

**Stretford**  
Grammar School  
*Aspirat primo fortuna labori*

## **Attendance Policy**

**Ratified by Governors: September 2025**

**Date of Policy:** September 2025

**Committee with Responsibility:** Student Admissions and Welfare

**Member of staff responsible:** Assistant Headteacher Student Welfare and Development

### **Policy Consultation & Review**

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in September 2025. It is due for review every two years

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## 1. Introduction/Aim

At Stretford Grammar School we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all students. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, students, and governors to:

- Support every student’s achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance;
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to student absences;
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 guidance, and other relevant legislation.

## 2. Legal Framework

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

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- > [School census guidance](#)
- > [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

In line with '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' the government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, particularly severe and persistent absence;
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and punctually.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

### 3. Safeguarding

At Stretford Grammar School, we believe every student should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and families, and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties in the home environment. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school; safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses attendance, behaviour management, Health and Safety, access to the curriculum and anti-bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, FGM and CSE.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In order to allow us to safeguard the children in our care it is important that parents provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least two other contact numbers in case of emergency.

It is also important for parents to let school know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability, please speak with your child's Progress Leader.

### **3.1 Children who are absent from education.**

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

At Stretford Grammar we believe that improving school attendance is everyone's business, and that it is a shared responsibility by governors, all school staff, parents, students, and the wider school community.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
<b>Senior Attendance Lead</b>	<b>Mrs H Dolphin</b>	<b>h.dolphin@stretfordgrammar.com</b>
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	<b>Mr J Raddings</b>	<b>attendance@stretfordgrammar.com</b>

The Governing Body of Stretford Grammar recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, students, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all students.
- Ensuring the school engages and works effectively with the local authority Student Absence Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all students and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of students including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, students with a social worker and students from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The head teacher at Stretford Grammar will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently and reviewed for efficacy periodically
- Monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Request the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

School will have a designated senior attendance lead with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and who will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents through regular communication (eg website, newsletters etc)
- Form positive relationships with students and parents;
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve;
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually;

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues;
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with, that staff understand the attendance register is a legal document and that attendance and absence are coded correctly in accordance with DfE statutory guidance
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time;
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors;
- Meet regularly with the Attendance Officer to ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented;
- Ensure robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group and individual student level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
  - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
  - young carers
  - children who are eligible for free school meals
  - children who speak English as a second language
  - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families;
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated;
- Set out how Student Premium will be used to support students with irregular attendance.

All staff at Stretford Grammar will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents;
- Form positive relationships with students and parents;
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve;
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation;
- Implement systems to ensure a consistent approach to reporting, recording and monitoring the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site;
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner;
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions;
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families.

The **Attendance Officer** will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support.

**The Attendance Officer:**

- monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- monitors attendance messages and records absence information on registers

- sends out messages to parents/carers if a student is absent and a message has not been received to alert us to a reason for absence
- reports concerns about attendance to the assistant headteacher
- works with Trafford Attendance to tackle persistent absence
- arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- does home visits to support students and ensure they are safe
- ensures that sanctions for punctuality are issued
- advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

#### **Parents are expected to:**

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress;
- Ensure their child is in school on time every day;
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment;
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note of explanation;
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours and not taking term time holidays;
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life;
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance;
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home;
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance;
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

#### **Students will:**

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, school website, parents and through the school timetable;
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance;
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class;
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen;
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

## **5. Categorising Absence and Attendance**

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance in Working together to improve attendance 2024.

## 5.1 Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised in the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution if the leave of absence is unauthorised for 8 sessions (4 school days) or more. A penalty notice is issued to **each parent for each child**, the penalty being £160 per parent per child (discounted to £80 if paid within 21 days).

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions that the school is open to them so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances'. At Stretford Grammar leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. We will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave. Other than in emergency, if a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. We will treat each application individually. Retrospective requests will not be considered and will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fail to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a student fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

## 5.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that a parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a student must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must sign out at reception. No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

In the majority of cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line

with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend school-led Attendance Support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the student as appropriate to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a student has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting students with medical conditions at school](#) and local authority policy [illness-and-your-child.pdf \(trafford.gov.uk\)](#) We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

### **5.3 Student Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance**

Stretford Grammar acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will authorise the student absence for one day only of the celebration/festival. Additional days either side will not be authorised. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

### **5.4 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller students**

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) students are among the lowest achieving groups of students at every key stage in education, although some GRT students achieve very well at school. There are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT students. Schools and Local Authorities can make a big difference to their life chances through:

- Clear high expectation of all students, regardless of their background
- An inclusive culture that welcomes all communities
- Strong engagement from parents

In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a student of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because:

- the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place,
- that the child has attended at a school as a registered student as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and
- if the child has attained the age of six, that they have made at least 200 attendances during the previous 12 months.

This provision applies *only* when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Trafford, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Stretford Grammar School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the student must have attended Stretford Grammar School in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base

school; in such cases, the student's school place at Stretford Grammar School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our students, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

## **5.5 Unauthorised Absence**

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Appointments for hairdressing
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the student is considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

## **6. Our Procedures**

### **6.1 Register Keeping and Recording**

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the student was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to students

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has accepted the reasons given.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave

- Recognised days of religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Registers are taken at the start of form period at 8.30am and in the first 5 minutes of each lesson. The register taken at the start of period five at 2pm confirms attendance for the afternoon session. The Attendance Officer or Office Staff, if the Attendance Officer is not available, are informed of any student who is not present but marked present at registration

Bromcom is used to take the register and store information on registers.

## 6.2 Late Arrival at School

At Stretford Grammar School all students are expected to arrive on time and complete a full day for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.30am and finishes at 3pm. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. A warning bell sounds at 8.25am and students are expected at this time to make their way to their form rooms. The school register will be taken at 8.30 am. All students arriving after this time are required to report to the main office, are expected to sign in on the electronic sign in system and collect a late sticker. They will be logged with the L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9am. The DfE advises that schools should close the register to students no more than 30 minutes after the register was taken. All students arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a warning letter leading to a penalty notice being issued or prosecution (after 10 sessions of recorded unauthorised lateness) as a last resort.

Please note: L code will be used if a student arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

## 6.3 Expected absence procedure for parents

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

- The student’s parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.20am, if possible or as soon as practically possible
- Parents/carers can call and leave a message or email [attendance@stretfordgrammar.com](mailto:attendance@stretfordgrammar.com). Parents should inform us of the name and form of the student and the reason for absence. A phone call or email should be sent on each day of absence
- We mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness

- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We do not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence is recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers are notified of this in advance
- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all students who are not in school after close of register at 9am and where no reason for absence is known.
- If there is still no contact made from the student's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact/s will be telephoned.
- If school cannot contact a parent or other emergency contact and are concerned about a student, a home visit may be carried out.
- School will telephone home if a student leaves the school without permission.

In cases of ongoing attendance concerns, school may also:

- Visit the home of the student.
- Write to the parents of a student to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance, and advice .
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing an Early Help Assessment or consulting with the Children's First Response team or other Local Authority Children Service teams or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.

#### **6.4 Attendance Rewards & Interventions**

- The school attendance target is 97%
- Parents are informed regularly of their child's attendance
- Progress Leaders and Form Tutors discuss attendance at the weekly tutor meetings to agree on intervention. Intervention may include conversations and support given to a child to support them with improving their attendance or praise for maintaining or improving good attendance
- Bronze, silver and Gold attendance certificates are issued to students termly
- Improvements in attendance are also acknowledged and celebrated
- The Attendance Officer monitors student absence on a daily basis
- A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health
- Attendance data is gathered on Bromcom and used to inform a school attendance tracker
- The Attendance Officer analyses attendance data on a fortnightly basis and updates the attendance tracker
- Attendance data is discussed at SLT meetings on a fortnightly basis
- We track the attendance of all students paying close attention to any emerging trends amongst specific groups. The data is used to identify any students in need of intervention and support and to monitor the impact of any intervention

- We use a tiered system of intervention for non-attendance.
- Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body at Welfare Committee meetings

## 6.5 Support Systems

At Stretford Grammar School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of other difficulties at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. Parents should contact the relevant Progress Leader to share concerns or information in the first instance.

We also recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- The EBSNA toolkit to identify any reasons for non-attendance
- Attendance action plans
- Educational Psychology
- The EHCP team
- Trafford Team Together
- Trafford's Graduated Approach for SEMH
- The Student Absence Team
- Alternative Provision
- Provision in the Hub
- Oak National Academy lessons
- A referral to the Medical Education Service will be considered if absence is as a result of a medical condition

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and students to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and students.

## Levels of Intervention and Support

<b>LEVEL ONE</b>	<b>FAILURE TO SEND CHILD TO SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL REFUSES LEAVE OF ABSENCE.</b>
Criterion	Failure to send child to school after request for leave of absence refused
Vulnerability	Any
Service Provider	School/LA
Intervention	Head Teacher to consider issue of a penalty notice and send request to Student Absence Team via the school portal
	Prosecution in the absence of the penalty being discharged within 28 days

<b>LEVEL TWO</b>	<b>LOW LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE</b>
Criterion	Attendance between 90%-100% over four weeks
Need/Vulnerability	Child/ family may be vulnerable
Service Provider	School
Intervention	School to contact parent to determine reason for student's absence on first day of absence and expected date of return.
	Attendance and monitoring process to identify when absence or punctuality becomes a concern
	Support from the school's attendance officer through telephone calls, letters, emails and home visits
	Parents to be offered access to sources of support via attendance plans or an individual health care plan.
	Praise and reward scheme for children entering level two from any higher level

<b>LEVEL THREE</b>	<b>MEDIUM LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE</b>
Criterion	Attendance between 80% - 90% over four weeks
Vulnerability	Child/Family may be vulnerable or have a low level need requiring single or multi agency support
Service Provider	School/ LA
Intervention	Identifying pattern of absence
Welfare Support	Attendance concern letter
	School meeting with parents – Individual Attendance Plan EBSNA toolkit
	Family help assessment / involvement of Trafford Team Together
	In school pastoral and mentoring support and counselling
	Home visits
	Individual health care plan
	Referral to external support services / alternative provision
	Referral for specialist assessment (e.g. SEND/CAMHS)
Intervention	
Enforcement	Non-attendance warning letters
	Parenting contract
	Home visits

<b>LEVEL FOUR</b>	<b>HIGH LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE</b>
Criterion	Attendance below 80% over four weeks

Vulnerability	Child/Family may have a complex level of need requiring higher level intervention, including referral to specialist assessments & services.
Service Provider	School/LA /Legal Services
Intervention Welfare Support	As at Level 3
Intervention Enforcement	When all attempts to engage with the family at levels three and four have failed referral to legal services with a view to penalty notice/prosecution/ Education Supervision Order

<b>LEVEL FIVE</b>	<b>SAFEGUARDING NEEDS</b>
Criterion	Any level of attendance
Need/Vulnerability	Child/Young person has acute needs that require statutory intervention to promote and protect the welfare of children/young people.
Service Provider	All Agencies
Intervention	Immediate referral by school, attendance officer or other concerned agency to Children's Services.
	Children's services to conduct an immediate assessment of need or a multi-agency assessment under Children's Act 1989, s17 as appropriate.

## 6.6 Severe Absence, Persistent Absence and the use of Legal Interventions

"Severe absence" (SA) is defined as missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason which equates to more than half of all school sessions missed.

"Persistent absence" (PA) is defined as missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days).

Absence at these levels can be extremely damaging to a child's educational prospects.

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

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

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

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

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

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

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

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

### **Children who are absent from education**

- A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.
- There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:
  - Are at risk of harm or neglect
  - Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
  - Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
  - Come from the families of service personnel
  - Go missing or run away from home or care
  - Are supervised by the youth justice system
  - Cease to attend a school
  - Come from new migrant families
- We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.
- Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

### **6.7 Reduced timetables**

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all students and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to

implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a student's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the student is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the student; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

Students absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be marked as absent in the register.

## **6.8 Alternative provision**

Where arrangements have been made for a student to attend alternative provision, school attendance staff will be notified and updated about any changes in the arrangements, so they can ensure the registers are marked accordingly.

Attendance staff and other relevant colleagues will communicate closely with the AP setting.

We will follow up with students and parents/carers on any attendance concerns, in conjunction with the AP.

If a student is only being offered part-time AP, school will ensure the student is offered additional educational provision, which together with the AP equates to a full timetable, unless there are exceptional reasons why not. Students will only be offered part-time educational provision for the shortest time possible and this will be regularly reviewed with the student and parents/carers with the aim of the student accessing fulltime education as quickly as possible.

### **Dual Registration and use of the D code**

If a student from the school is attending another state-funded DfE registered school, Student Referral Unit or Alternative Provision Academy, for part or all of their education, the student will be dual registered at this school (Dual - Main) and the other setting (Dual - Subsidiary).

If a student is attending an AP which is not a state-funded DfE registered school, Student Referral Unit, the student cannot be dual-registered.

When a student from the school is dual registered with another setting, we will ensure the student and parents are clear about the student's timetable; i.e. when the student is expected to attend the school or the other setting, and what the arrangements are for register marking, including the use of the D code. The school will also be clear which setting will be following up any absences. Where students are dual-registered, the AP should provide the school with attendance updates weekly, unless otherwise agreed with the alternative setting. However, if attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the school immediately, and a course of action will be agreed in writing between the school and the AP.

A dual registered student must not be removed from either setting's roll without the agreement of the other setting.

### **Off-site educational activity (B code)**

If a student is attending an AP setting which is not another school or Student Referral Unit for part or all of their education, the school will mark the sessions which the student attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school will mark any sessions attended at the school with the relevant present code, and any absences with the relevant absent code. Such APs should provide attendance updates daily, unless otherwise agreed, so the school can mark the register accordingly.

Unless otherwise agreed with the AP, the AP is expected to notify the school by 10.00am on the morning of any individual student absences, to ensure the school is made aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and takes follow up action as necessary.

If attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the school immediately.

## **7. Deletions from the Register**

At Stretford Grammar School we will add and will only delete students from our school roll in line with the Student Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about students leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the student leaving. At Stretford Grammar School we will always work with families to gain information about the student's next school and/or address before the student leaves to reduce the risk of students becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Trafford Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will ensure the Children Missing Education Team are informed of all removals from our school roll no later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities. Where the location of a student is unknown we will liaise with Trafford Student Absence Team so that joint reasonable enquiries can be made to ascertain the child's whereabouts and the student will remain on roll until those enquiries are exhausted.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The student will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Trafford Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above. We will also inform Trafford Council's EHE team.

Stretford Grammar School will follow Trafford Council's [Children Missing Education procedures or those of other relevant Local Authorities](#) when a student's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Trafford Council or other Councils to establish the whereabouts of the child.

## **8. Related Policies**

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that students at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- medical needs
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- SEND
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

## **APPENDIX 1**

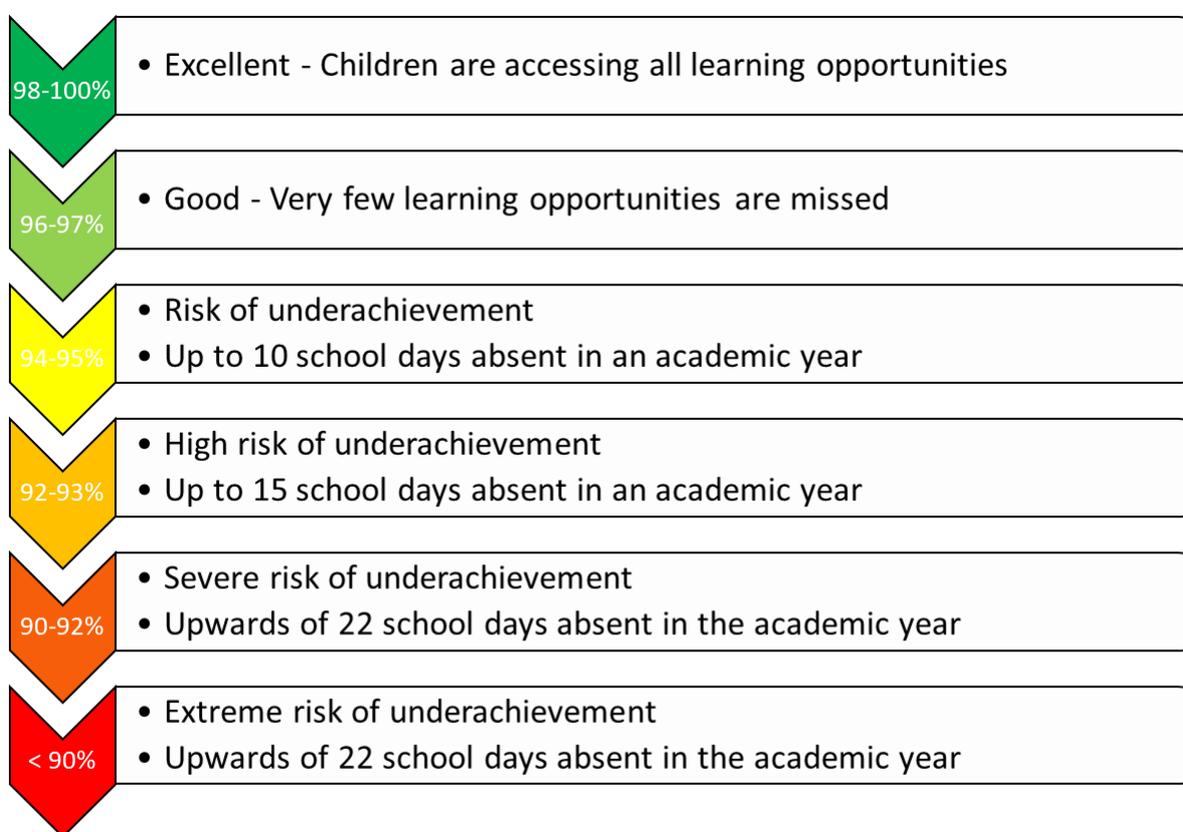
### **Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents**

We expect students to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

**You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:**

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Students must be in school by **8.25 am**.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- If your child appears to be only slightly ill, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



**‘On the day’ absences: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?**

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, please report this absence using the email address [attendance@stretfordgrammar.com](mailto:attendance@stretfordgrammar.com) or calling the school number 0161 865 2293 and selecting the option 1. In the message you must leave your child’s full name, year and tutor group and give the specific reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register.

**Leave of Absence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our 'Leave of absence request' form to make these types of requests. This is found on our website. The form should be submitted in advance of the leave of absence, to [pastoral@stretfordgrammar.com](mailto:pastoral@stretfordgrammar.com). You will receive a letter in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined. Please note that a holiday in term time will only very rarely be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

### Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they do not arrive by **8.30 am**.

The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Please contact Stretford Grammar School if you require any support with ensuring your child's regular school attendance.

### APPENDIX 2

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience

<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
<b>C1</b>	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access

		arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

