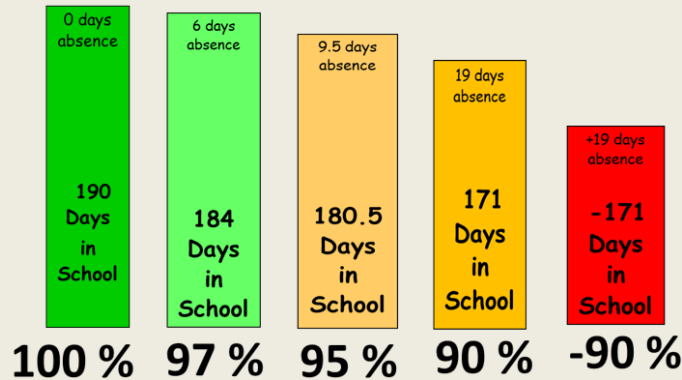
- 3a.4 If arrival is after 8.40am and **before 9.10am**, then the pupil will be recorded as late (Late **before** the close of register). The register will then be coded as L and the reason recorded on the communication log.
- 3a.5 The **school register must officially close at 9.10am**. Any pupil arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an **unauthorised absence** for the morning session (Late **after** the close of register). The register will then be coded as U and the reason recorded on the communication log.
- 3a.6 Pupils arriving **more than 10 minutes late to school**, whereby parents/carers have not contacted the school to make us aware of a reason beyond the students' control, will be issued with an S4 sanction and in turn will receive a 30-minute detention after school on the same day (3.15 - 3.45pm) which parents/carers will be notified of.
- 3a.6 Parents/carers will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in further action being taken to support improved attendance. (See Appendix 1)
- 3a.7 Our afternoon session begins at 12.30pm with a register taken at this time.
- 3a.8 Our school day ends at **3.10pm** (NB: this does not account for after school extra-curricular activities).

3b Absence Procedures

At St Gabriel's RC High School, **we expect all students to aspire for 100% attendance** and recognise that 96-100% attendance is 'good'.



Attendance and Punctuality



At St Gabriel's, we aim for all students to have 100% attendance and we reward this. However, good attendance means being in school at least 96% of the time (184 – 190 days)

To ensure the safety and educational wellbeing of all pupils, we have a rigorous monitoring system and follow up policy when absence occurs:

3b.1 On the first day of absence, the school must be notified of the reason for the

absence. If we are satisfied with the reason, we will authorise the absence. If we are not satisfied, the absence will not be authorised.

3b.2 When a pupil's attendance falls below 96% (regardless of whether absences have been authorised or not), stage 1 is triggered. Parents/carers are notified of the pupil's attendance percentage and a letter is sent out to inform parents that attendance monitoring has begun, and attendance must improve otherwise stage 2 will be triggered. (See Appendix 2)

3b.3 Pupils' attendance is continually monitored. If attendance improves, we will send a letter informing you of this and will resume monitoring their attendance in the usual way.

3b.4 If attendance does not improve, a letter is sent advising parents that stage 2 has been triggered, which requires parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss their child's absence. At this meeting, an attendance improvement plan will be agreed, recorded and implemented. (See Appendix 3 and Appendix 4)

3b.5 If a pupil's attendance fails to improve following the implementation of an attendance improvement plan, stage 3 will be triggered. A second meeting in school will be required where the next steps are agreed; **this will include a fixed penalty warning being issued, which could lead to a fixed penalty notice being charged per parent/carer by the Local Authority.**

NB: Please remember that a child's attendance percentage will be adversely affected by lateness to school incurring a U code and/or if a child's behaviour warrants suspension from school. Therefore, maintaining a 'good' standard of attendance also requires students to arrive to school punctually and meet our behaviour expectations.

4 Reporting Absence

4.1 If a child is absent from school, parents should contact school either by:

- Telephone 0161 764 3186
- Email – attendance@stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk

School must be contacted **before registration on the first day of absence** providing a reason for the absence.

4.2 If the absence continues, parents should contact the school office as stated in 4.1, **each day of absence** to identify the reason for absence and the expected date of return.

4.3 Where absence is recorded as unexplained, a reason for the absence must be obtained, in writing, no later than 5 school days after the session.

4.4 If a child is absent, and we have had no contact from the parents/carers to provide a reason for the absence, we will:

- Activate first day calling procedures after the register is closed at 9.10am, this includes a call to each contact on the contact list, a text message and an email to the parent / carer.
- If there remains no contact then a further telephone call will be made later that morning to the parent and, if no response, a call will be made to all the pupils' other emergency contacts again.
- If we cannot contact a parent/carer and are concerned about the pupil, a home visit may be carried out by the Attendance Officers. If the family is supported by a social worker, then the social worker will be informed.

4.5 If we have concerns around a pupil's safety, we may also visit the home of the pupil or request a welfare check to be made by the police.

4.6 We will telephone home if a pupil leaves school without permission.

5. Requesting leave of absence

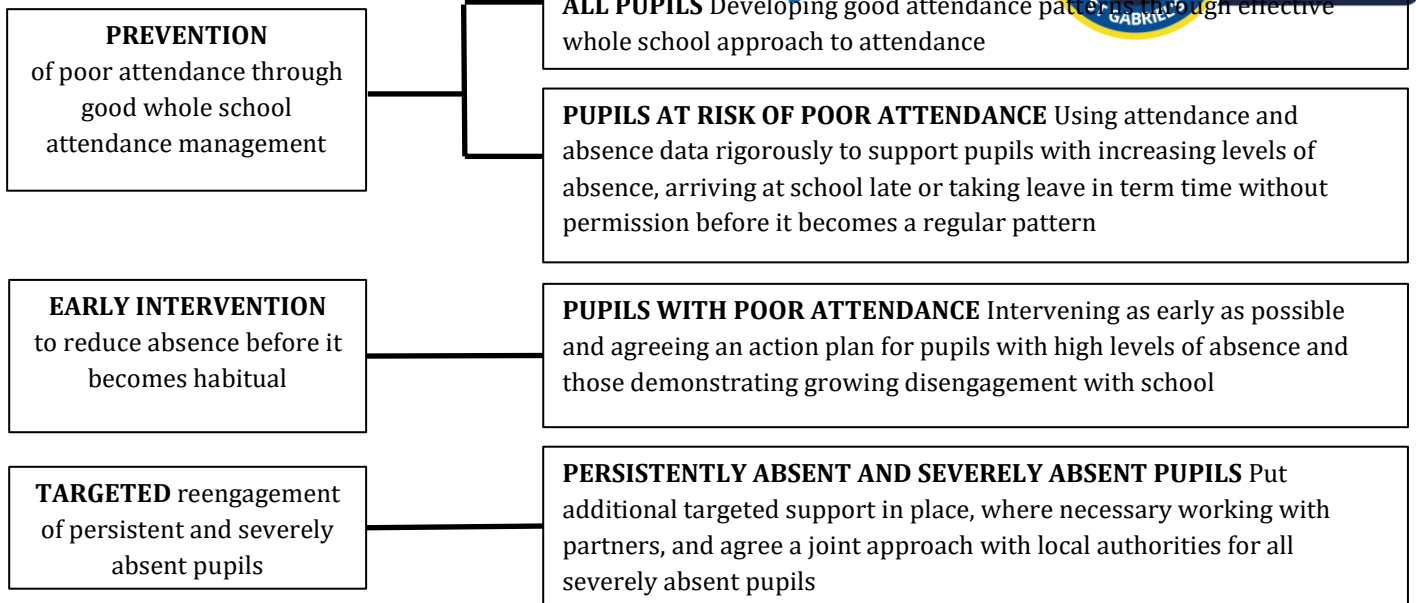
5.1 A leave of absence will only be granted (authorised) under exceptional circumstances. It is therefore unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday during term time. In making our decision, we will take into account the specific circumstances and context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing to the Headteacher giving as much notice as possible. These requests can be in writing to the following:



- attendance@stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk
- St Gabriel's RC High School, Bridge Road, Bury, BL9 0TZ.

6 Managing Attendance

- 6.1 Parents/carers should be monitoring their child's attendance through the Arbor App, which will inform parents/carers of the amount of time missed and the impact on learning.
- 6.2 We value and recognise the importance of good attendance. We may use the following to promote and celebrate good attendance:
- Praise and recognition within assemblies.
 - Reward vouchers for 100% attendance/improved attendance.
 - School trips for 100% attendance/improved attendance.
 - Attendance Awards (e.g. at annual celebration evenings).
 - Informative posters throughout school.
 - Arbor Parent App – immediate to all parents / carers.
- 6.3 We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who have consistently high attendance, those who have shown improvements in their attendance and to identify pupils who may be vulnerable (see 6.4 below). We will also analyse specific groups, classes, year groups to inform our strategy in promoting good attendance.
- 6.4 Our approach to attendance management is based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support. We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance, have poor attendance or are identified as being either persistently absent or severely absent.



- 6.5 We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts of pupils that need support. We will focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- 6.6 We recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties and trauma in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help us to identify any additional support that may be needed. It is expected that the child and their family work collaboratively with us to identify the most appropriate support. Where relevant, the support would involve following the Emotionally Based School Avoidance pathway.
- 6.7 We recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.
- 6.8 We will proactively meet with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable to discuss attendance at, and engagement with, school. This will include pupils who are classed as being persistently absent (10% or more absence), those who are severely absent (50% or more absence), those with patterns of absence and pupils who show an unexpected or unexplained dip in attendance.
- 6.9 Working with parents, we will identify pupils who need support from wider partners and will make the necessary referrals as quickly as possible. With parental consent, this may include exploring Early Help support or through discussion within a team around the school meeting.

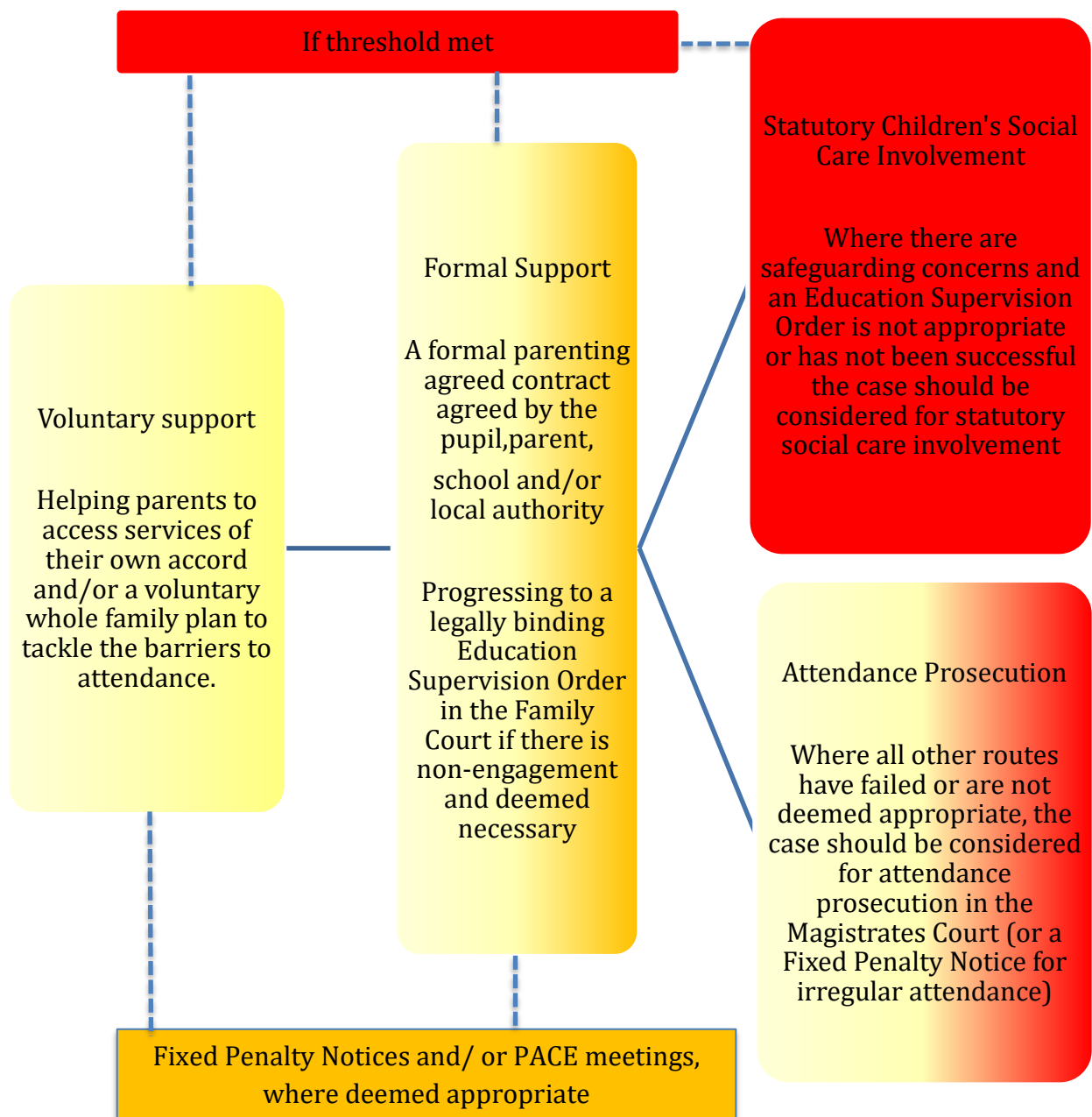


- 6.10 To aid this we will host regular attendance clinics in school and/or other venues in the community where parents can speak with the school's attendance officer and representatives of other agencies such as Housing, health care etc. that have been invited.
- 6.11 We will support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- 6.12 If we have any concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of a pupil then, in line with our safeguarding responsibilities, we will make any necessary referrals.
- 6.13 If we have been unable to contact the family, and have not seen the pupil, then we will inform the Local Authority so that joint enquiries can be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures

7. Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action

- 7.1 We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include:
- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement in school
 - Reward systems for positive behaviour
 - Discussion with parents and pupils
 - Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/ or has a social worker
 - Working with attendance professionals, internal and/ or external to the school
 - Attendance panels
 - Attendance support plans
 - Referrals to support agencies
 - Pupil Voice Activities
 - Friendship groups
 - Personal, social and health education
 - Anxiety-based school avoidance resources
 - Trauma-informed approaches
 - Early help referral options
 - Time limited part-time timetables
 - Additional learning support
 - Behaviour support
 - Inclusion resources
 - Reintegration support packages
- 7.2 Support offered to families, both internally and externally, will be child-centred, trauma informed and inclusive; planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

7.3 Our approach to attendance management is based on the principles of prevention, early intervention and targeted support. At all stages we aim to work in partnership with parents/ carers to address any barriers to attendance and/ or punctuality together. Where support is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' 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.



- 7.4 We will work with Bury local authority to use the full range of legal interventions available to us to protect our pupils' right to an education. These are:
- Parenting contracts
 - Education supervision orders
 - Attendance prosecution
 - Parenting orders
 - Fixed penalty notices (see section 8)
- 7.5 Decisions on which intervention to take will be made on a case-by-case basis after considering the individual circumstances of the family.

8 Fixed penalty notices

- 8.1 School and the local authority will have regard to our safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, mindful of the close relationship between good attendance and effective safeguarding.
- 8.2 Fixed penalty notices will be served on parents/carers as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure that their child regularly attends the school. Fixed penalty notices will be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school (which includes a U code for being late after the register has closed at 9:10am, G code for unauthorised holiday absence and O code for other unauthorised absence) where the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence/s, which should usually be the parent or parents with day-to-day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.
- 8.3 We will only use a fixed penalty notice, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended in 2013, where support to secure regular attendance has not been successful. Fixed penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised holiday in term time.
- 8.4 Fixed penalty notices can be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

Note: This policy meets the requirements of the department for education's [working together to improve school attendance guidance](#) and referenced the statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties governing 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 2010,2011,2013,2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (and 2013 amendment)

This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, our school's child protection and safeguarding policy and our school's behaviour policy.



Appendix 1



«date_of_printing»

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re: Punctuality and attendance

Pupil: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «reg»

Punctuality and attendance to school is vital to help your child achieve and get the best possible start in life.

Our records show that as of today's date «forename» has been marked late to school on «total_lates_both» occasions. «forename»'s current attendance at school is «percentage_attendance»%.

Please can you ensure «chosen_forename» arrives to school by 8.40am each morning ready for registration, please also speak to «chosen_forename» regarding his punctuality to lessons.

Both attendance and punctuality are key factors in Ofsted's judgement for Behaviour and Attitude in schools. If you require any further information regarding attendance please visit the St Gabriel's website and view the attendance policy, Improving Good Attendance.

As a consequence of this, «forename»'s attendance and punctuality will now be monitored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If «forename»'s punctuality and attendance to school does not improve you will be invited into school for a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership team.

Yours faithfully

Mrs C Cull
Headteacher



St Gabriel's

Roman Catholic High School



Appendix 2



St Gabriel's
Roman Catholic High School



«date_of_printing»

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Here at St Gabriel's RC High School, we have the highest expectations of all our students. We strive for all our students to achieve the very best they can in their exams.

Our data shows that «chosen_forename»'s has a below expected national attendance record of 96% and more importantly, that this is impacting on their future grades. The pace of learning is very quick and missing just a day can mean that your child struggles in the next lesson and in forthcoming assessments.

Our records show that «chosen_forename»'s attendance is currently at «percentage_attendance»%

We will now begin to monitor you child's attendance and if School sees no improvement this may trigger stage 2, which could result in school being unable to grant any requests for medical appointments, GP appointments or dental appointments, unless evidence is provided. School will also require parents/carers to attend a meeting where an attendance improvement plan will be agreed, recorded and implemented.

Requests for leaves of absence may also be declined.

Please see this as a positive intervention which will support «chosen_forename» during their time here at St Gabriel's. If you require any further information relating to attendance please visit the St Gabriel's website and view the attendance policy, Promoting Good Attendance. Together we can support them to improve attendance, catch up missed work and hopefully celebrate their success when the time comes.

If your child's attendance improves we will inform you of this and resume monitoring their attendance in the usual manner.

Should you need to contact School about a medical condition, or family circumstance which School is unaware of, please do so on at attendance@stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk and a member of our team will contact you in order to make an appointment in School to discuss this matter.

Once again thank you for your continuous support.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C Cull
Deputy Head Teacher



St Gabriel's

Roman Catholic High School



Appendix 3



**ST TERESA
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**STRENGTH
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St Gabriel's
Roman Catholic High School



**STRENGTH
SERVICE
SUCCESS**

«date_of_printing»

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Here at St Gabriel's RC High School, we have the highest expectations of all our students. We strive for all our students to achieve the very best they can in their exams.

Our data shows that you have received a stage 1 letter and «chosen_forename»'s attendance has not improved and in fact has fallen well below expected national attendance record of 96%. More importantly, that this is now having a serious impact their learning as missing just a day can mean that your child struggles in the next lesson and in forthcoming assessments.

Our records show that «chosen_forename»'s attendance is currently at «percentage_attendance»%. Consequently, from this point onward, we will be unable to grant any requests for medical appointments, GP appointments or dental appointments, unless evidence is provided. Requests for leaves of absence may also be declined.

You are now required to attend a meeting to discuss your child's attendance where an attendance improvement plan will be agreed, recorded and implemented.

All future absences may result in a home visit.

Parents/carers of students with known unauthorised holidays will be issued with a fixed penalty notice. Also parents/carers of students with 10 sessions of unauthorised absence may be issued with a penalty warning notice.

If you child's attendance fails to improve following the implementation of an attendance improvement plan, stage 3 will be triggered. A second meeting will be required where next steps are agreed, this may include guidance being sought from the Local Authority and/or a Fixed Penalty Warning being issued, which could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being charged per parent/carer per child by the Local Authority.

Please see this as a positive intervention which will support your son/daughter during their time at St Gabriel's. If you require any further information relating to attendance please visit the St Gabriel's website and view the attendance policy, Promoting Good Attendance. Together we can support them to improve attendance, catch up missed work and hopefully celebrate their success when the time comes.



Should you need to contact School about a medical condition, or family circumstance which School is unaware of, please do so at attendance@stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk and member of our team will contact you in order to make an appointment in School to discuss this matter.

Once again thank you for your continuous support.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C Cull
Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 4

		<u>Attendance Improvement Plan</u>			
Pupil Name:				Date:	
Current Attendance Percentage:				Number of days absent:	
Barriers to attendance (from pupil, parent / carer and school perspective):					
Support (from pupil, parent / carer and school perspective):					
Targets:					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Review Date:					
Signed school:					
Signed pupil:					
Signed parent / carer:					
Review					
Attendance Percentage:				Number of days absent:	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Targets have been met and attendance increase celebrated			
<input type="checkbox"/>		Attendance targets have not been met. Referred to attendance team.			