Trust Attendance Policy

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This policy is a statutory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented with localised amendments

Our mission vision and values

The Trust has a clear mission at its core, ensuring that all pupils are enabled to flourish, rooted in God's Love - academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally. This is central to our work and rooted in our Christian foundation (John 10 v 10). Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is built upon our shared belief in Church of England principles. In our Trust, just as in the wider Church of England community, 'flourish' refers to prospering, thriving and growing – not shrinking out and dying. It means prayerfully encouraging all within our schools so that they might prove fruitful, successful and contented in the longer term. We seek to provide space generously for all to flourish in life and all its structures. Equitable treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is a core part of enabling this long term, holistic flourishing.

We have a clear vision about creating successful schools for the benefit of their communities. All schools provide rich and diverse curricula which evolve to meet the needs of their children and local communities, as well as delivering educational excellence to enable them to continue to flourish in later life.

The way we work and deliver against our mission is critical to our Trust. We have shared, agreed values of:

Hope; Nurture; Equality; Respect; Collaboration.

The Trust's vision is underpinned by a Christian values framework which is adopted by all schools. It provides clear expectations for all Trust employees on how we wish our values to impact on all areas of school life. It draws on, and is informed by, the National Church of England Vision for Education and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision.

Each school within the Trust has a personalised vision for education, developed locally to reflect the individual character and needs of the school community. This vision is underpinned by the Trust's wider vision, and agreed with the Trust, but it is owned and driven by the headteacher and their LGB.

OUR COMMUNITY

The Trust are dedicated to delivering education that serves local communities. Our schools are inclusive, welcoming those from all and no faiths, from all abilities and backgrounds. We believe in providing a high-quality education, underpinned by Christian values, which enables every child to flourish.

Underpinning all of the Trust's work is a belief in educational excellence. The Trust serves all stakeholders by providing schools with the highest levels of academic rigour and pastoral care.

Our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually. All of the Trust's schools teach a broad and balanced curriculum within national guidelines focusing on core skills. This is designed to ensure that all pupils reach their

academic potential and seek to enrich their experience along the way. Pupils will be enabled to succeed in an atmosphere of high expectation, aspiring to educational excellence with a firm foundation of values.

This policy forms part of our Trust governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This is the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust (DSAMAT) Attendance policy and must be implemented and adhered to in each of the academies within the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust. For the remainder of this document, the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust will be referred to as DSAMAT.

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1. AIMS

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

1. Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
2. Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
3. Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
4. Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
5. Acting early to address patterns of absence
6. Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Manshead will pursue high attendance through early identification, understanding barriers and practical support, alongside proportionate legal intervention when appropriate. Attendance is a safeguarding and inclusion responsibility shared by staff, pupils, families and partners. We will act before absence becomes persistent and evaluate whether our action improves pupils' access to suitable education. We will not treat absence caused by illness, disability or other lawful reasons as misconduct.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy has regard to Working together to improve school attendance, statutory guidance updated July 2026, and the statutory duties that apply to academies. Its principal attendance legislation is the Education Act 1996, including sections 7, 19, 436A, 444 and 444A–444B; the Education Act 2002; the Education and Inspections Act 2006; the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended, including the 2024 amendments; the Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007; and the Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013 as amended, including the 2024 daily attendance-data provisions.

We will also comply with applicable safeguarding, equality, SEND and information-protection duties under the Children Act 1989, Equality Act 2010, Children and Families Act 2014, UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, as amended. Relevant guidance includes Keeping children safe in education 2026; Children missing education, September 2025; the SEND Code of Practice; supporting pupils at school with medical conditions; arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs; alternative provision; providing remote education; and suspension and permanent exclusion guidance effective from 26 July 2026.

The 2006 pupil-registration regulations are superseded for this purpose by the 2024 regulations and must not be presented as the current registration framework. The academy will check commencement and applicability before implementing any further legislative change; announcements or proposed measures are not treated as duties already in force.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Governance

The Trust Board is responsible for:

1. Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
2. Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement
3. efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most (delegated to the Education and Ethos committee)

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for:

Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:

1. Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
2. Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

The Cluster Education Cluster Leaders will work with Headteacher to ensure the below…

1. Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
2. Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
3. Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
4. Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
5. Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
   I. The importance of good attendance
   II. That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
   III. The school's legal requirements for keeping registers

IV. The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role,

1. including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
2. Promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos
3. Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools
4. Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
5. Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
6. Ensuring that the agreed steps to take regarding follow up action for absences, including holiday absence is taken by all schools consistently.

The Local Governing Board (LGB) is responsible for:

1. Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's local policies and ethos
2. Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data shared through the Leadership Report and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most

The LGB will review attendance, persistent and severe absence, punctuality, access to education and the impact of intervention at least half-termly. Reports will distinguish authorised and unauthorised absence and include SEND/EHC plans, disadvantage, care experience, pupils with social workers, young carers and other relevant cohorts. Governors will challenge patterns, resources, equality impacts and the completion of improvement actions. Minutes will record agreed actions, owners and review dates. The Trust will oversee statutory compliance, share effective practice and provide additional support where attendance is weak.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

1. The implementation of this policy at the school
2. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the LGB through the Leadership Report.
3. Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
4. Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
5. Working in conjunction with the local authority, when an attendance case should be referred for legal intervention. A school-issued penalty notice may only be issued by the headteacher or an authorised deputy or assistant headteacher; an attendance officer does not gain that legal power merely through the headteacher's authorisation. All notices must comply with the local

authority Code of Conduct and the national framework. Where someone other than a local authority officer issues a notice, they will first check with the local authority and send it a copy. The academy's normal request and issuing route will be recorded in its authorised local procedure.

6. Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
7. Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
8. Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

1. Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
2. Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
3. Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
4. Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
5. Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
6. Attending and supporting Attendance Reviews led by DSAMAT or by external partners.
7. Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
8. Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
9. Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
10. Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
11. Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
12. The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Ms A Joseph and can be contacted via 01582 679400 & office@mansheadschool.co.uk

The senior attendance lead will coordinate weekly case review with attendance, pastoral, SEND and safeguarding staff and keep a single action record for pupils needing support. Each plan will identify a lead adult, the pupil's and parent's views, barriers, agreed actions, attendance goals and a review date. The lead will attend local authority Targeting Support Meetings, check the impact of interventions and report unresolved barriers to the headteacher. The academy will publish the current role holder and contact details and update them promptly when responsibilities change.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

1. The attendance officer will prepare accurate attendance records and evidence of support, advise the headteacher and attendance champion on referrals to the local authority, and administer the agreed procedure. The officer will not issue a school penalty notice unless independently holding a legally eligible role. Attendance monitoring is described in section 8. The current attendance-officer name and contact route will be confirmed before publication. (see section 8)
2. Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
3. Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the
4. designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
5. Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
6. Advising the Headteacher/Attendance Lead (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Maria Michelli and can be contacted via 01582 679400 & office@mansheadschool.co.uk

3.5 Class Teachers / Form Tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for morning sessions, Class teachers during period 4 for afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information via Arbor to the school office. This needs to be completed during the first 10 minutes of the session.

Every teacher will complete the lesson register promptly and report any unexplained difference from the statutory register immediately. Morning and afternoon statutory registers will be taken at the same time for every registered pupil, including pupils with an agreed part-time timetable. Absence from a lesson when a pupil is known to be on site triggers the missing-pupil procedure; staff must not assume that the pupil is with another adult without confirmation. Lesson registers supplement and do not replace the statutory attendance register.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

1. Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
2. Transfer calls from parents/carers to the head of year where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Designated staff will check unanswered absence contacts, maintain up-to-date emergency contacts, alert the attendance lead to unexplained absence and refer immediate welfare concerns to the DSL. The DSL decides safeguarding escalation; administrative staff must not wait for an attendance-percentage threshold before raising a concern.

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

1. All natural parents, whether they are married or not
2. All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
3. Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

1. Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time
2. Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:30 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
3. Where possible, use the Study Bugs App to inform the school of their child's absence before 8:30 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.
4. Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
5. Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
6. Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
7. Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting their child's form tutor or head of year, who can be contacted via 01582 679400 & office@mansheadschool.co.uk

Parents of compulsory-school-age children must secure suitable full-time education, normally through regular attendance at the school where the child is registered. Reporting an absence does not itself authorise it. The academy decides the correct code from the circumstances and explains disputed decisions. Parents may report via Studybugs, telephone or email; inability to use an app must not prevent reporting or access to support. We will make communication accessible, including translation or alternative formats where needed. We will seek more than one emergency contact where reasonably possible.

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

Both admission and attendance registers will be electronic and each entry preserved for six years from its date. Corrections will retain an auditable original entry, reason, date and author; records will not be

altered to improve attendance statistics. Required daily attendance data will be supplied to the DfE under the applicable information regulations, with access controls, secure transmission and a published privacy notice. Consent is not required for a statutory return; staff must identify the correct lawful basis for other sharing.

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

1. Present
2. Attending an approved off-site educational activity
3. Absent
4. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
5. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
6. The original entry
7. The amended entry
8. The reason for the amendment
9. The date on which the amendment was made
10. The name and position of the person who made the amendment
11. See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

1. Whether the absence is authorised or not
2. The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
3. The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

1. The school day is 8:40 to 15:10 and pupils arrive by 8:35.
2. The morning register is between 8:40 and at 9:10
3. The afternoon register is open betwee 12:30 and closes at 13.00.
4. Both remain open for thirty minutes. The same opening duration applies to both sessions and will not exceed thirty minutes.

The academy will agree same-session attendance reporting with every off-site provider. Code B, K, P, V or W is used only when the pupil actually attends an activity meeting that code's criteria. Code D is used only for a session scheduled at another school where the pupil is also registered. If a pupil does not attend the provision, we record the appropriate absence reason, follow up promptly and consider safeguarding. Remote learning at home is not recorded as attendance at an approved off-site activity.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents should report unplanned absence and its reason by 8:30 each day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, using Studybugs, 01582 679400 or medicalabsence@mansheadschool.co.uk. Physical and mental illness that prevents attendance is recorded using code I. We normally accept a parent's explanation and do not apply a blanket requirement for medical evidence after five days or at any fixed attendance percentage.

Reasonable evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the illness or where prolonged or repeated illness requires evidence to identify suitable support. We will explain why evidence is needed, accept appropriate available information and avoid unnecessary GP appointments or costs. A diagnosis or specialist referral is not a precondition for initial support.

If the explanation cannot be accepted, the attendance lead will review the available information, discuss the decision with the family and record the reasons for any unauthorised code. Safeguarding, reasonable adjustments and continuity of education will be considered independently of the coding decision.

4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents should inform the school in advance of the appointment via 01582 679400 &/or office@mansheadschool.co.uk

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Code M records absence with leave for a medical or dental appointment. Permission and expected return time will be agreed, and the pupil should attend before or after the appointment when practicable. Only necessary absence is authorised; an appointment is not automatically permission to miss the whole day. An interview for education or employment is considered under code J1 rather than the general exceptional-circumstances code.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil arriving after registration begins but before the register closes is marked L. After closure, the U code is used unless the established reason requires another applicable absence code; record the actual arrival time and reason. Staff will not use a present mark to conceal lateness after closure.

Repeated lateness prompts discussion with the pupil and family to identify travel, caring, health, SEND or other barriers and agree support. Any behavioural consequence must be proportionate and take account of disability and safeguarding; it does not replace the correct attendance mark. Regular late arrival after closure contributes unauthorised sessions towards the national penalty-notice consideration threshold where code U properly applies.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

For every unexplained absence, the attendance team will contact parents promptly on the first morning and follow up each further unexplained session. If contact fails, staff will use other emergency contacts, check known circumstances and alert the attendance lead and DSL. The DSL will assess immediate risk, direct reasonable welfare enquiries and decide whether children's social care, the police or other agencies are needed. An emergency or credible immediate danger requires urgent action; staff must not wait for five days or ten days.

Use N only while the reason is not established. Replace it with the correct code as soon as the reason is known and no later than five school days after the session. If no reason is established within that period, use O. Continue enquiries and record the action taken; the coding deadline is not a safeguarding waiting period.

Notify the pupil's social worker or youth offending team worker of unexplained absence where applicable. Make attendance returns to the local authority for compulsory-school-age pupils who fail to attend regularly or have ten continuous school days recorded with unauthorised codes, at the frequency agreed with the authority and at least monthly. Make a sickness return when there are reasonable grounds to believe illness coded I will lead to fifteen school days missed consecutively or cumulatively in the school year. Refer earlier where welfare or educational need requires it.

Support and, where appropriate, proportionate formal or legal action will be agreed after considering the circumstances, equality duties and evidence of barriers and support.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents can view their child's attendance through the academy's available parent system and will receive an accessible attendance summary at least half-termly. The attendance lead will make earlier contact when absence or lateness causes concern. Reports explain sessions missed, authorised and unauthorised absence, trends and available support. A parent may ask the attendance team to review a disputed entry, without delaying safeguarding or statutory action.

4.7 Admission register and children missing education

A pupil's name is deleted only where a ground in regulation 9 of the 2024 regulations is satisfied and all conditions for that ground have been met. The academy will make required new-pupil and deletion returns to the local authority, including notifications outside normal transition points, and any other returns the authority has lawfully required. Where joint reasonable enquiries are required before deletion, the school and authority must complete and record them; a period of unexplained absence does not by itself justify removal.

We distinguish a registered pupil absent from education from a child missing education who is not registered and not receiving suitable education otherwise. Both can raise safeguarding concerns. The attendance lead and DSL will use the local CME procedure and promptly exchange necessary information with the relevant authority. Staff will not encourage home education or removal from roll to avoid attendance, behaviour or SEND responsibilities. Elective home-education notifications will be handled under the applicable legal ground and current guidance; staff will not create an extra approval requirement where the law does not require one.

5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will consider leave requests individually, following the specific categories and conditions in the 2024 registration regulations and July 2026 statutory guidance. Applications should be made as early as possible and normally in advance; an emergency will be considered on its facts. Four weeks' notice is a planning request, not a rule that prevents consideration of a genuine emergency.

Exceptional leave under code C depends on the individual facts, relevant background and length of leave justified. Bereavement, a family emergency or other event is not automatically authorised simply because it appears on a list. A desire for a holiday, leisure or recreation is generally not an exceptional circumstance. Leave is not granted for protest activity during school hours. We communicate the decision and authorised dates in writing.

Other categories have their own requirements. Code R applies to a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs; there is no academy blanket one-day-per-festival cap overriding those criteria. Extra travel or days beyond those set apart require separate consideration. Code M concerns permitted medical or dental appointments, J1 an approved education or employment interview, C1 a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad meeting the licensing or approval requirements, and S authorised study leave for public examinations. Study leave is used sparingly for public examinations and not for mocks or as blanket permission to cease attending; revision support remains available.

Temporary part-time education for a compulsory-school-age pupil is exceptional and follows section 7.4 and code C2. Code T is considered for a pupil of compulsory school age with no fixed abode whose

parent is travelling for occupational purposes and where the relevant conditions are satisfied; it is not allocated simply by ethnicity or traveller identity. If the pupil is attending another school where registered, use D for that scheduled session instead.

Approved off-site education is recorded only under its appropriate attendance code and verified attendance, as described in section 4.1. Unavoidable inability to attend is recorded using the specific Q or Y code whose conditions are met and is not described as an approved educational activity. Code E applies while a suspended or permanently excluded pupil remains on roll and no alternative provision has been made. Required educational provision and the correct attendance or absence code apply once alternative provision begins.

5.2 Support and attendance legal intervention

The academy will understand barriers and provide appropriate support before formalising intervention where support has not succeeded or has not been engaged with. Where support is not appropriate, for example an unauthorised term-time holiday, legal intervention may be considered without first providing unsuitable support. Illness, disability and safeguarding needs are considered on their facts. There is no automatic fine based only on an attendance percentage.

Attendance penalty notices concern compulsory-school-age pupils and must follow the national framework and the Code of Conduct of the local authority where the academy is situated. At ten unauthorised sessions in a rolling ten-school-week period, the academy must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in the individual case. Sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive and the period may span terms or school years. A school week is one with at least one school session. Meeting the threshold does not require an automatic notice. Any below-threshold use must follow the local code and the same individual considerations.

The decision record will address whether support is appropriate and has been offered or tried, whether a notice is the best tool, whether equality duties make it inappropriate and whether another intervention is preferable. The local authority assesses the sufficiency of support and its own public-interest considerations. The academy will liaise with it to check previous notices, avoid duplication and follow cross-border arrangements where necessary. Eligible school issuers are restricted to the headteacher or an authorised deputy or assistant headteacher; local authority officers and the police have their own powers.

For an attendance notice, the first notice to a parent for a particular child is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within twenty-one days. The second notice to that parent for that child within the applicable three-year period is £160 payable within twenty-eight days, with no reduction. A third attendance notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years of the first; the authority considers alternative action, often prosecution or another suitable intervention. Payment is made to the local authority. Where unpaid after twenty-eight days, the authority must consider prosecution or withdrawal

in accordance with the regulations. There is no statutory right of appeal against a penalty notice; parents should promptly contact the issuing authority if they believe it was wrongly issued.

The separate notice for a child found in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification in the first five days of suspension or permanent exclusion is not part of that attendance escalation framework. Subject to the required parent notification, its amount is £120, reduced to £60 if paid within twenty-one days. It does not count towards the two-notice attendance limit.

Where the attendance threshold is met and appropriate support has not worked or has not been engaged with, a Notice to Improve should usually give a final opportunity to engage. It is not required where support is inappropriate, and an eligible officer may decide it would have no useful impact. It will specify the attendance record and offences, parent duties, support already offered and still available, the required improvement, a three-to-six-week period, possible prosecution or penalty notice, and the circumstances permitting earlier issue. Parents are informed before any notice issued before the improvement period ends.

Attendance contracts are written support agreements, not fines or compulsory contracts. They set out pupil and parent actions, practical school or authority support, named contacts and review arrangements. Failure to agree a contract alone is not an offence. Where difficulties continue, the academy will work with the local authority on the appropriate route, including an education supervision order, attendance prosecution or related court measures. The academy does not itself impose a court order. We continue reviewing the pupil's needs and the effect of the action taken.

6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

We believe that regular attendance is essential for pupils to achieve their full potential, and we actively promote and reward good attendance through a variety of strategies:

1. Celebration of Good Attendance: Pupils who achieve high levels of attendance are recognised and celebrated through the awarding of certificates. These are presented during assemblies to highlight and commend their commitment to learning.
2. End of Term Rewards Days: To further incentivise consistent attendance, pupils with excellent or significantly improved attendance are invited to participate in special rewards days at the end of term. These events are designed to be enjoyable and motivating, reinforcing the importance of regular school attendance.
3. Attendance Contracts: In partnership with parents and carers, the Academy may implement attendance contracts where attendance concerns arise. These contracts outline clear expectations and support strategies and are used as a collaborative tool to improve attendance. They may be initiated by the school or in conjunction with the local authority, depending on the level of concern.

Recognition will celebrate sustained improvement and engagement with agreed plans as well as high attendance. Criteria will not unfairly disadvantage pupils whose attendance is affected by disability or legitimate medical absence; leaders will consider reasonable adjustments and equivalent opportunities. Access to essential curriculum learning or necessary support will not depend on earning an attendance reward. Staff will explain attendance expectations routinely and seek pupils' views on barriers, safety and belonging.

7. SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO ARE ABSENT OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We recognise that some pupils face complex and multifaceted barriers that impact their ability to attend school regularly.

Our approach is rooted in understanding, early intervention, and collaboration. We work closely with pupils, families, and external agencies to identify the root causes of persistent absence and to develop tailored support plans. This includes:

Individualised Support Plans: We create personalised attendance support plans that consider the pupil's specific needs and circumstances. These plans are regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary.

Multi-Agency Collaboration: Where appropriate, we engage with external professionals such as social workers, health practitioners, and local authority attendance officers to ensure a co-ordinated and holistic response.

Family Engagement: We maintain open and supportive communication with families, offering regular meetings and check-ins to build trust and work together to overcome barriers.

Monitoring and Early Intervention: Attendance data is monitored closely to identify patterns and intervene early. This proactive approach helps prevent issues from escalating and ensures timely support.

Each targeted plan will record the pupil's account, family circumstances, in-school barriers such as bullying or curriculum access, practical actions, responsible adults and a review date. The attendance champion will review active high-concern cases weekly and coordinate early help or statutory services where needed. Young carers, pupils in temporary accommodation and families facing transport or financial barriers will be offered appropriate referrals and practical support. Timetable flexibility that reduces access to full-time education is permitted only under the safeguards in section 7.4, not as an informal attendance or behaviour arrangement.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We are committed to supporting all pupils, including those whose attendance is affected by mental or physical ill health or special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We understand that these pupils may face additional challenges in attending school regularly, and we take a compassionate, flexible, and proactive approach to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

Our approach includes:

Collaborative Support with Families: We work closely with parents and carers to understand the nature of the pupil's needs and to develop a shared plan of support. Regular communication ensures that families feel listened to and involved in decision-making.

Pastoral and Specialist Support: Pupils have access to our pastoral team, SENDCo, and other support staff who provide tailored interventions and emotional support. We may also involve external professionals such as educational psychologists, CAMHS, or health services where needed.

Maintaining Educational Engagement: For pupils who are unable to attend school in person for extended periods, we explore alternative ways to maintain their engagement with learning, such as remote learning resources, home tuition (where applicable), or reintegration programmes.

Regular Review and Reintegration Planning: We regularly review the support in place and work with families to plan for a successful return to school when appropriate. Reintegration plans are carefully managed to ensure a smooth and supportive transition.

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their health or additional needs, feel valued, supported, and able to access their education in a way that works for them.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

At Manshead CE Academy, we understand that returning to school after a prolonged or unavoidable absence; whether due to illness, family circumstances, or other significant events, can be a challenging experience for pupils and their families. Our approach is centred on providing a warm, supportive, and structured reintegration process that prioritises the pupil's wellbeing and academic continuity.

Key elements of our approach include:

1. Personalised Reintegration Plans: We work with pupils, parents/carers, and relevant staff to create a tailored reintegration plan. This may include a phased return, adjusted timetables, or additional academic and pastoral support.

2. Pastoral Support: Pupils are supported by our pastoral team, who provide regular check-ins, mentoring, and a safe space to talk about any concerns or anxieties related to returning to school.
3. Academic Catch-Up Support: Where needed, we provide targeted academic support to help pupils catch up on missed learning. This may include access to revision materials, tutoring, or in-class support.
4. Collaboration with Families: We maintain open communication with families throughout the reintegration process, ensuring they are informed, involved, and supported.
5. Monitoring and Review: The reintegration plan is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the pupil's needs. Adjustments are made as necessary to support a successful return to full attendance.

The named reintegration lead will agree a written plan with the pupil and family before or promptly on return, identifying safety, reasonable adjustments, missed learning, a trusted adult and review dates. Review will occur at least fortnightly while a temporary reduced timetable is in place, with earlier review if progress or risk changes. Reintegration arrangements must not make attendance conditional on a parent attending a meeting or operate as an informal exclusion.

7.4 Temporary part-time timetables

Pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to suitable full-time education. A temporary part-time timetable providing less than full-time education is used only in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests, with headteacher approval and the agreement of the parent the pupil normally lives with. It must not be used to manage behaviour, compensate for staffing shortages or conceal absence.

8. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

We take a proactive and systematic approach to monitoring attendance, absence, and punctuality to ensure that all pupils are supported in maintaining regular school attendance.

Attendance staff check unexplained sessions and coding daily. The attendance champion reviews individual patterns, persistent and severe absence risk, repeated lateness and lesson absence weekly with pastoral, SEND and safeguarding colleagues. SLT reviews whole-school trends and the impact of actions each half term. Review triggers prompt assessment and support; they do not automatically establish culpability, unauthorised absence or a sanction.

Daily Registration: Teachers record attendance using the Arbor system, which provides a secure and efficient platform for tracking pupil attendance in real time. Registers are taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session as well as each lesson during the day.

Absence Reporting: Parents and carers are expected, wherever possible to report pupil absences using the Studybugs app. This platform allows for quick and clear communication between home and school, ensuring that all absences are recorded accurately and promptly.

Data Analysis: Attendance and punctuality data is regularly reviewed by the attendance team and senior leaders. We analyse trends at individual, group, and whole-school levels to identify patterns of concern and to inform targeted interventions.

Early Intervention: Where attendance issues are identified, we act swiftly to engage with pupils and families. This may include phone calls, meetings, home visits, or referrals to external support services.

Reporting and Accountability: Attendance data is shared with form tutors, Heads of Year, and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure a coordinated response. Governors are also kept informed of attendance trends and the impact of interventions.

DSAMAT Attendance reviews

The Diocese of St Albans MAT conduct annual Attendance Reviews (run by the Education Cluster Leaders) within each school to monitor and review Attendance and Absence figure, analysing pupil groups and different cohorts with each school's distinctly different context. The review will consider the following:

Data Summary: Overall data, Disadvantaged, Boys/Girls, LAC/PLAC, SEND, SEND (EHCP), Other groups which may be specific to each situation. • How data presents at that point in time and how it has changed over time. • Authorised / Unauthorised absences. • Exceptional Circumstances Authorised absence. Rational for use of exceptional criteria • Persistent Absence – reasons for this and actions to reduce. • Barriers to good attendance and actions taken to reduce / remove the barriers • Case Studies of successes and what can be learned from these to inform other cases across the Trust • Suspensions and Exclusions, where applicable. • In year leavers, numbers of and reasons for leaving. • Discussion about leadership and management of attendance, systems and processes in place to record, review and analyse attendance, CME procedures and off-rolling procedures.

Each DSAMAT Attendance review is summarised within a report which details strengths and areas for further development (which sits in the school's success tracker). This report is shared with the Headteacher / Senior leader / Attendance Officer, Cluster Lead and DSAMAT Executive team/ The Headteacher shares the report with the LGB as part of the Leadership report and the CEO shares a summary of Trust wide reports with the Trust Board Education and Ethos Committee

The Headteacher ensure that action is taken for all recommendations form the annual audit and the Cluster Education Leaders will receive this information and impact data

8.1 Monitoring attendance

Manshead will supply the required daily pupil attendance information to the DfE under the applicable information regulations through its secure authorised arrangements, and statutory register returns to the local authority. This is not merely discretionary access granted on request. Data quality will be checked for missing marks, prolonged N codes, inappropriate off-site codes and unaudited amendments.

Weekly operational review and half-termly strategic review will complement termly and annual analysis. Comparisons will use the same reporting period, pupil ages and relevant cohorts, drawing on current national, local and comparable-school data. Leaders will distinguish changes caused by cohort composition or coding from changes in pupils' attendance and evaluate rates and numbers together.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

1. Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
2. Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
3. Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
4. Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Analysis will include individual pupils, year groups, SEND and EHC plans, disadvantage, children looked after and previously looked after, pupils with social workers, young carers, long-term health needs and other locally relevant groups. Leaders will examine authorised and unauthorised absence, persistent and severe absence, lateness, lesson avoidance and access to off-site provision. Protected-characteristic information will be used where relevant, lawful and reliable; small groups and identifiable case data will be handled confidentially.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

Manshead CE Academy will:

1. Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
2. Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
3. Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)

4. Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies
5. Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

Each attendance action will have an owner, baseline, intended outcome and review date. Reviews will test whether the barrier was removed and whether access to education improved, rather than counting contacts alone. Work with feeder schools, other schools attended by siblings, health, social care, youth justice and relevant local authorities will be coordinated where useful, including cross-border pupils. Necessary information is shared securely and proportionately; safeguarding sharing will not be delayed merely to obtain consent where another lawful basis applies.

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

1. Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
2. Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
3. Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
4. Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
5. Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
6. Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

Persistent absence means missing at least 10% of possible sessions; severe absence means missing at least 50%. These measures include authorised and unauthorised absence and are not themselves

offences. We intervene earlier when emerging patterns, three consecutive unexplained days, recurring missed sessions or welfare concerns indicate risk; urgent safeguarding action is immediate.

For persistent absence or risk of it, the head of year and attendance lead agree a written plan with the family and check its impact. Severe absence requires senior case oversight and coordinated work with the local authority and relevant services, considering whether existing support meets the child's needs and whether further safeguarding or statutory action is necessary. Neither a percentage nor parental non-engagement alone predetermines a penalty notice. Every plan records educational provision, safety, named adult, family and pupil views, actions and the next review.

9. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Trust will review this policy at least annually and earlier following a relevant statutory or guidance change, a serious attendance-related safeguarding incident or evidence that implementation is ineffective. The headteacher reviews local procedures, contact details, registration times and the equality impact of application each year and proposes changes through Trust governance. Academy-specific sections require CEO authorisation; Trust Board approval and accurate version details must be recorded before publication. A staff briefing and accessible family communication will accompany material changes.

10. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is read alongside the academy and Trust child protection and safeguarding, behaviour, SEND and inclusion, medical-conditions, suspension and exclusion, alternative-provision and off-site-direction, data-protection and privacy, admissions and children-missing-education procedures. It also links to the applicable local authority attendance-support, penalty-notice Code of Conduct and school-travel procedures. Where documents differ, statutory duties prevail and leaders will resolve and republish inconsistent wording promptly.

Appendix 1

Code	Definition	Application
/	Present at morning registration	Physically present when the morning register is taken.
\	Present at afternoon registration	Physically present when the afternoon register is taken.
L	Late before closure	Arrives after registration starts but before the register closes.
K	LA arranged educational provision	Actually attends education arranged by the local authority away from a school at which registered; record provision type.
V	Visit or trip	Actually attends a school-arranged or approved educational visit or trip.
P	Sporting activity	Actually participates in an approved educational sporting activity with appropriate supervision.
W	Work experience	Actually attends approved work experience; provider reports absence promptly.
B	Other approved educational activity	Actually attends approved educational activity away from school with appropriate physical supervision; record activity. Not remote education at home.
D	Dual registered at another school	Scheduled to attend another school on whose admission register the pupil is also entered. Not a general code for all alternative provision.
C1	Regulated performance or employment abroad	Leave for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad satisfying the required licence or approval conditions.
M	Medical or dental appointment	Absent with leave to attend an appointment; authorise only necessary time.
J1	Education or employment interview	Absent with leave for an interview meeting the guidance conditions.

S	Public examination study leave	Approved public-examination study leave; used sparingly, not mocks.
X	Non-compulsory age session not required	A pupil below or above compulsory school age is not required to attend that session. Not unexplained absence at a required session.
C2	Temporary less than full-time education	Compulsory-school-age pupil absent under an agreed exceptional temporary part-time timetable. Authorised absence; not off-site full-time provision.
C	Exceptional circumstances leave	Individually agreed exceptional leave; no blanket entitlement for listed events.
T	Occupational travel with parent	Compulsory-school-age pupil has no fixed abode and is travelling with a parent for occupational purposes; statutory and guidance criteria apply. Use D when scheduled at another school where registered.
R	Religious observance	Day exclusively set apart by the parent's religious body; other days or travel require separate consideration.
I	Physical or mental illness	Illness prevents attendance; evidence requests are proportionate, not blanket.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	Pupil remains on roll and no alternative provision has been made. Once provision is arranged, record the applicable provision or absence code.
Q	Lack of statutory access arrangements	Use only for the specified legal circumstances, including an unfulfilled local-authority school-travel duty; not ordinary transport difficulties.
Y1	Normally provided transport unavailable	School outside walking distance and normally provided school or LA transport is unavailable.
Y2	Widespread emergency travel disruption	Unable to attend because a local, national or international emergency causes widespread travel disruption.
Y3	Part of premises unavailable	Cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises remaining in use.

Y4	Unexpected whole-school closure	Planned session cannot take place because the whole site is unexpectedly closed; not a planned closure.
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Unable to attend because of police detention, remand to youth detention, or a detention sentence.
Y6	Public-health prohibition	Applicable public-health guidance or law prohibits travel or attendance. Not simply illness or a parent's general infection concerns.
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Unavoidable cause directly prevents this pupil attending and no other code applies; record the nature. Not a general welfare or convenience code.
G	Unauthorised holiday	Holiday without granted leave, including days beyond agreed holiday leave.
N	Reason not yet established	Temporary pending enquiries. Replace within five school days; use O if still unexplained.
O	Other or unknown unauthorised absence	No established reason or the established reason does not meet another authorised or unavoidable-cause code.
U	Arrival after register closes	Late after closure where no other applicable absence reason is established. Record arrival time.
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on roll	Administrative advance record only; once expected to start, add to admission register and follow up non-arrival using the proper mark.
#	Planned whole-school closure	Administrative planned closure, including holidays, approved non-educational days or other qualifying planned whole-school closure.

Codes I, M, R, S, T, C, C1, C2, J1 and E are authorised absence; G, N, O and U are unauthorised absence. Q and Y1–Y7 are not possible attendance for statistical purposes. D and X are also not possible attendance. K, V, P, W and B record attendance at qualifying off-site educational activity. Z and # are administrative codes. Counts and percentages must use the appropriate possible-session denominator. The full code conditions determine a mark, not the statistical outcome leaders wish to obtain.

Staff must not use B for remote learning, C2 for full-time education partly off site, D for an unregistered provider, or Q/Y codes as general authorisation for anxiety, poor attendance or family preference.

Illness is I when the criteria apply. A claim that a pupil has attended provision must be verified, not assumed from a placement timetable.