St Dunstan's College

PART OF
ST DUNSTAN'S EDUCATION GROUP

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy owner	Deputy Head Pastoral
ISSR reference	14b Missing child policy; 15a Attendance policy
Date of review	Autumn 2026
Approved by	SDEG Group Board 25.09.26
Date of next review	Autumn 2027

Version Control Information

Reason for Amendment	Role	Date	Main Changes
Annual review	Deputy Head Pastoral	Michaelmas 2024	New Template Change to DfE coding
Annual review	Deputy Head Pastoral	Michaelmas 2025	
Annual Review	Deputy Head Pastoral	Michaelmas 2026	Changed in line with updated DFE Guidance 'working together to improve school attendance'

Part A – St Dunstan's Education Group Policy

1. Aims

St Dunstan's Education Group recognises that regular attendance is essential to pupils' learning, wellbeing, safeguarding and personal development. The Group is committed to promoting a culture of good attendance across its schools and to taking seriously any issues that may lead to non-attendance.

This policy sets out the Group's expectations for attendance, absence monitoring, registration, safeguarding responses to absence, and the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents/carers.

The Group aims to meet its obligations with regard to attendance by:

- ensuring a culture of good attendance is central to each school's ethos and culture;
- working to reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education;
- acting early to address patterns of absence;
- promoting punctuality in attending lessons;
- working with the relevant Local Authority when there are attendance concerns.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff and parents/carers across St Dunstan's Education Group schools. Each school will maintain local attendance procedures in Part B of this policy, reflecting its own school day, staff responsibilities, systems and escalation arrangements.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by the legal and regulatory framework governing school attendance, including:

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education Act 2002;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, including subsequent amendments;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working together to improve school attendance.
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 require the proprietor to ensure that an admission register and an attendance register are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Every school is required to maintain two separate registers: an admissions register, known as the School Roll, and an attendance register. These registers may be checked by inspectors to assure themselves that the relevant requirements are being met. 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 Group's approach to attendance is based on the following principles:

- Attendance is a safeguarding matter as well as an educational matter.
- All pupils should have access to full-time education.
- Absence should be followed up promptly and appropriately.
- Patterns of absence should be identified and addressed early.
- Parents/carers have responsibility for ensuring that their child attends and stays at school.
- Schools, not parents/carers, authorise absence.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 St Dunstan's Education Group Board

The Group Board is responsible for:

- approving this policy;
- reviewing annual attendance statistics for each school;
- holding senior leaders accountable for implementation.

3.2 Local Governing Boards

Local School Boards are responsible for:

- ensuring each school follows the framework set out in this policy;
- monitoring school attendance statistics on a termly basis;
- reviewing attendance trends;
- providing challenge and support.

3.3 Heads of School

Heads of School are responsible for attendance within their school. This includes ensuring staff follow the policy framework, staff receive sufficient training, registers are completed accurately, attendance statistics are reported to the Local School Board, and absences are authorised only in appropriate circumstances.

3.4 Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance (Senior Attendance Champion)

Each school will identify appropriate staff responsible for monitoring attendance, overseeing interventions, reviewing attendance plans and ensuring procedures remain aligned with current government guidance.

They will also promote good attendance and work closely with parents and pupils to achieve this.

3.5 Attendance officer and College Office

The Attendance Officer and College Office Administration Team are responsible for ascertaining reasons for absence on a daily basis. This includes updating registers following communication from parents/carers, contacting parents/carers about unexplained absence, updating iSAMS, reporting concerns to the pastoral team, alerting the safeguarding team to unexplained absence and ensuring correct attendance codes are used.

3.6 Staff

Staff are responsible for implementing the attendance framework and completing registrations accurately. Maintaining an accurate attendance register is a key part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are responsible for adhering to the attendance policy and communicating effectively with the school about absences, including requests for planned absence. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.

4. Attendance Expectations

Each school will promote high attendance by:

- developing and maintaining a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance;
- recording attendance during registration periods twice daily;
- checking reasons for absence with parents/carers;
- supporting pupils experiencing difficulties with attendance;
- supporting pupils in catching up missed work where appropriate;
- publishing term dates in advance;
- making attendance information visible to parents/carers where school systems allow.

5. Absence and Authorisation

The Group recognises that schools, not parents/carers, authorise absence. Schools may authorise absence in circumstances including illness, appointments, religious observance, compassionate reasons or other exceptional circumstances.

Requests for leave of absence should be made in writing in advance wherever possible. Absence in exceptional circumstances does not ordinarily include birthdays, holidays, festivals, days out as a special treat or other family celebrations.

Time off for family holidays is not a right. Parents/carers must seek permission in advance for term-time absence, and retrospective approval will not be granted.

6. Attendance Monitoring and Safeguarding

Schools will monitor attendance and respond to patterns of absence. Attendance concerns may involve contact with parents/carers, support from pastoral staff, escalation to senior leaders and liaison with the relevant Local Authority where required.

Where a pupil of compulsory school age has been absent without authority for 10 consecutive school days, has failed to attend regularly, has been removed without formal written notification, has a safeguarding concern including Children Missing Education, or has 15 days of recorded illness absence in the academic year, the school will alert the relevant Local Authority.

The Group recognises the difference between wilful truancy and school refusal and will support pupils who are school refusers or at risk of becoming school refusers in line with the Safeguarding Policy and related school procedures.

7. Individual Needs

Schools will consider individual barriers to attendance including:

- special educational needs and disabilities;
- mental health needs;
- medical conditions;
- safeguarding concerns;
- disadvantage;
- social care involvement;
- caring responsibilities.

Support will be tailored to individual circumstances.

8. Supporting Pupils with Attendance Barriers

The Group recognises that poor attendance is often a symptom of wider difficulties rather than a behavioural choice.

Schools will seek to identify and address barriers to attendance at an early stage. These barriers may include:

- mental health difficulties;
- anxiety-based school avoidance or school refusal;
- special educational needs and disabilities;
- medical conditions;
- safeguarding concerns;
- family circumstances;

- social care involvement;
- other factors affecting a pupil's wellbeing.

Where attendance concerns arise, schools will work collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand barriers and develop appropriate support plans.

Support may include:
- pastoral intervention;
- attendance plans;
- reasonable adjustments;
- phased reintegration arrangements;
- referrals to external services;
- safeguarding support;
- collaboration with local authorities and other agencies where appropriate.

The Group recognises the distinction between deliberate non-attendance and attendance difficulties arising from anxiety, mental health or other vulnerabilities and will seek to respond proportionately and supportively.

9. Registration and Record-Keeping

Schools must maintain accurate attendance records and ensure registers are completed in accordance with applicable guidance and school procedures. Attendance records must be backed up and retained in accordance with each school's procedures and applicable requirements.

10. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Attendance and Absence

For schools and settings providing Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education, attendance arrangements must reflect the safeguarding requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Parents/carers are expected to notify the setting of any absence as soon as reasonably practicable and in accordance with local procedures.

Where a child is absent without notification, or where there is a prolonged absence, the setting will take reasonable steps to establish the child's whereabouts and wellbeing. This may include:

- contacting parents/carers;
- contacting emergency contacts;
- reviewing attendance patterns and previous attendance concerns;
- liaising with safeguarding staff;
- implementing safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

The response to an absence will take account of:

- the age and vulnerability of the child;
- patterns and trends in attendance;
- safeguarding concerns;
- any information already held regarding the child or family.

Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to Children's Social Care, the Local Authority or other relevant agencies in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Schools and nurseries should seek to obtain more than two emergency contact numbers for each EYFS child wherever reasonably possible.

11. Monitoring and Review
This policy will be reviewed annually. The policy will be approved through the appropriate Group governance route.

12. Associated Policies
This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy

Part B – St Dunstan's College Arrangements

1. School Responsibilities

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Gemma Kenward (Assistant Head Inclusion)
Email: gkenward@stdunstans.org.uk
Telephone: 020 8516 7200

1.1 Head of College and Deputy Head Pastoral

The Head of College and Deputy Head Pastoral are responsible for attendance in the Senior School, working closely with the Senior Attendance Champion to achieve this. Their responsibilities include ensuring staff follow the attendance framework, staff receive sufficient training, registers are completed accurately, attendance statistics are reported to the Local School Board, and absences are authorised in exceptional circumstances.

They are also responsible for ensuring information is shared with the local authority, as outlined below.

1.2 Senior Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible (alongside the Deputy Head Pastoral in the Junior School) for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Providing regular attendance reports for Senior Leadership Teams and Local School Boards.

Working with the pastoral administrator and Heads of Year to ensure they are:

- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

- Overseeing arrangements for temporary reduced timetables, in line with the requirements outlined in Working Together to Improve School Attendance.
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness
    - Providing the local authority with details of pupils on temporary reduced timetables

1.3 Admissions Team

Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times

1.4 Attendance Officer and College Office Administration Team

- Ensure registers are taken and coded accurately;
- Work with the pastoral teams to identify students of concern and ensure support is put in place;
- Record communication with parents accurately;
- Contact parents to ascertain a child's whereabouts if unaccounted for;
- Alert the safeguarding team if a child is unaccounted for that day.

1.5 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- implementing this framework and completing registrations accurately. AM and PM registration must be completed accurately, and the policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, particularly procedures for Children Who Are Absent From School.
- supporting pupils on reintegration to school after a period of absence and contact parents as requested by pastoral teams.

1.6 Pupils and Parents/Carers

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers, where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance action plans that they make with the school

- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting your child's Head of Year/Head of Section or Form Tutor/Form Teacher, who can be contacted via email, or via collegoffice@stdunstans.org.uk (Senior School) or jsoffice@stdunstans.org.uk (Junior School)

Pupils are expected to:
- Attend school every day, on time
- Attend every timetabled session, on time

2. Attendance Registration System

The College (Senior School and Junior School) uses iSAMS to record, report and monitor student attendance and absence. The attendance register is backed up electronically at least once a month, and records are retained for three years after the end of the relevant school year.

As a school in membership of the Independent Schools Council, the College participates in the ISC annual census. From January 2009, ethnic monitoring data has been included using the same methodology as the maintained sector.

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

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

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

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

3. The School Day

Senior School

All Senior School students are required to be in school by 08:20 and should not arrive before 07:30. Students arriving between 07:30 and 07:50 should be in breakfast club or a supervised activity.

The normal school day ends at 16:00, and students can expect to depart the school by 16:15. After-school activities begin at 16:15 and end at 17:15. All students are expected to be off the school site by 17:45.

Students are registered at the start of the day during morning tutor time, at the start of each lesson, and during afternoon tutor time. Form Tutors register students at 08:40 and 14:10, and Subject Teachers register students at all other times. The registers are kept open until 08:50 for the morning session and 14:20 for the afternoon session.

Junior School

All Junior School pupils are required to be in school by 08:35, following a 15-minute drop-off window commencing at 08:20. Pupils arriving after this time will be required to enter via the Junior School Office where their time of arrival will be recorded.

Before School Care runs from 07:45 to 08:20.

For Junior School pupils, the normal school day ends at 15:10 for Pre-School, 15:15 for Reception and 15:35 for Years 1 – 6, and EYFS siblings of children in Years 1 – 6. After school activities begin at 15:45 and end at 16:30 (except for some which run until 16:45).

After-School Care (run by Munchkins Sports) runs from the end of the school day until18:00.

Registers are called at 08:40 each morning and close at 08:50 for the first session of the day. Afternoon registers are called at 14:10 and close at 14:20.

The calling of the Register must be undertaken by an adult, and they must be marked using the official codes (see below).

EYFS Local Procedures

Name of EYFS Attendance Lead.

- Head of EYFS

Attendance reporting process for parents/carers.

- Parents/carers must notify the school of any absence by telephone or email before 9am on the first day of absence. The reason for the absence and the

expected date of return should be provided. Parents/carers must continue to take these steps on each subsequent day of absence.

Definition of prolonged absence used by the setting.

- The EYFS Framework explicitly states that Early Years providers must use their professional judgement to decide if an absence is 'prolonged'. Any absence pattern which causes concern regarding a pupil's welfare, development, or safeguarding will be discussed by the EYFS Attendance Lead and the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL). Further safeguarding action may be taken in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Timescales for first-day contact.

- Where a pupil is absent and no notification has been received, the school will make first-day contact with parents/carers as soon as possible, normally by 10:00. If contact has not been established, further attempts will be made using all available contact details. EYFS parents/carers must provide the school with at least two emergency contacts and ensure contact information is kept up to date.

Escalation procedures for unexplained absence.

- If a pupil's absence remains unexplained:
  1. The school will attempt to contact all parents/carers and emergency contacts on the first day of absence
  2. Unexplained absence will be referred to the EYFS Attendance Lead and the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL) and will be recorded appropriately
  3. The Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL) will work in conjunction with the DSL where contact cannot be established or where there are welfare/safeguarding concerns
  4. Further safeguarding action may be taken in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures

Emergency contact arrangements.

- Parents/carers must provide the school with at least two emergency contacts and ensure contact information is kept up to date. If parents/carers cannot be reached, the school will contact the nominated emergency contacts.

Safeguarding referral arrangements.

- Any unexplained absence, repeated absence, or attendance pattern that raises concerns regarding a pupil's welfare will be discussed by the EYFS Attendance Lead and Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL), in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This may include situations where none of the listed contacts are reachable. The DSL will determine whether further action is required, including consultation with, or referral to children's social care, the local authority, or other external agencies, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

4. Sixth Form Fobbing In and Out

All Sixth Form students are issued with an ID fob to access security-controlled doors and gates. Sixth Form students must fob in whenever they enter the school and fob out whenever they leave the school. Fobbing in and out generates the Fire Register and supports emergency accountability.

Forgetting to fob out may result in a student being listed as on site when they are not, creating a risk during an evacuation. Repeated failure to fob in and out may result in sanctions, depending on the circumstances.
Students must use the dedicated fob units located near the College Office, West door and STEM atrium.

5. Absence Due to Illness

If a student misses school due to illness, the parent or guardian must:

- Junior School - email jsabsence@stdunstans.org.uk as well as the pupil's Form Teacher before 0900 on each day of absence, or phone the Junior School Office on 020 8516 7225.
- Senior School – email absence@stdunstans.org.uk and the student's Form Tutor before 09:00 each day of absence, or phone the College Office on 020 8516 7200.

If the College has not heard from a parent or guardian, contact will be attempted to ensure the student is safe and to verify their whereabouts.
Parents/carers should contact the College each day their child is absent so records can be kept up to date and the school can monitor the student's progress and anticipated return date.

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

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

Students in the Senior School are expected to catch up on missed lessons promptly. Missed work will normally be found on the VLE, and teachers will make reasonable efforts to support students who ask for help. In prolonged medical absence, the school will make efforts to send work via the VLE, but additional hard-copy material cannot be guaranteed.

6. Late Arrival

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The times of registration closure are outlined above for each school section.

Students arriving after this time must sign in at the College Office/Junior School Office so systems remain accurate for safeguarding and emergency evacuation purposes.

Systems are updated again by 10:00. If parents/carers have not contacted the school, a list of students not present will be generated and the Attendance Officer (Senior School) or Junior School Office (Junior School) will endeavour to contact parents or guardians.

7. Leaving School Early During the School Day

Students are not normally allowed to leave the site during the school day. Exceptions include Year 13 students leaving after 14:10 registration if they have unsupervised study during period 5, and Year 12 and Year 13 students leaving during break and lunch if they have earned the privilege to do so. Students must fob out before leaving and fob back in on return.

If a student in the Senior School needs to leave during the day due to illness or for a medical appointment, they must sign out at the College Office. Students are not permitted to sign themselves out for appointments or illness without approval from the Form Tutor, Form Teacher or another appropriate member of staff.

Any Junior School pupils with reason to leave school early/during the school day must be collected by a parent/carer.

8. Requests for Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Requests for medical appointments should be made to your child's Head of Year (Senior School) or Junior School Office and Form Teacher (Junior School).

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

Any other absence requests should directed to the Head via collegeoffice@stdunstans.org.uk (Senior School) or addressed to the Head of Junior School via jsoffice@stdunstans.org.uk (Junior School)

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence, in line with the authorised absence reasons outlined below.

9. Authorised absence

9.1 Approval for term-time absence
The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

Rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:
- Medical emergencies
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative)

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

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The Head may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see above for further information)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

9.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency (not a delayed train or bus), a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

10. Attendance Monitoring and Record-Keeping

Form Tutors and Form Teachers are responsible for monitoring student attendance and contacting parents/carers where there are concerns, such as frequent absence. In the Junior School, this will be supported by the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral and relevant Section Head. Where escalation is necessary, the Head of Year and SLT Link (Senior School) or Deputy Head Pastoral (Junior School) may offer support and use attendance action plans if attendance does not improve.

The Department for Education expects every student attending school to maintain attendance of approximately 90% and above. Students whose attendance is below 90% are classed as persistently absent. Severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% of more of possible sessions. If attendance does not improve, the school will contact the appropriate Attendance, Inclusion and Participation Service from the child's Local Authority.

The school will alert the Local Authority where a pupil of compulsory school age has been absent without authority for 10 consecutive school days, has failed to attend regularly, has been removed without formal written notification, where there is a

safeguarding concern including Children Missing Education, or where there have been 15 days of illness absence recorded across the academic year.

Truancy or unauthorised lateness may result in sanctions in line with the Behaviour Management Policy. If unauthorised absence or school refusal results in attendance falling below 85%, the Head may review whether the student's continued education at the school is tenable.

The school recognises the difference between wilful truancy and school refusal and will support pupils who are school refusers or at risk of becoming school refusers in line with the Safeguarding Policy and the Supporting School Refusers document.

11. Reporting to parents

Attendance data is available via the MySchool Portal.
The school will also regularly share attendance data proactively with parents, via half-termly reports in the Senior School and in termly reports in the Junior School.

12. Attendance Promotion

The school promotes positive attendance through:

- Form Tutor/Teacher and Head of Year/Section monitoring;
- celebration of strong attendance;
- communication with families;
- pastoral support;
- attendance reviews where concerns arise;
- reinforcing the link between attendance, wellbeing and academic progress.

13. Attendance Intervention

Where concerns arise, the school may implement:

- attendance monitoring;
- attendance action plans;
- meetings with parents/carers;
- pastoral interventions;
- SEND support;
- referral to external agencies;
- local authority collaboration where appropriate.

14. Supporting Pupils who are Absent or Returning to School

Where a pupil has experienced a prolonged or unavoidable absence, the school will implement appropriate arrangements to support reintegration, which may include academic, pastoral and wellbeing support. This will be overseen by their Form Tutor/Teacher and/or Head of Year/Section, working closely with parents/carers and the pupil, as well as medical professionals or other external agencies as appropriate.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life
- We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

The school recognises that regular attendance is essential to support children's learning, development, wellbeing and safeguarding. Any prolonged absence from Pre-School or Reception will be monitored carefully and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where a pupil is absent for an extended period, the school will:

- Maintain regular contact with parents/carers to establish the reason for the absence and the expected date of return
- EYFS Attendance Lead and the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL) will ensure clear record of all communications and actions taken in relation to the absence
- Offer appropriate support to families where attendance concerns have been identified
- Monitor the pupil's welfare and consider whether any safeguarding concerns are present
- Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL) will work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where the absence is unexplained, recurring, or where there are concerns about the pupil's wellbeing

Where a pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive school days, or has accumulated 15 days of absence within an academic year, the school will undertake a formal review of the circumstances of the absence. This may include welfare checks, meetings with parents/carers, consultation with relevant professionals, and referral to external agencies where appropriate.

If the school is unable to establish contact with a family, or if the pupil's absence gives rise to safeguarding concerns, the matter will be referred immediately to the DSL, who will determine whether further action is required in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school will work collaboratively with parents/carers to support a pupil's return to Pre-School or Reception following a prolonged absence and to ensure a smooth reintegration into school life.

15. Temporary Part-Time Timetables

To support students experiencing significant challenges attending school full-time or have a temporary illness that requires part-time attendance at school (medical confirmation of this will likely be requested by the school), the school may work with parents and pupils to create a temporary reduced timetable.

In line with the procedures set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance, such measures must be temporary with clear review dates (usually every two weeks or more frequently) to establish what is working and what needs to be altered. They should not continue for more than 6 weeks and can never continue beyond 12 weeks. Details of the reduced timetable must be shared with Local Authority.

The intention of a part-time timetable is to aid pupils in returning to full-time education and should never be viewed as a permanent solution. Review meetings should focus on what adjustments can be made within the school day itself, to ensure they are moving to full-time attendance. This will likely also include additional support measures, such as counselling, referrals to external agencies or medical practitioners.

If it seems that full-time attendance cannot be achieved, the school may need to work with families to look at alternative schooling options that might be more suitable. However, the school always aim to work closely with parents and pupils to avoid this outcome.

16. Sponsored Students

Students studying at the school on a visa sponsored by SDEG will have attendance monitored closely. The school recognises its obligation to report to the border agency a sponsored student who misses 10 expected contact points without a verified reason. Morning and afternoon registration points are counted as expected contact points, so reporting would ordinarily occur after 5 school days of unexplained absence.

17. Unauthorised Absence During the School Day

St Dunstan's College is a relatively open site, and if a Senior School student's non-presence in a lesson or activity suggests they may have left site without permission, staff will inform the DSL and College Office. Checks will be undertaken to establish whether the student is on site, including locations such as the Medical Room, Music Rooms, LRC, toilets and sports fields. If the student cannot be located, the DSL will agree action with the Head of Senior School, which may involve calling the Police.
The safety and whereabouts of all Junior School pupils are closely monitored throughout the school day. If a pupil is unexpectedly absent from a lesson, activity or supervised session, and their whereabouts is unknown, staff will immediately inform the Junior School Office and a member of the Junior School Leadership Team.

Checks will be undertaken without delay to establish the pupil's location, including contacting relevant staff and searching appropriate areas of the school site, such as classrooms, specialist teaching areas, the Wellness Centre, toilets, playgrounds, sports

facilities and other supervised locations. Checks of their individual timetables for sessions such as LAMDA or Music Lessons will be completed.

If the pupil cannot be located promptly, the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL) and the Head of Junior School will assess the situation and determine any further action required in conjunction with the DSL. Where there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk or has left the school site, parents/carers and appropriate external agencies, including the Police, may be contacted.

18. Attendance Data

Attendance data will be reviewed:

- weekly at operational level;
- half-termly by pastoral leaders;
- termly by senior leaders and Local School Board members.

Data will be analysed by:

- year group;
- cohort;
- individual pupil;
- vulnerable groups;
- persistent absence indicators.

The purpose is to identify trends, target support and evaluate interventions.

19. Routes for support

Day-to-day attendance enquiries should be directed to the Attendance Officer.

Attendance support concerns should be directed to the Head of Year or SLT Link in the Senior School and the Form Teacher or Head of Section in the Junior School. In the Junior School, this is overseen by the Junior School Deputy Head Pastoral (DDSL).

20. Local Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral. At each review, it will be approved by the Education Committee.

21. Local Linked Policies
This Attendance Policy links to the Safeguarding Policy.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

The school uses the attendance codes set out in the attendance register, in accordance with the guidance referenced in the policy.

Present Codes

Code	Meaning
/	Present: AM registration
\	Present: PM registration
L	Late before registers close
B	Off-site educational activity
D	Dual registration
J	Pupil at interview
P	Approved sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience

Authorised Absence Codes

Code	Meaning
C	Exceptional circumstances leave of absence
E	Excluded: fixed-term suspension
I	Illness
M	Medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave for Years 11 to 13 during public examinations
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes

Unauthorised Absence Codes

Code	Meaning
G	Family holiday not authorised
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Absent without authorisation
U	Late after registers close

Other Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Pupil not on admission register
#	School closure
X	Not required to be in school
[C1]	Regulated performance
[C2]	Temporary reduced timetable
[J1]	Employment or educational interview
[K]	Local authority arranged education provision
[Q]	Lack of access arrangements
[Y1]	Transport unavailable
[Y2]	Widespread travel disruption
[Y3]	Part of school closed
[Y4]	Whole school unexpectedly closed
[Y5]	Criminal justice detention
[Y6]	Public health guidance or law
[Y7]	Other unavoidable cause