

OUR LADY & ST JOSEPH
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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APPROVED BY: Governing Body

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction

Regular attendance and punctuality at school are essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential. Pupils who attend regularly are more likely to make strong academic and social progress, develop positive relationships, establish effective routines and experience a successful transition to the next stage of their education.

At Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, we aim to ensure that pupils' attendance is as high as possible.

For the purposes of this policy, "parent" includes a natural parent, any person who has parental responsibility for the child, and any person who has day-to-day care of the child

Our school attendance target is 96% or above, while always aspiring towards 100% attendance.

We are committed to meeting our statutory responsibilities for school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensuring that any reduction to a pupil's full-time timetable is exceptional, temporary, in the pupil's best interests and subject to a planned return to full-time education.
- Developing a positive whole-school culture in which attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- Acting early to identify and address patterns of absence.
- Listening to pupils and families to understand barriers to attendance.
- Recognising that barriers to attendance may include disability, SEND, mental or physical health needs, bereavement, family circumstances, housing instability, caring responsibilities and safeguarding or social care involvement.
- Identifying and supporting young carers sensitively and appropriately.
- Providing appropriate support to remove barriers wherever possible.
- Supporting parents/carers to fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.
- Promoting and supporting good punctuality.
- Working effectively with the Local Authority and other relevant agencies.
- Using legal intervention appropriately where support has not been successful or is not appropriate.

The school will implement this policy fairly, consistently and proportionately. In doing so, it will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, and will consider each pupil's individual circumstances before deciding on support, authorisation, attendance management or enforcement.

Our Attendance Strategy

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School follows the Department for Education statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* and the Tower Hamlets Penalty Notice Scheme.

We promote a positive **whole-school culture** that values high attendance, maintain clear and consistent systems for recording and following up absence and use attendance data to identify patterns and emerging concerns, including for key cohorts such as pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with mental or physical health needs, young carers, pupils with safeguarding or social care involvement, children in need, children with a social worker, children who are looked after or previously looked after, and pupils in temporary or unstable accommodation. As part of our proactive approach, we use VYED (View Your Education Data) and ABIE (Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectation) to support the early identification of attendance concerns, analyse patterns and trends, and identify pupils and families who may require additional support. These systems support leaders to monitor attendance closely, target interventions appropriately and evaluate their impact over time.

Our approach reflects the DfE's graduated approach to improving attendance:

Expect → Monitor → Listen and Understand → Facilitate Support → Formalise Support → Enforce

We seek to understand the individual circumstances behind absence and work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance wherever possible. Support and intervention are provided at the earliest opportunity.

Where voluntary support has not been effective, or where support is not appropriate or has not been engaged with, the school will work with the Local Authority and may formalise support or consider statutory intervention. Sanctions, including Penalty Notices and other legal interventions, will be used in accordance with national regulations and Tower Hamlets procedures where necessary. The school will work with the local authority and relevant partners to identify children at risk of becoming children missing education and will follow the Tower Hamlets children missing education procedure where this is required. The school will not remove a pupil from the admission register unless a lawful ground for deletion applies under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Attendance Categories

Each child's attendance can be broadly summarised as:

Attendance	Category	What this means
99%+	Excellent	Excellent attendance supports all aspects of a pupil's progress, achievement and wider school experience.
96%–98%	Good	Good attendance. We encourage pupils and families to maintain and build upon this.

94%–95%	Requires Improvement	Attendance will be monitored and the school may contact parents/carers to understand any emerging barriers.
90%–93%	Cause for Concern	Absence may be affecting attainment, progress and the pupil's wider school experience. The school will work with the family to identify barriers and improve attendance.
Below 90%	Persistent Absence	A pupil is considered persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of the sessions they could have attended. The school will monitor attendance closely, work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, involve the Attendance & Welfare Advisor and other services.
50% or below	Severe Absence	A pupil who misses 50% or more of the sessions they could have attended is considered severely absent. These pupils will be given high priority for intensive and coordinated attendance support, involving relevant external agencies where appropriate.

Attendance percentages alone will not determine the school's response. We will consider the individual circumstances of each pupil and family, the reasons for absence and any additional needs or barriers to attendance.

Legal Requirements

Parents/carers have a legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school attends regularly.

Where a child fails to attend regularly and absences are unauthorised, parents/carers may be subject to statutory intervention, including a Penalty Notice or prosecution, where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Monitoring whole-school attendance at least termly.
- Monitoring persistent and severe absence.
- Considering attendance, absence, persistent absence, severe absence and punctuality for key cohorts, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils with mental or physical health needs, young carers, pupils with safeguarding or social care involvement, children in need, children with a social worker, children who are looked after or previously looked after and pupils in temporary or unstable accommodation.

- Holding school leaders to account for the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and the school's attendance strategy.
- Ensuring that school leaders fulfil the school's statutory responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Assuring itself that staff receive appropriate attendance training, including statutory attendance codes, first-day response, safeguarding escalation, children missing education, record keeping, support for vulnerable pupils and the appropriate use of legal intervention.
- Monitoring the implementation, impact and annual review of this policy, including feedback from pupils and parents/carers.

Senior Attendance Champion

The **Head of School is the school's Senior Attendance Champion** and provides strategic leadership for improving attendance across the school.

The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Championing the importance of attendance across the whole school community.
- Providing strategic leadership for attendance.
- Ensuring the school's attendance policy is implemented consistently.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Monitoring and analysing school-level and pupil-level attendance data.
- Identifying patterns, trends and groups requiring additional support.
- Ensuring appropriate interventions are implemented and their impact evaluated.
- Ensuring attendance is considered alongside safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, inclusion and pupils' wider well-being.
- Reporting attendance information to governors.
- Supporting staff in addressing attendance concerns.
- Working with the Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate.
- Ensuring that the school fulfils its duties in relation to statutory attendance data returns, admission-register notifications, children missing education and the lawful removal of pupils from the admission register.
- Ensuring appropriate attendance arrangements are in place for pupils with a social worker, pupils subject to safeguarding plans, young carers, pupils with SEND and pupils experiencing medical or mental-health barriers.
- Ensuring that remote education and part-time timetables are used only where lawful, appropriate, time-limited and clearly planned. Considering whether formal intervention, including Penalty Notices, is appropriate.

The Local Authority / Attendance & Welfare Advisor (AWA)

The Attendance & Welfare Advisor works with the school to:

- Monitor and support attendance at school and individual pupil level.
- Support the school in tackling persistent and severe absence.
- Provide advice and support in complex attendance cases.
- Work with pupils and families where additional intervention is required.
- Attend meetings with parents/carers where appropriate.
- Respond to referrals made by the school.
- Undertake home visits where appropriate.

- Support the use of formal attendance interventions.
- Issue Penalty Notices and pursue other legal interventions where the statutory criteria are met.

The school's use of Penalty Notices and legal interventions will follow national regulations and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets School Absence Penalty Notice Scheme.

Attendance and Admissions Officer

The school's Attendance and Admissions Officer is responsible for:

- Supporting the implementation of this policy.
- Monitoring daily attendance.
- Identifying unexplained absence for each registration session and taking timely action in accordance with the school's first-day response procedures.
- Ensuring that reasons for absence are obtained and the attendance register is amended with the correct code as soon as possible and no later than five working days after the relevant session.

Supporting office staff in recording and following up absence.

- Monitoring pupil-level and school-level attendance data.
- Reporting attendance information and concerns to the Head of School/Senior Attendance Champion.
- Identifying patterns of absence and punctuality at an early stage.
- Contacting and working with parents/carers where attendance is a concern.
- Listening to families to help identify barriers to attendance.
- Coordinating appropriate support and intervention.
- Maintaining records of pupils who are persistently or severely absent.
- Monitoring the impact of attendance interventions.
- Seeking advice from and making referrals to the AWA where appropriate.
- Arranging attendance meetings with parents/carers.
- Supporting the Head of School in determining whether formal intervention may be appropriate.
- Supporting decisions about whether home visits are required.
- Liaising with the DSL/DDSL where absence gives rise to safeguarding concerns.
- Keeping accurate records of contact, actions, support offered, attendance meetings, agreed plans, referrals, outcomes and decisions relating to attendance.
- Supporting the maintenance of the admission register and required notifications to the local authority.
- Following the Tower Hamlets children missing education procedure where a pupil's whereabouts or onward education cannot be confirmed.

Where there are genuine concerns regarding the authenticity of illness-related absence, the school may request appropriate supporting information. **Medical evidence will not be requested unnecessarily.**

Class Teachers

Class teachers will:

- Promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils in their class.
- Complete registers accurately and on time.

- Raise emerging concerns promptly with the Attendance and Admissions Officer.
- Speak appropriately with parents/carers where attendance or punctuality is becoming a concern.
- Alert the Attendance Officer and/or DSL immediately where the absence of a pupil with a Child Protection Plan or other safeguarding concern requires escalation.
- Recognise and celebrate good and improving attendance appropriately.

School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding absence and record the information appropriately.
- Follow up unexplained absence promptly.
- Contact parents/carers and, where necessary, other emergency contacts when no reason has been received for a child's absence.
- Record reasons for absence accurately using the appropriate statutory attendance codes.
- Escalate concerns to the Attendance and Admissions Officer and/or DSL/DDSL where appropriate.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day the school is open unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time.
- Telephone the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am and provide the reason.
- Continue to keep the school informed on subsequent days where an absence continues.
- Work with the school to address any barriers to attendance.
- Attend attendance meetings when requested.
- Arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Provide appropriate supporting information regarding absence where reasonably requested by the school.
- Request any leave of absence during term time in advance and understand that leave will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Attendance Registers and Statutory Codes

The school maintains an electronic admission register and attendance register in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

An attendance register will be taken for every pupil at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session of every school day. The register will be taken at the same time for all pupils.

Morning registration opens at 8:50am and closes at 9:00am

Afternoon registration opens at 12:55pm for EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 and closes at 1:05pm.

Afternoon registration opens at 1:40pm for Upper Key Stage 2 and closes at 1:50pm.

Where a pupil arrives after the register has opened but before it has closed, they will be recorded as late using the appropriate statutory code, with their actual time of arrival recorded. Where a pupil arrives during the morning session after the register has closed, they will also be recorded with the appropriate late/absence code and their actual time of arrival, in line with advice from the Attendance and Welfare Adviser (AWA).

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes prescribed by the Department for Education and will apply them in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and *Working together to improve school attendance*.

The school will establish the reason for every absence as soon as possible. Where absence is initially recorded as unexplained, the school will amend the register with the correct code as soon as the reason is known and no later than five working days after the relevant session. Where any attendance-register entry is amended, the school will preserve the original entry and record the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which it was made and the name of the person making it.

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register will be preserved for six years from the date on which the entry was made.

The school will make the attendance-data returns required by the Secretary of State and cooperate with data requests from the local authority where required.

Children Missing Education and Admission Register

The school recognises that a pupil's unexplained absence, failure to return, move from the area, withdrawal from school or change in circumstances may indicate a risk that the pupil is becoming a child missing education.

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, the school will make timely and proportionate enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts, safety and education arrangements. This may include contact with parents/carers, emergency contacts, relevant professionals and other agencies, taking account of safeguarding concerns and the child's known circumstances.

Where the school has reason to believe that a pupil will not return to school and does not have valid written confirmation of the pupil's new school or education otherwise than at school, it will follow the Tower Hamlets children missing education referral process promptly.

The school will not remove a pupil's name from the admission register unless one of the lawful grounds for deletion set out in Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies. Where required, the school will notify the local authority when a pupil is added to or removed from the admission register other than at a normal transition point.

Where a parent notifies the school in writing that their child will attend another school, the school will seek confirmation of the new school and make the required notification to the local authority. Where a parent indicates an intention to electively home educate, the

school will follow the relevant statutory process and Tower Hamlets procedure before any deletion from the admission register.

The school will work with Tower Hamlets and other relevant agencies until reasonable enquiries have been completed and the pupil's whereabouts and education arrangements are appropriately resolved.

Safeguarding and Attendance

Attendance is an important part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Unexplained, repeated or concerning absence may be an indicator of wider safeguarding concerns. Where a pupil's absence gives rise to a safeguarding concern, this will be reported promptly to the **DSL/DDSL**, and the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

The school will pay particular attention to the attendance of vulnerable pupils, including children subject to Child Protection or Child in Need plans, children with a social worker, children who are looked after or previously looked after, young carers, children in temporary or unstable accommodation, pupils with SEND, pupils experiencing mental or physical ill health and other pupils known to safeguarding services.

Where no reason has been provided for an absence, the school will make reasonable efforts to establish the child's whereabouts and safety, including contacting parents/carers and emergency contacts and considering further safeguarding action where appropriate. The school will seek to hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil wherever reasonably possible. Where appropriate, the school may also liaise with the pupil's social worker, youth offending team worker or other relevant professional in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing arrangements.

Attendance concerns will be considered alongside other available information about the child and family.

Where absence gives rise to an immediate concern for a pupil's welfare, the school will follow its child protection procedures without waiting for a prescribed number of absences or attempts at contact.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head of School/Senior Attendance Champion and governors receive regular reports on attendance, including:

- Whole-school attendance and absence.
- Persistent absence.
- Severe absence.
- Punctuality.
- Attendance by year group.
- Attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Attendance of pupils with SEND.
- Attendance of pupils with safeguarding or social care involvement.
- Attendance of children in need and children with a social worker.
- Attendance of children who are looked after and previously looked after.
- Attendance of young carers.
- Attendance of pupils with medical or mental-health needs.
- Attendance of pupils in temporary or unstable accommodation.
- The number, nature, duration and outcomes of any part-time timetables.

- The number and outcomes of CME referrals, where applicable.
- The use and impact of attendance support plans, Notices to Improve, Penalty Notice referrals and other formal interventions.
- Patterns and trends over time.
- The impact of attendance interventions and support.

VYED and ABIE are used alongside the school's attendance systems to support leaders in identifying patterns and pupils requiring intervention.

Attendance information is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategy, target support, inform school improvement planning and ensure that the school's approach supports inclusion, safeguarding, behaviour, achievement and pupils' wider well-being.

Attendance data will be considered alongside contextual and qualitative information, including pupil and family views, safeguarding information, SEND and health needs, and the impact of support. The school will avoid relying solely on headline attendance percentages when assessing need or deciding an appropriate response.

Punctuality and Lateness

School doors open at **8.40am** and pupils may enter their classrooms from this time.

The morning register opens at 8.50am and closes at 9.00am. Pupils arriving after the register has opened but before it closes will be recorded as late using Code L. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will normally be recorded using Code U, unless another statutory attendance code is more appropriate. The afternoon registration times and register-closing times are set out in the "Attendance Registers and Statutory Codes" section of this policy. The afternoon registration time and register-closing time are set out in the Attendance Registers and Statutory Codes section of this policy.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make every effort to ensure their child arrives at school on time.
- Use Breakfast Club where appropriate if early arrival would help overcome transport or other practical barriers.
- Ensure children arriving late are signed in through the school's agreed late-arrival procedures.

Class teachers will:

- Monitor pupils' punctuality.
- Speak with parents/carers where punctuality is becoming a concern.
- Ensure registers are completed correctly and promptly.
- Raise persistent lateness with the Attendance and Admissions Officer.

The school will:

- Contact parents/carers where punctuality is a concern.
- Establish the reasons for repeated lateness.
- Work with families to understand and address barriers.
- Monitor persistent lateness.

- Seek advice and support from the AWA where appropriate.
- Consider formal intervention where persistent unauthorised lateness continues despite support.

Absence

Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by **9.00am**, or as soon as practically possible.

Absence due to illness will normally be authorised unless the school has genuine reason to question the authenticity of the illness.

Where the school has genuine concerns about the authenticity of illness-related absence, it may request appropriate supporting information, such as an appointment card, prescription, text confirmation of an appointment or other reasonable evidence. The school will not routinely request medical evidence and will not ask for it unnecessarily.

The school will identify and follow up unexplained or unexpected absence for each registration session. On the first day of absence, the school will make contact with the parent/carer where no reason has been provided. If contact is not established, or concerns continue, the school will make further timely and proportionate enquiries. This may include contacting other emergency contacts, checking relevant safeguarding information, liaising with appropriate professionals and considering whether a home visit, safeguarding referral or children missing education referral is required.

Illness, Medical Needs and Reintegration

Where a pupil's absence is linked to mental or physical ill health, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil, parents/carers, SENCO, pastoral staff and relevant health professionals to identify support that enables attendance and successful reintegration.

Support may include reasonable adjustments, pastoral support, attendance planning, a phased return where appropriate, curriculum catch-up, reduced-pressure transition arrangements and regular review meetings.

Remote education will not normally be used as a substitute for school attendance. It will only be used where appropriate, as a last resort, and as part of a time-limited plan to support the pupil's return to full-time education.

Planned Absence

Parents/carers should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.

Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for as much of the day as reasonably possible.

Attendance at an appropriate medical or dental appointment will normally be authorised where the school has been informed appropriately.

Supporting Pupils with Barriers to Attendance

We recognise that barriers to attendance can be complex and may be experienced differently by individual pupils and families.

Some pupils, including those with SEND, disability, medical needs, mental or physical health needs, caring responsibilities, young-carer responsibilities, bereavement, family difficulties, housing instability, poverty, safeguarding concerns, social care involvement, experience of care, or other individual circumstances, may experience additional barriers to regular attendance.

The school will seek to understand these barriers and work collaboratively with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required and will ensure that attendance expectations, support plans and enforcement decisions take proper account of the pupil's individual needs and relevant professional advice.

Attendance support plans will set out the identified barriers, agreed actions, responsibilities, review dates, support offered and the intended route back to sustained full-time attendance. Where multi-agency involvement is needed, the school will work with the family and relevant services to coordinate support

This may include:

- Regular communication with the pupil and family.
- Attendance meetings.
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND.
- Liaison with the SENCO.
- Support from pastoral staff.
- Support for emotional or social barriers.
- Liaison with health professionals.
- Early Help or social care support.
- Attendance support plans.
- Support from the Attendance & Welfare Advisor.
- Multi-agency working where appropriate.

The school will consider the individual needs of pupils and families and provide appropriate support before progressing to legal intervention where support is appropriate.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the school will work closely with the family, SENCO, Local Authority and relevant professionals where attendance concerns relate to the pupil's SEND.

Part-Time Timetables and Flexi-Schooling

The school is committed to every pupil's entitlement to full-time education. A part-time timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests, for a temporary and time-limited period, and with a clear plan for the pupil's return to full-time education.

A part-time timetable will not be used as a behavioural sanction, as a response to staffing or resource difficulties, or as a long-term alternative to appropriate educational provision.

Any part-time timetable will be agreed with the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally lives, recorded in writing, regularly reviewed and supported by an individual reintegration

plan. The school will involve the local authority, SENCO, DSL and relevant professionals where appropriate.

Where a pupil is flexi-schooled or receives education through another arrangement, the school will ensure that attendance is accurately recorded using the appropriate statutory code and that the arrangement is properly documented.

Each arrangement will specify the days and hours the pupil will attend, the educational provision that will be made, the reason for the arrangement, the planned end date, review dates and the actions required to support a return to full-time education. The school will keep a written record of parental agreement and all reviews.

Persistent and Severe Absence

A pupil is **persistently absent** where they miss 10% or more of the sessions they could have attended.

A pupil is **severely absent** where they miss 50% or more of the sessions they could have attended.

Persistent and severe absence will be treated as a priority.

For pupils who are persistently or severely absent, the school will seek to understand the reasons for absence, identify barriers, agree appropriate actions with the family and coordinate support from other services where necessary.

Severely absent pupils will receive particularly close monitoring and intensive support because of the significant amount of education they are missing.

Where absence is linked to safeguarding or social care concerns, the DSL/DDSL and relevant professionals will be involved as appropriate.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Governors recognise that absence during term time can significantly disrupt a pupil's continuity of education.

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

All requests for leave of absence must be made **in advance**.

The Head of School may grant a leave of absence only where they consider there to be **exceptional circumstances**. Each application will be considered individually, taking account of the specific facts and circumstances of the request. The school will not operate a blanket policy that automatically authorises leave for particular events, destinations, family circumstances, religious occasions or cultural celebrations. All applications will be considered on their individual merits, taking account of the pupil's circumstances, attendance record, educational impact and the specific reasons provided.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Arrange holidays during school holiday periods.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term time.

- Submit requests for exceptional leave in advance.
- Ensure their child returns to school on the agreed date.

The school will:

- Provide clear information to parents/carers regarding term-time absence.
- Consider requests individually.
- Not authorise leave for the purpose of a family holiday unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- Consider requests connected with bereavement, religious observance, pilgrimage, significant family events or other personal circumstances individually and without presumption that leave will automatically be authorised or refused.
- Record unauthorised leave using the appropriate statutory attendance code.
- Consider whether the national threshold for a Penalty Notice has been met and follow the National Framework and Tower Hamlets procedures.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

The school follows the **National Framework for Penalty Notices** and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Penalty Notice Scheme.

A Penalty Notice must be considered where the **national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks** has been met.

The 10 sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive and may include a combination of different types of unauthorised absence. The 10-school-week period may span different terms or school years.

Meeting the national threshold does **not automatically mean that a Penalty Notice will be issued**. Each case will be considered individually.

Where the threshold has been met, the school and Local Authority will consider whether:

- Further support is appropriate.
- Support has already been provided and has not resulted in sufficient improvement.
- A Notice to Improve is appropriate.
- A Penalty Notice is appropriate.
- Another legal intervention would be more appropriate.

Where support is appropriate, the school will seek to work with the family to improve attendance.

A **Notice to Improve** may be issued as a final opportunity for parents/carers to engage with support and improve attendance before a Penalty Notice is issued.

A Notice to Improve is not required in every case. For example, where support is not appropriate because of an unauthorised term-time holiday, a Penalty Notice may be considered without a Notice to Improve.

Penalty Notice Charges

Where a Penalty Notice is issued:

- The **first Penalty Notice** issued to a parent in respect of an individual child within a three-year rolling period is **£160**, reduced to **£80 if paid within 21 days**.
- A **second Penalty Notice** issued to the same parent for the same child within three years is **£160**, with no reduced rate.
- A maximum of **two Penalty Notices** may be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a three-year rolling period.
- Where the national threshold is met for a **third or subsequent time** within the three-year period, another Penalty Notice cannot be issued and alternative legal intervention may be considered.

Penalty Notices are issued to **each parent for each child** where appropriate.

Payment is made directly to the Local Authority.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within the required timescale may result in prosecution.

The decision to issue a Penalty Notice or pursue another statutory intervention will be made in accordance with national legislation, statutory DfE guidance and the current Tower Hamlets Penalty Notice Scheme.

For further information regarding leave of absence, parents/carers should refer to the school's Leave of Absence Policy and the relevant information published by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Working Together with Families

Our priority is always to work positively and constructively with families to secure good attendance.

Where attendance concerns arise, our approach will be to:

Expect – set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils.

Monitor – use accurate attendance data, including VYED and ABIE, to identify concerns and patterns quickly.

Listen and Understand – speak with pupils and families to understand the reasons for absence and any barriers they are experiencing.

Facilitate Support – agree appropriate support and remove barriers within school wherever possible, working with other services when necessary.

Formalise Support – where voluntary support has not been effective, formalise arrangements and expectations where appropriate.

Enforce – where support has not been successful, has not been engaged with or is not appropriate, consider statutory intervention in partnership with the Local Authority. Our aim throughout is to ensure that every child is able to **belong, succeed and thrive** through regular attendance at school.

The school will communicate its attendance expectations, registration arrangements, absence-reporting procedures, leave-of-absence process and sources of support clearly to parents/carers. This policy will be published on the school website, shared with families on

admission, highlighted at the start of each academic year and updated when there are material changes to national or local requirements.

The school will provide attendance information to parents/carers in a clear and understandable form. Where attendance is a concern, this will include an explanation of the sessions or days missed, emerging patterns, the likely impact on learning and the support available

The school will communicate its attendance expectations, registration arrangements, absence-reporting procedures, leave-of-absence process and sources of support clearly to parents/carers. This policy will be published on the school website, shared with families on admission, highlighted at the start of each academic year and updated when there are material changes to national or local requirements.

Where attendance is a concern, the school will provide parents/carers with clear, understandable information about attendance patterns, sessions or days missed, likely impact on learning, agreed support and the actions expected from all parties

Staff Training and Implementation

All relevant staff will receive appropriate training and guidance on the implementation of this policy. This will include statutory attendance codes, accurate register completion, first-day response, unexplained absence, safeguarding escalation, children missing education, working with vulnerable pupils, reasonable adjustments, attendance support plans, record keeping and the appropriate use of legal intervention.

The Senior Attendance Champion will oversee implementation, monitor consistency of practice and ensure that attendance systems are reviewed in light of national and local changes, attendance data, stakeholder feedback and the impact of support and intervention.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body as part of its monitoring cycle and updated sooner where there are significant changes to national or local attendance requirements.

Next review due: September 2027