Attendance Policy including EYFS

Introduction

At St Hilary's School, we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. Our school is dedicated to preparing our children for their adult life beyond formal education and ensuring that it promotes and reinforces British Values to all our children. We actively promote democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and those with different faiths and beliefs. These are fundamental British Values which underpin all that we offer, as does our School Motto 'Not for oneself but for all.'

We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for our pupils, and we look to parents to support this objective. Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable pupils to attain their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so, unless there are extenuating circumstances, i.e. serious illness or bereavement of a family member or close relative. Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's progress and attainment in school, relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships, confidence to attempt new work and to learn alongside others. The Governors and Headmaster, in partnership with parents, have a duty to promote full attendance at school and take their responsibility to Safeguard Children, KCSIE (2026), DfE statutory guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance (July 2026), Children Absent/Missing Education extremely seriously. The School works in partnership with parents and other agencies to understand barriers to attendance and support better attendance. All pupils are required to be in school before 8.30am, although some pupils may arrive earlier to attend Before School Care and/or Breakfast Club from 7.30am. The school day ends at 3.30pm for Pre-Prep and 4.00pm for Prep, although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities, or to attend After School Care, supervised by staff employed by the School.

The Law and ISI guidelines

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers of its pupils:

- an Admissions Register, known as the 'school roll'
- an Attendance Register

The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

The School keeps its admission and attendance registers electronically. In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, entries in the admission register and attendance register are preserved for six years from the date on which the relevant entry was made. The School maintains appropriate electronic back-up arrangements for these records.

The Government expects schools and local authorities to:

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

- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children, of compulsory school age and who are registered at school, attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

Senior Attendance Champions

The School's Joint Attendance Champions are senior leaders with responsibility for championing and improving attendance. They provide a clear vision for attendance, maintain a strong whole-school attendance culture, establish and monitor effective attendance systems, regularly evaluate attendance data and patterns, ensure that pupils and families receive appropriate support, and communicate the School's attendance expectations and processes clearly to pupils, parents and staff. They work closely with the Headmaster, DSL, pastoral staff and relevant external agencies where attendance concerns may indicate safeguarding or wider welfare needs. The Joint Attendance Champions are Mark Parton (Deputy Head and DSL) and Hannah Wynn (Business Manager).

St Hilary's understands its statutory duties to share prescribed attendance and registration information with the relevant local authority and to work with the local authority where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance or whereabouts. This includes making required attendance and sickness returns, notifying the local authority of relevant additions to and deletions from the admission register, and referring concerns about children who may be missing education. The School will not wait for a fixed period of absence before making a safeguarding referral where there is reason to believe that a child may be at risk of harm. Working Together to Safeguard Children emphasises the importance of effective multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For further information, please see the **Admissions Policy** which includes information regarding the Admissions Register and procedures regarding pupils joining and leaving the school. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Supervision of Children Policy and Missing Pupil Policy.

Registers

Class/Form teachers (including EYFS Room Leaders) complete an electronic register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Registers are completed online through our School Management System. Marking the attendance register twice daily is a legal requirement. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the DfE statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026), and Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025) set out the relevant requirements. Teachers mark pupils according to the register guidelines (Appendix 1). Pupil attendance is monitored weekly to identify concerns regarding individual pupils and the appropriate action is then taken. The morning register is taken at 8.30am and closes at 8.45am. Where a pupil is absent and the reason is not yet established, Code N will be used initially and amended to the appropriate code as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session. If no reason can be established within five school days, Code O will be used. A pupil arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes will be marked L by the School Office. A pupil arriving after the register has closed will be marked U, unless another absence code is more appropriate. The lunch/afternoon register is completed after lunch break and closes at 1.45pm. Children in Years 3-6 are registered by the Deputy Head at the end of lunch break.

Pupils attending Before and After School Care will be registered by the member of staff supervising the children.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the Headmaster can authorise

absence for approved reasons where the absence must be unavoidable. The Headmaster is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified.

Unauthorised Absence
An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission or where the School is not satisfied that the reason given is one that can be recorded as authorised under the statutory attendance codes. This includes parents keeping children off school unnecessarily, absences that have not been properly explained, holidays not agreed, persistent non-specific illness where the School has genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason given, absence of siblings if one child is ill, parental illness, oversleeping, inadequate clothing/uniform, confusion over school dates, excessive absence for medical/dental appointments without good reason, and child's/family birthdays. The School will follow KCSIE (2026), Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026), the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2025) when responding to unexplained or unauthorised absence.

According to KCSIE (2026), all staff should be aware that children absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child being absent/going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the unauthorised absence and children absent from education procedures.

KCSIE for 2026 highlights the difference between children absent from education and children missing education.

Definitions: a child absent from education is a child who is registered at a school but is absent, including where absence is repeated or prolonged. A child missing education (CME) is a child of compulsory school age who is not a registered pupil at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Persistent or severe absence by a pupil who remains on the School roll does not, by itself, make that pupil CME; however, repeated or prolonged absence can be an important safeguarding warning sign and must be followed up promptly.

EYFS
Child absences:
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2026 p.25. States 'providers must follow up on absences in a timely manner. If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts must be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts. Providers must consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances and use their professional judgement when deciding if the child's absence should be considered as prolonged. Consideration must be given to the child's vulnerability, parent's and/or carer's vulnerability and their home life. Any concerns must be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check requested.'

'Providers must have an attendance policy that they share with parents and/or carers. This must include expectations for reporting child absences and the actions providers will take if a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period of time, for example: implementing the setting's safeguarding procedures, following up with the parents and/or carers and contacting emergency contacts if parents and/or carers are not contactable.'

Parental Responsibility
Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their

education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk. Parents are able to view their child's/children's attendance by logging into the Parent Portal. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent and every subsequent day after that. This is a safeguarding matter so that all parties know that every child is safe. This is the case for all children, including those in EYFS.

Pupils are expected to arrive between 8.00 and 8.30am, when the front gate is opened and children go to class. Some pupils may attend Before School Care which begins at 7.30am for Breakfast Club. All children attending Breakfast Club will go to the Pepperpot Dining Hall to be supervised by members of staff. They may eat breakfast if they wish. Parents book their children in for Breakfast Club and are charged for this service. At 8.00am the children are escorted to their classrooms.

Pupils are not normally allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip, a visit or a sporting fixture. The dates of these are published in the Calendar or will have been notified to parents in advance. Pupils will also be granted absences for school visits and external examinations. Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds, or in exceptional circumstances, should be made in writing to the Headmaster (see **Appendix 2** for medical absence requests and **Appendix 3** for non-medical absence requests) well in advance of the proposed absence.

Term dates are published in the school calendar so that holidays can be arranged without disrupting the pupil's education. Please note that it is our policy not to allow holidays to be taken during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances or the pupil is below compulsory school age.

Illness and Medical Appointments

If your child is unwell, please contact (via email or telephone) the School Office before 8.30am on the first day, and every subsequent day, of absence informing the School of the reason for absence. The absence will then be marked in the register using the appropriate attendance code. As part of our safeguarding procedures, the School Office will contact the parent or carer and, where necessary, alternative emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for absence, including for children in EYFS. In line with KCSIE (2026), parents/carers are asked to provide more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. For EYFS children, the statutory framework states that, where possible, settings should hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child.

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment. If your child is absent due to vomiting, they should not return to the School for the next 48 hours after the last bout of sickness. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.

Schools are not expected routinely to request medical evidence to support illness absence. In most cases, a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend will be sufficient. The School may request reasonable medical evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness or where clarification is needed to record the absence accurately. The School will be flexible about the form of evidence requested and will avoid placing unnecessary pressure on health professionals.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions, whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence at this level may have a significant impact on a child's educational progress, wellbeing and wider outcomes. We expect parents/carers' fullest support and co-operation regarding attendance and persistent absence.

We carefully monitor all absences. Significant priority is given where a pupil's attendance reaches the persistent absence level, or is at risk of doing so, and parents/carers will be informed. Pupils who are persistently absent are tracked and supported carefully through our pastoral and attendance systems. Particular attention will be given to severe absence, where a pupil is absent for 50% or more of possible

sessions, because pupils at this level of absence are likely to require intensive and coordinated support involving the School, family, local authority and other relevant partners.

Where attendance concerns arise, the School will work with the pupil and family to understand the barriers to attendance and agree appropriate support. Where voluntary support is not effective, is not engaged with, or is not appropriate, the School will work with the relevant local authority and other partners to consider further support and, where applicable, formal attendance intervention. Any legal intervention remains subject to the statutory framework and the responsibilities of the relevant local authority.

For pupils of compulsory school age, the national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Reaching the threshold does not automatically result in a penalty notice: the circumstances of the individual case and whether support or another form of intervention is appropriate must be considered. As an independent school, St Hilary's will liaise with the relevant local authority where formal attendance enforcement may be appropriate.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority where it has reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil of compulsory school age will be, or has been, unable to attend because of sickness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The School will work with the local authority and relevant professionals to support continuity of education and reintegration where appropriate.

Attendance records

It is the responsibility of the School attendance team to ensure that attendance and lateness records are up to date. If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence. Where it is not possible to make contact, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a seven-day reply deadline before the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply. It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.

In line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, entries in the School's admission and attendance registers will be preserved for six years from the date on which the relevant entry was made.

Procedure

If, when collating the registers, staff in the school office find that a child is absent without this absence having been accounted for, they will follow the following procedure:

- Check to establish whether the child is on a late-running school bus (AM only)
- Check that the pupil and their parent/carer has not signed in/out
- Check office documentation (notification of absence via letter/ email from parents etc.)
- Carry out internal enquiries: check that the child is not in a Learning Support, Music lesson or LAMDA lesson and that he/she is not in the Nest; check that the child is not in an early morning club (AM registers), or lunchtime club (PM registers) and is running late.
- Check with the Form Teacher and go to the classroom to check
- Check with the Headmaster and Deputy Head

- If the child's whereabouts still cannot be established, contact both the parents to inform them that their child has not been registered and try to establish their whereabouts, using email as well as telephoning all given numbers and leaving messages.

If parents respond and inform us that the child should be in school

- Go back to the classroom and check again

If the child is present

- Establish why he/she was not registered (and send report accordingly)
- Contact parents to inform them that he/she is safe

If child is missing

- Inform the Headmaster and carry out 'reasonable enquiries.'

If parents do not respond

- If no response from either parent is received after 10 minutes, go to classroom to check whether the child is present.

If child is present

- Establish why he/she was not registered (and send report accordingly)
- Contact parents to inform them that he/she is safe

If child is missing

- Inform the Headmaster and carry out 'reasonable enquiries.'

What are reasonable enquiries?

Making reasonable enquiries is a shared process between the School and the relevant local authority. The School will act promptly where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown and will continue reasonable enquiries, in liaison with the local authority, until it is mutually agreed that enquiries have concluded or there are no further reasonable actions the School can take. Depending on the circumstances, reasonable enquiries may include one or more of the following:

- Contacting parents, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Checking local databases within the LA, or the DfE's Key to Success or school2school systems
- Following local information sharing arrangements, making enquiries to:
- Other local databases and agencies
- Agencies known to be involved with the family
- Checking with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
- Checking with the LA and school from which your pupil moved from originally, or any past LAs or schools that have educated your pupil
- Checking with the LA where your pupil lives, if it's different from the one where your school is
- In the case of children of service personnel, checking with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service
- Conducting a home visit, following your own policies and risk assessment procedures. If appropriate, making enquiries with neighbours and relatives

Children missing education (CME)

The School follows the DfE's Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025). Where an unexplained absence raises concern, the School will make immediate enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts. If there is reason to believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.

If enquiries lead the School reasonably to believe that a pupil will no longer be attending St Hilary's and the parent has not provided written notice that the child will attend another school or will receive education

otherwise than at school, the School will refer the child to the home local authority's CME team as soon as possible and will continue reasonable enquiries in liaison with the local authority.

The School will also comply with the statutory grounds and procedures governing deletion from the admission register. Where a statutory ground for deletion requires prescribed enquiries or consultation with the local authority, a pupil's name will not be deleted until those requirements have been met.

Tutors and/or office staff should report to the Headmaster and DSL any unauthorised, unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence that gives rise to concern. The School will make all required notifications and returns to the relevant local authority, including notifications relating to additions to and deletions from the admission register at non-standard transition points and sickness absence of at least 15 school days, whether consecutive or cumulative. Children will not be removed from the School roll merely because they have stopped attending or cannot immediately be traced; deletion will only take place where a statutory ground for deletion applies and the required procedures have been completed. Where a child may be missing education, the September 2025 CME statutory guidance and local authority procedures will be followed.

The Local Authority will be able to view and take extracts from both the registers and the Secretary of State may also access and take extracts of the Attendance Register.

Sponsored Students and missed contact points

The School monitors the attendance of all pupils it sponsors under the Student or Child Student immigration routes in accordance with the Home Office's *Student Sponsor Guidance, Document 2: Sponsorship Duties*. Expected contact points include scheduled lessons, assessments and pastoral meetings that the pupil is expected and able to attend. The School records missed contact points and any reasons for absence, follows up unexplained absences promptly with parents or carers, and acts on any safeguarding concerns in line with its safeguarding procedures. Absences reasonably authorised by the School are excluded from the count. If a sponsored pupil misses **10 consecutive expected contact points** without permission, the School will review the circumstances and, where sponsorship is withdrawn, report this to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) through the Sponsor Management System within the applicable reporting timescale. In the rare cases where the School decides to continue sponsorship after 10 consecutive missed contact points, it will retain evidence of the decision and the reasons for it.

This policy pays due regard to the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, July 2026); Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (DfE, September 2025); Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; Working Together to Safeguard Children; and, for children in the EYFS, the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework in force from 1 September 2026.

Reviewed: June 2019, June 2020, June 2021, August 2021, June 2022, July 2022, July 2023, July 2024, August 2024, September 2024, January 2025, July 2025, July 2026, September 2026
Next review date: June 2027
Person(s) responsible: Mr Duncan Sinclair (Headmaster); Mr Mark Parton (SLT and Joint Attendance Champion); Mrs Hannah Wynn (Business Manager and Joint Attendance Champion); Ms Jackie Trew (Office Manager)

Appendix 1:

The Register codes below are a statutory requirement**.**

REGISTER CODES

Attendance codes G what they mean- Colour Key
Present
Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
Authorised Absence
Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Unauthorised Absence

Code	Reason	Notes	Statistical Value	Description - Colour key
/	Present at the school morning session	Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.	Attending	Present
\	Present at the school afternoon session	Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.	Attending	Present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. If a pupil is recorded with code N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.	Attending	Present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead. Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are: • attending courses at college; • attending unregistered alternative provision. Schools should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.	Attending	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded. If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the pupil absence using the relevant absence code.	Attending	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
P	Participating in a sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if: • the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account. Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.	Attending	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
W	Attending work experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if: • the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition. Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.	Attending	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if: • the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and • the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are: • attending transition days at other schools; • attending courses at college; • attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school. schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.	Attending	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)): Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963. • Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State. • Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a pupil who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above.	Authorised	Authorised Absence

M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment. This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a pupil to study for a public examination where the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence). Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a pupil not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend. Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance. Under compulsory school age. In cases where a parent wishes their child to begin school on a part-time basis in line with the school admissions code, schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence for sessions the pupil is not expected to attend. This must be agreed between the school and the parent they normally live with and must end at the point at which the pupil reaches compulsory school age. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with. Over compulsory school age. Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs in line with paragraphs 65 -70. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the pupil normally lives with that the pupil should temporarily be educated part-time. Where a pupil is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexischooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the pupil is not in school for that session should be used.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school	The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence). Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence. Pregnant pupils, Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. Ultimately, it is at the school's discretion how much leave to grant. Absent - other authorised reasons Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence. Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement. Defence in the law. Parents can in some circumstances, present a defence against prosecution, under section 444(6) of the Education Act 1996. This defence applies where the child has no fixed abode, and the parent can prove that they are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and that the child has been attending school as regularly as the trade or business permits. If the child is aged 6 or older, the parent must also prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months. This is in addition to the requirement to prove that the child has attended as regularly as the trade or business permits, which means that if the trade or business permits the child to attend for more than 200 sessions, they should do so.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). As a general rule, a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to record the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C. Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as: • Setting term dates around days for religious observance; • Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance; • Taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and • Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.	Authorised	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register - i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the	Authorised	Authorised Absence

		session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, schools should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.		
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school on disciplinary grounds, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education. When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Where the pupil is attending alternative provision, for the session in question, schools should record this using the appropriate attendance code in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or if the pupil is attending another school at which they are a registered pupil, schools should record this using code D (dual registered at another school).	Authorised	Authorised Absence
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Code Q is only used where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live. These circumstances are set out in law but in summary are where: • the local authority has a duty to arrange the pupil's home to school travel and has not; or • the pupil is registered at a private school that is beyond walking distance from the pupil's home and the local authority has not arranged boarding for them or enabled them to go to a state school nearer to their home; or • the pupil lives in Wales and a Welsh local authority has a duty to provide home to school travel and has not.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available. Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed. This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention. If a pupil is remanded to local authority accommodation, they should attend school as normal where possible and where it is not possible any absence should be recorded using the appropriate code. A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day. Schools are expected to communicate with the pupil's Youth Offending Team worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Education is a key part of effective resettlement, therefore it is important that schools maintain contact with the Youth Offending Team throughout the sentence to support the child's resettlement where appropriate.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend. Meaning, the pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be: • contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), or • prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school. This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6)), examples are: • Bail conditions (that prevent the pupil from attending the school or being present in the area where the school is situated) • Court attendance (where the pupil is legally required to attend Court).	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
G	Holiday not granted by the school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.	Unauthorised	Unauthorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.	Unauthorised	Unauthorised Absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.	Unauthorised	Unauthorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be recorded as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.	Unauthorised	Unauthorised Absence
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective pupil (or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the 92 prospective pupil). An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a pupil can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective pupil) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or by the fact of the pupil attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority coordinate in-year applications for school places. Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations
#	Planned whole school closure	Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as: • days between terms; • half terms; • occasional days (for example, bank holidays); • weekends (where it is required by the management information system); • up to 5 non-educational days; and • use of the whole school as a polling station.	Not a possible Attendance	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations

Useful Links:

Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (legislation.gov.uk) Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk)
Children and Families Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (legislation.gov.uk)
Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Appendix 2:

LEAVE OF ABSENCE - Medical

This is to request that my child/ren
..... Class .....
..... Class .....

Be permitted to be absent from school on ..... (date)

□ Doctor's appointment
□ Dentist's appointment
□ Hospital appointment
□ Other Please specify ……..

They will leave school at ..... and return at .....

Signature of parent/guardian ..... Date .....

✂ ----------

TEACHER COPY

..... (name) will be absent on .....(date)

□ Doctor's appointment
□ Dentist's appointment
□ Hospital appointment
□ Other Please specify …….

They will leave school at ..... and return at .....

Appendix 3:

LEAVE OF ABSENCE – Non Medical

This is to request that my child/ren
..... Class .....
..... Class .....

Be permitted to be absent from school on ..... (date)

□ Senior School Open Day Name of School ……
□ Scholarship / Interview Please Specify ……
□ Entrance Exam Name of School ……..
□ Music/Art/Ballet/other External Exam Please Specify …….. ……
□ Other Please specify ……..

For Holiday Requests, please email the Head's PA: secretary@sthilarysschool.com

They will leave school at ..... and return at .....

Signature of parent/guardian ..... Date .....

✂ ----------

TEACHER COPY

..... (name) will be absent on ..... (date)

□ Senior School Open Day Name of School ……
□ Scholarship / Interview Please Specify ……
□ Entrance Exam Name of School ……..
□ Music/Art/other External Exam Please Specify …….. ……
□ Other Please specify ……..

They will leave school at ..... and return at .....