Trimley St Mary Primary School

Policy Title	**Attendance/Absence Policy**
Legal Requirement	**Yes**
Review Cycle	**Annual**
Lead Personnel/Committee	**Mrs K. Cook - Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Champion** **Mrs M. Dodwell - Attendance Officer** **Mrs H. Mackie - Attendance Governor** **Full Governing Body**
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Mrs K. Cook	Deputy Headteacher	Date:	14th October 2026
Mrs S. Love	Chair of governors	Date:	14th October 2026

Policy Version History

Version	Policy Source	Document Author/Reviewer Plus Amendments/Additions	Review date	Date Ratified	Next Review Due
V1	SCC Model policy adapted	R. Barkworth, C. Ashford, R. Pattinson	January 2023	February 2023	Spring 2024
V2(1)	Key Model Policy-adapted	R. Barkworth, P. Murray, C. Scott, H. Mackie Updated DFE guidance	March 2024	April 2024	Spring 2025
V2(2)	DFE Guidance Model Policy adapted for Trimley	R. Barkworth, P. Murray, H. Mackie Included section re Trimley monitoring processes. Updated absence codes included DFE Keeping Children safe in Education changed from 2023-24 Previous - Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy-now Pupils with Additional Health needs and medicines policy	July 2025	July 2025	July 2026
V2(3)	DFE Guidance Key adapted Model policy	M. Dodwell, K. Cook, H. Mackie Update from SIMMS to Arbor Update Keeping Children Safe in Education to 2026 Update to include children's wellbeing and schools Bill 2026 Update of personnel Update of register timings Update of absence escalation Revised attendance monitoring procedure to a clear staged approach: Stage 1 at 96%, Stage 2 at 90–95%, and Stage 3 below 90% (persistent absence), with clearer escalation, support and recognition of improvement. Added visual attendance stage overview and removed the standalone Missing Children section; safeguarding and unexplained absence procedures remain within the Absence Procedures section and linked safeguarding/CME policies.	July 2026	September 2026	July 2027

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Statement of intent

Trimley St Mary Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits across the school.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships and working alongside our families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies; to share information where a pupil is at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.
- To make reasonable adjustments and support, as required, pupils and their families where attendance may be affected due to mental or physical ill health, or as dictated by their SEND needs and/or disabilities.

The school's Attendance Champion and Deputy Headteacher is **Mrs K. Cook;** our Attendance Officer and Home/School Liaison is **Mrs M. Dodwell.** Both can be contacted via the main office, at **office@trimley.net** or calling 01394 284130.
Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- DFE (2025) Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE (2026) 'Children missing education
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2026

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs and Medicines Policy
- Looked After & Previously Looked After Children (LAC & PLAC) Policy
- Young Carers Policy (YC)

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.

- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Coheadteachers are responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance champion role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

The Attendance Officer reports directly to the Attendance Champion and is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Working with families to support individuals and their needs as required.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

- Where designated, accurately taking the attendance register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance and punctuality of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Working with the school and associated agencies where required.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

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

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- 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
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Severe absence (SA):

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year

Statutory School Age:

- Children are of statutory school age from the prescribed day following their 5th birthday. Generally, this is the term following their 5th birthday, i.e. child turns 5 in the autumn term they are of statutory school age from the spring term.

Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality. Pupils are expected to attend school every day, arrive punctually and remain at school for the full school day.

Pupils should arrive on the school site by **8:50am**, when the school day begins. This allows pupils to settle in their classrooms and prepare for learning before registration at **9:00am**.

The school gates and classroom doors close at **9:00am**. Pupils arriving after this time must enter through the main school office and will receive a late mark.

The morning register closes at **9:15am**. Pupils arriving after this time without an authorised reason will be recorded as absent for the morning session.

The afternoon register will be taken at **1:00pm for EYFS and Year 1** and **1:15pm for year 2 and KS2**.

The afternoon register will close at **1:10pm for EYFS and KS1** and **1:25pm for KS2**. Pupils who are not present will be recorded as absent for the afternoon session.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone or Parentmail before 9:15am on the first day and each subsequent day (unless advised otherwise) of their child's absence. Parents will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.

- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, school staff will make every reasonable effort to establish the reason for their absence and confirm their whereabouts and welfare. If contact cannot be established, the school will continue to make contact attempts each school day, including contacting listed emergency contacts. The following stages are routine checkpoints and will not delay safeguarding action where concerns arise.

- Day 1 – Initial contact: School staff will contact parents/carers by telephone (including work numbers, where available) and/or email. If contact cannot be established, staff will attempt to contact all listed emergency contacts. Any concerns about the child's whereabouts or welfare will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately; a same-day home visit or further safeguarding action may be required.
- Day 2 – Home visit: If no satisfactory contact has been established and the child's whereabouts and welfare remain unconfirmed, two members of staff will undertake a home visit. The DSL will be informed of the outcome promptly and will determine whether further enquiries or safeguarding action are required.
- Day 3 – Continued contact and review: School staff will continue to attempt contact with parents/carers and emergency contacts. The DSL will review the outcome of previous contact attempts and the home visit and determine whether further welfare checks, safeguarding action or external agency involvement are required.
- Day 4 – Further action: If the child's whereabouts and welfare remain unconfirmed, a further home visit will be undertaken where appropriate. The DSL will review the circumstances and determine whether further enquiries or referrals to external agencies are required. The school will not wait until Day 4 to seek external advice or make a referral where earlier action is warranted.

Safeguarding: The school will not wait until a specified day of absence to take safeguarding action. Where concerns arise regarding a child's safety or welfare, the DSL will be informed immediately and appropriate action taken in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Where there is reason to believe a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral to Children's Social Care will be made without delay. Where a child is believed to be in immediate danger, the police will be contacted on 999. All contact attempts, home visits, concerns and actions taken will be recorded.

Where a pupil is absent for more than three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s). Also,

- The Attendance Officer will continue to keep in contact with parent/carer at least every other day of absence and agree contact times with parent/carer.

- Where a child is absent for a duration for planned medical issues, including operation recovery, chronic illness and prolonged illness, the Attendance Officer will keep in regular contact with parent/carer to offer support and in line with the School's Safeguarding policy.

In the case of prolonged illness and/or confirmed medical condition, the Attendance Officer may liaise with parent/carer and medical professionals, such as School Nursing, GP and other health professionals, with the consent of parent, to ensure that the child's medical and educational needs are met.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA and/or SA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance champion on a regular basis. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Attendance register

The school uses Schools Information Management System, (Arbor), to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.
Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- C2 = Leave of absence for a pupil subject to a Part Time Timetable

- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Y1 = Unable to attend due to LA arranged transport being unavailable
- Y2 = Widespread travel disruption
- Y3 & Y4 = Unable to attend due to school premises being partially or wholly closed
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years from the date of leaving our school, stored securely in our archives.

Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request leave of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing, preferably using the School's 'Leave of Absence Request' form at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.
Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 8% for any reason
- Term Time holidays, without exceptional circumstances

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice.

The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences

In line with the national framework from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Local Authority (LA) a penalty notice will be issued when a pupil has 10 or more sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. The penalty notice will be charged at £160 per child/per parent if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty will be issued when the national threshold is met, within a 3-year rolling period of a first penalty being issued to the same parent/carer. A second penalty notice will be charged at £160 if paid within 21 days, there is no reduction for early payment.

In line with the new DfE framework, a maximum of **two** penalty notices may be issued over a rolling 3-year period. If the national threshold is met for a third time within 3 years and the parents/carers have already been issued with 2nd penalty, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

For example:

10 sessions (5 school days) or more taken as unauthorised holiday in September 2024 – a £160 penalty notice will be issued (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days).

A further 10 sessions, or more, of unauthorised absence is taken in October 2025 – a further penalty notice will be issued at a rate of £160 – no reduction for early payment.

A further 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence is taken before end September 2027, consideration will be made by the school for prosecution as detailed above.

Unauthorised absence includes, but not limited to, holidays (when deemed not for exceptional circumstances), no reason or an unacceptable reason for absence is given or arrival after the registers have closed. Absences must be requested in advance of the leave being taken; leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least 2 weeks advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.
In line with the SEND Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.
Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.
If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.

- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within 1 week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using our school's signing in/out register which is retained at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:55am and 1pm (EYFS & KS1) or by 1:15pm (KS2), where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.
Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.
The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, contact will be made with the parents, including a letter of warning.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, holidays in term-time, persistent late arrival at school and where there are six or more school sessions (three school days) of unauthorised absence in a term.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
    - Sending letters to parents.
    - Having a weekly tutor review.
    - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
    - Using fixed penalty notices.
    - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.
The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Postcards home

- End of term certificates
- Small rewards, such as pens, pencils, stationary equipment etc.

Where attendance drops or where truancy/absconding from school are factors, school trips /events may no longer be offered at the discretion of the attendance team and co-headteachers.

Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.
Promoting the value of school and parental engagement: The school will actively help parents and carers understand the value of regular attendance and the positive impact of school on children's learning, friendships, wellbeing and wider development. We will share and celebrate learning and school experiences, provide opportunities for families to engage with school life and, where practicable, experience learning in classrooms, and seek parental feedback. We will explain the cumulative impact of absence sensitively and work collaboratively with families to understand and address individual barriers to attendance.
These opportunities will be planned to meet the needs of our school community.
The school will ensure that there are at least two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.
The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.
If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.
Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Persistent Absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC

- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.
- Working with the child and family, setting individual targets and recognising improvement

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 10 percent and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.
Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.
Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.
The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.
The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.
The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.
The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.
Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers

- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.
Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Trimley St Mary Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

Attendance Stage Overview

The table below gives families and staff a simple overview of the school's staged approach. Percentages are considered alongside individual circumstances, known barriers and safeguarding information.

Attendance	Position	Approx. days missed*	Approx. weeks missed*	School response
99–100%	**Excellent**	0–2	Less than ½ week	Celebrate and maintain
97–98%	**Expected**	3–6	About ½–1 week	Monitor and encourage
96%	**Stage 1**	About 7–8	About 1½ weeks	Early supportive contact
90–95%	**Stage 2**	About 9–19	About 2–4 weeks	Closer monitoring and support
Below 90%	**Stage 3 – Persistent Absence**	More than 19	More than 4 weeks	Formal meeting and action plan

**Approximate figures are based on a 190-day school year and are included to illustrate the cumulative impact of absence.*

Stage 1 – Attendance at 96%

Where a pupil's attendance reaches 96%, the Attendance Officer/Attendance Champion will consider the individual circumstances and make early, supportive contact with parents/carers where appropriate. A Stage 1 attendance letter may be sent, setting out the pupil's current attendance and offering support to identify and address any emerging barriers.
The pupil's attendance will be monitored and improvement encouraged and recognised. Known medical, SEND, safeguarding or other exceptional circumstances will be taken into account and appropriate support or reasonable adjustments considered.

Stage 2 – Attendance between 90% and 95%

Where attendance falls between 90% and 95%, the pupil will move to Stage 2. The Attendance Officer/Attendance Champion will review attendance more closely and contact parents/carers to discuss the pattern of absence, any barriers to attendance and the support that may be required. A Stage 2 attendance letter will be sent where appropriate.
Attendance will be reviewed regularly. Where concerns continue, parents/carers may be invited to an attendance meeting and an agreed period of monitoring may be put in place.
School will work with the family and, where appropriate, relevant staff or external services to address identified barriers before attendance becomes persistent absence.

Stage 3 – Attendance below 90% (Persistent Absence)

Attendance below 90% is persistent absence. At Stage 3, a formal attendance meeting will normally be arranged with parents/carers and an Attendance Action Plan will be agreed, setting out barriers, support, actions, responsibilities and review dates. The school will

consider involvement from the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team/Education Welfare Officer and other relevant services where appropriate.
Where engagement and support do not lead to sufficient improvement, the school will follow Suffolk and national attendance procedures and consider further formal intervention, including a Notice to Improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention where the relevant criteria are met. Safeguarding action will not be delayed by any attendance stage.

Improvement and exit from a stage
Where attendance improves and agreed targets are met, this will be recognised with the pupil and family. Monitoring may continue until attendance is sustained. The school's response will remain proportionate to the pupil's circumstances and will focus on improving attendance rather than the percentage alone.

Unexplained absence
The staged attendance process above does not replace the school's separate Day 1–Day 4 unexplained absence and safeguarding procedure. First-day contact, emergency-contact checks, home visits and safeguarding escalation will continue in accordance with the Absence Procedures section of this policy.

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96% – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website. This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is summer term, 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Who's Who in Our School

Co-Head Teachers Mrs H Lamb & Mrs L Beston
Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs. K. Cook
DSL: Mrs. M. Dodwell

Deputy DSLs: Mrs H. Lamb, Mrs L. Beston, Miss L. Hudson, Mrs K Cook & Mrs M Bateman (Governor)

Senior Leadership Team: Mrs H Lamb, Mrs L Beston, Mrs K Cook Miss L. Hudson, Mrs L Lee, Mrs E Ryan

SENDCo & Snr Mental Health Lead: Mis L. Hudson

Attendance Officer: Mrs M Dodwell
Attendance Champion: Mrs K Cook
Attendance Assistant: Mrs L Filby

Chair of Governors: Mrs S. Love
Attendance Governor: Mrs H Mackie
Safeguarding Governor: Mrs M Bateman

Business Manager: Miss H Rowe

Home/School Liaison: Mrs M Dodwell