

**St Teresa Of Calcutta Catholic
Academy Trust**

**Improving School Attendance
Handbook**

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1. Executive Summary - Purpose of this Framework

The *St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust (STOCCAT)* School Attendance Framework outlines a Trust-wide commitment to promoting and sustaining excellent attendance, anchored in our Catholic mission: *Making Christ Known; Making Lives Better*. For 2025–2026, this framework sets out three core strategic objectives that underpin all attendance work across our schools:

Strategic Attendance Priorities 2025–2026

1. Embed a Trust-Wide Early Intervention Strategy

Implement a *twin-track approach* to tackle persistent absence:

- **Track 1:** Prevent pupils from falling into persistent absence (90–95%)
- **Track 2:** Recover attendance for persistently and severely absent pupils (<90%, <50%)

2. Strengthen Attendance Leadership and Accountability

Ensure every school has a named attendance lead, robust monitoring systems, and clear links between attendance, safeguarding, and academic progress.

3. Cultivate a Culture of Belonging and Engagement

Develop an inclusive culture through trust-building, pupil voice, consistent messaging, and visible celebration of attendance improvements.

This framework is a practical tool for **headteachers, senior leaders, attendance officers, pastoral teams**, and **classroom staff**, designed to guide:

- School self-evaluation and strategic attendance planning
- Implementation of aligned policies and procedures
- Early identification and support for pupils at risk of persistent absence
- Use of attendance data for analysis, intervention, and improvement
- Targeted support strategies for SEND and vulnerable pupils
- Professional development to upskill staff in pastoral care and attendance improvement

Ultimately, this framework supports the creation of a high-attendance culture where every child is seen, supported, and expected to thrive—ensuring every day in school counts.

1.1 Attendance: Introduction

St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust (STOCCAT) is rooted in a shared moral purpose and clear set of values: *Making Christ Known and Making Lives Better*. These principles guide every aspect of our work, including how we approach attendance. We are united in our belief that every child, regardless of background or personal circumstances, has the right to access high-quality education every day. Regular attendance is not simply a statutory expectation; it is fundamental to safeguarding, achievement, and the full flourishing of each child's potential.

Our attendance improvement model is both rigorous and compassionate, designed to support each school's unique context while upholding high expectations for all. We recognise that improving attendance is a collective responsibility, requiring strong systems, early intervention, and proactive engagement with families. We provide bespoke

support to schools through Trust-wide monitoring, tailored strategies, professional development, and data-informed practice. This work is grounded in collaboration, openness, and shared accountability.

We operate as a single organisation, and our approach to attendance reflects this unity. Systems, policies, and support structures are aligned across schools to ensure consistency and efficiency. Schools are encouraged to share successful strategies, learn from each other's experiences, and act as a unified body with a shared commitment to pupil wellbeing and progress. Attendance is not viewed in isolation but as a core driver of school improvement and educational excellence.

Governance around attendance is transparent and purposeful. Clear lines of accountability from the Trust board through to school leaders ensure that attendance data informs strategic decision-making and that interventions are timely, proportionate, and effective. Leaders at all levels must engage with this structure, ensuring that attendance remains a standing priority in both policy and practice, and that families feel supported and empowered to ensure their child attends school every day.

Ultimately, our work on attendance must result in real, positive outcomes for pupils. Every absence is a missed opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. This handbook sets out the framework through which we will embed a culture of high attendance across all our schools – ensuring consistency, early action, and a relentless focus on what matters most: securing the life chances of every child in our care.

2. Attendance: Intent

At the heart of our schools is a commitment to creating an environment where every child feels safe, valued, and inspired to attend every day. Excellent attendance is essential to realising our mission to *Make Christ Known and Make Lives Better*. It is a fundamental expression of our care for pupils and a key enabler of their academic success, personal development, and spiritual growth.

In each STOCCAT school, attendance is championed as a shared responsibility between pupils, families, staff, and the wider Trust. We aim to foster a culture where attendance is understood as a gateway to opportunity – a daily act of commitment to learning, community, and self-betterment. Our procedures are designed not just to monitor attendance but to actively promote it, remove barriers, and respond quickly to any signs of persistent or concerning absence.

Our approach is proactive, pastoral, and purposeful. Attendance strategies are shaped by our Catholic values of *Hope, Courage, and Innovation*, ensuring that each child is seen, known, and supported. Through consistent routines, strong relationships, and early intervention, we seek to understand the individual stories behind absence and work in partnership with families to find solutions.

Ultimately, we want our pupils to feel that school is a place they want to be – where they are inspired to show up each day, ready to learn, contribute, and grow. By placing attendance at the heart of our Trust-wide improvement strategy, we reaffirm our commitment to equity, excellence, and the belief that every child deserves to flourish in school and beyond.

2.1 Building a Culture of Positive Attendance.

Creating a culture of positive attendance goes far beyond simply tracking who is in school each day—it is about fostering a whole-school ethos where attendance is actively promoted, celebrated, and woven into the identity of the school. At the heart of this culture is a belief that *every child, every day* in school truly matters. A culture of positive attendance prioritises encouragement, nurtures strong relationships, and focuses on early, supportive actions that help every child feel valued and motivated to attend.

In such a culture, the following are evident across all our trust schools:

- Students feel noticed, welcomed, and genuinely missed when they are absent.
- Relationships are respectful, trusting, and inclusive at every level—from pupils and staff to leaders and governors.
- There is a strong sense of belonging—for every pupil, every colleague, and every family.
- High expectations are consistently communicated, modelled, and upheld for both behaviour and learning.
- Staff regularly speak about the value of attendance and its strong link to academic progress and wellbeing.
- Leaders are visible, approachable, and listen actively, promoting open communication and psychological safety.
- Communication with families is early, empathetic, and supportive—not just when things go wrong.
- Attendance is embedded into school life—from visual displays and assemblies to daily routines and conversations.
- Barriers to attendance are addressed with compassion and understanding, not judgment.
- Progress in attendance, effort to improve attendance, and consistent attendance are recognised and celebrated—through both informal praise and formal reward systems—reinforcing that every improvement, no matter how small, contributes to better outcomes, stronger academic performance, and a deeper sense of belonging within the school community.

3. Attendance: Implementation

Each STOCCAT school implements attendance practices in alignment with our Trust-wide principles, ensuring that our approach is both consistent across the Trust and responsive to the needs of each local community. We empower leaders and staff to take collective ownership of attendance, so that all pupils are supported to attend regularly and thrive in school. This work is underpinned by our Catholic mission: a commitment to serve every child with dignity, compassion, and high expectations, inspired by the example of St Teresa of Calcutta.

Implementation is expected to be rooted in a clear strategic approach that is:

- Evidence-informed – drawing on national research and best practice to support early intervention and sustained improvement.

- Responsive to relevant DfE frameworks – including statutory guidance such as *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*
- Reflective of the latest Ofsted inspection framework and CSI handbook – ensuring attendance is seen as a key indicator of safeguarding, inclusion, and academic success
- Informed by the expertise and guidance of our Trust-wide Professional Learning Network (PLN) – fostering collaboration and shared responsibility
- Based on the principle that attendance is a whole-school priority – connected to wellbeing, academic progress, and life chances
- Supported through high-quality, continuous professional development – equipping all staff with the skills to promote attendance through pastoral care, data analysis, and motivational dialogue
- Measured by demonstrable impact on pupil attendance and engagement – using data to drive improvement and ensure accountability at all levels

Through this shared commitment, we ensure that attendance implementation across our Trust is strategic, compassionate, and impactful contributing directly to our wider school improvement goals and our mission to nurture every child's God-given potential.

3.1 Understanding and Using Good Attendance Data

A healthy attendance culture is underpinned by reliable data that shows both whole-school trends and individual progress. Good attendance data isn't just about hitting high percentages—it's about understanding patterns, responding early, and making meaningful improvements.

Whole-School Indicators:

- The school's overall attendance is steadily improving with a goal of 96% and higher
- Persistent absence is decreasing each term.
- Key groups such as SEND, Pupil Premium, and EAL pupils show better attendance and narrower gaps.
- Class/form level data is monitored weekly, with recognition given for improvement and effort.

Individual Pupil Progress:

- Pupils who previously struggled with attendance are showing clear trackable improvements.
- Early intervention ensures at-risk pupils receive timely support.
- Each pupil's attendance is reviewed weekly, with personalised action support plans for those falling below 95%.
- Data is actively discussed in pastoral meetings, with trends acted on quickly.

3.2 Core Attendance Commitments for STOCAT Schools:

- **Clear Systems and Routines** All schools must maintain robust daily procedures for registration, prompt follow-up of absences, and systematic escalation of concerns. These systems should be efficient, accurate, and supportive, ensuring no child's absence goes unnoticed.
- **Early Identification and Monitoring** Schools are expected to regularly monitor attendance data to identify persistent or emerging patterns of absence. Staff

should be trained to recognise early warning signs and to act swiftly to prevent attendance issues from becoming entrenched.

- **Partnership with Families** Engagement with families should be rooted in trust, respect, and collaboration. Schools must communicate regularly and constructively with parents and carers, working together to support sustained improvements in attendance.
- **Pastoral and Inclusion Support** Recognising the strong link between wellbeing and attendance, every school must ensure access to high-quality pastoral care, mental health support, and inclusion teams. These services should work together to address the underlying causes of poor attendance.
- **Professional Development and Accountability** Staff at all levels should receive training in attendance procedures, data analysis, and motivational conversation techniques. School leaders are expected to drive improvement through regular review, self-evaluation, and participation in Trust-led school improvement processes, with clear accountability for attendance outcomes.

This strategic and values-led implementation ensures that attendance is not treated as a standalone task, but as a vital thread woven through every aspect of school life—from safeguarding and wellbeing to curriculum access and spiritual development.

4. Attendance: Impact

We want the impact of our attendance strategy to be visible in the everyday life of our schools—in the experiences of pupils and families, and in the outcomes we achieve across the Trust. Strong attendance is a key indicator of a healthy, inclusive school culture where pupils feel safe, valued, and supported to thrive.

When children attend school regularly, it shows they are engaged in a learning environment that meets their academic, social, and emotional needs. This sense of belonging strengthens relationships between school and home, as families see their children benefiting from a supportive and encouraging environment.

Improved attendance leads to better academic outcomes, greater personal development, and deeper connections within the school community. It supports pupils to reach their potential, develop essential life skills, and build resilience. By prioritising attendance, we create a culture of collaboration—where pupils, families, and staff work together to ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed.

4.1 Impact Measures

- Reduced levels of persistent and severe absence: We expect to see a downward trend in absence rates across all STOCCAT schools, particularly among vulnerable groups, driven by early intervention, consistent tracking, and responsive support.
- Improved attendance for all pupil groups: We want to see all children, regardless of background or need, attending regularly and benefiting fully from the curriculum, enrichment, and pastoral care offered in school.
- Increased engagement and connection to school: Pupils who attend consistently should show stronger relationships with peers and staff, greater involvement in school life, and more positive attitudes toward learning.

- Families feeling supported, not judged: We want to hear from parents and carers that they feel part of the process—listened to, encouraged, and empowered to help their child attend regularly.
- Data-informed practice across all levels: We expect school leaders and staff to use attendance data to drive improvement, monitor progress, and adapt interventions to meet evolving needs.
- A sustained culture of high expectations: Across the Trust, we want attendance to be embedded into school culture as a shared value, with staff, pupils, and families recognising that every day in school matters.
- Attendance improvement celebrated and sustained: Improvements in attendance should not only be recognised but maintained through continued engagement, routine reinforcement, and pupil voice.

By realising these outcomes, we aim to ensure that every pupil in a STOCCAT school is present, heard, engaged, and given the best possible foundation for lifelong learning and flourishing.

5. Attendance Management & Intervention

A strong school-level attendance process is built on clarity, consistency, and timely action. It is a shared responsibility that involves all members of the school community—from classroom staff to senior leaders—working together to create a culture where regular attendance is expected, supported, and celebrated.

5.1 Attendance Monitoring & Daily Procedures

Within this process, all STOCCAT schools are expected to implement clear, consistent, and robust procedures for managing pupil absence. These procedures are fundamental to safeguarding pupils and supporting their academic and emotional development. Accurate daily registration is a legal requirement and a critical part of this framework, with registers taken promptly at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In secondary schools, registers are completed lesson-by-lesson to identify emerging attendance or engagement issues early. Any delays or inaccuracies in registration are addressed through a structured escalation process that includes reminders, support, and, where necessary, formal action. (See Appendix 1 - Inaccurate Registers, Escalation Process)

Attendance and pastoral teams regularly review daily absence reports and initiate immediate first-day contact with families when absences are unexplained. Patterns of absence, such as repeated non-attendance on specific days or during particular lessons, are carefully flagged for further investigation. Daily telephone contact is made for every unexplained absence to ensure the child's safety and to reinforce the importance of open communication. When contact cannot be established by phone, home visits are conducted sensitively and professionally, with a focus on safeguarding, welfare, and re-engagement (see Section 5.4).

This early identification of attendance concerns, combined with timely, compassionate intervention, ensures that barriers to attendance are addressed before they become entrenched, promoting a positive and supportive attendance culture across all Trust schools.

5.2 Attendance Interventions and Support

All schools implement a consistent, structured, and supportive set of interventions aimed at improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. Central to this approach is building strong, trusting relationships with families through a tiered communication strategy, including regular praise calls, attendance messages, report cards, and home visits when needed. Multiple channels such as in-app messages, newsletters, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings ensure families stay informed, supported, and connected. These interventions also promote early action and tailored support for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged.

To support the effective implementation of these interventions, schools will follow a **Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist**, ensuring regular review and continuous development of attendance practices. (See Appendix 2 - Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist)

Key practices include:

- **Half-termly attendance letters and report cards** sent to parents and carers outlining attendance percentages, sessions lost, and attendance bands. These communications reinforce the Trust's expectations for regular attendance and provide timely updates on any emerging concerns.
- **Supportive parent meetings** led by appropriate pastoral or attendance staff to identify barriers and co-constructing action plans with the family. (See Appendix 3 - Individual Attendance Support Plan) Where needed, additional support is provided for SEND and disadvantaged pupils, including access to learning support or wider external services. The Trust Attendance Lead also meets with families to offer further support and guidance where persistent issues continue.
- **Attendance Café.** These informal gatherings invite parents into school to meet with staff and other families in a relaxed setting to discuss the importance of good attendance. Through friendly conversations, shared experiences, and practical advice, parents gain a better understanding of how regular school attendance supports their child's learning, wellbeing, and future success. The cafés also provide an opportunity to ask questions, explore challenges, and access support in a welcoming environment.
- **Pastoral and wellbeing support** is available for pupils whose absence is linked to emotional, social, or mental health challenges. This support is particularly targeted at SEND and disadvantaged pupils and may include access to in-school counselling, mentoring, inclusion teams, or referrals to external support agencies.
- **Interventions for SEND and disadvantaged** pupils are carefully tailored to meet their specific needs, ensuring that any barriers to attendance are addressed effectively. (See Appendix 4 - Attendance Support for SEND and Disadvantaged Pupils)
- **Recognition and celebration of improved attendance** are embedded into each school's culture. Pupils are praised and rewarded for improved attendance, with visible and public recognition to help sustain motivation—particularly for SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- **Support for pupils with prolonged absence due to medical conditions**
When a pupil is absent from school for an extended period due to a medical condition, schools must first complete all standard absence procedures, including

regular communication with parents and home visits. Once a prolonged absence is confirmed, the school remains responsible for safeguarding the pupil's wellbeing and supporting their education. This includes maintaining regular contact with the family, working with relevant health professionals, and considering a referral under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 where appropriate, to ensure the pupil receives suitable alternative education. A clear plan should be in place to support learning during the absence and reintegration on return, ensuring continuity, inclusion, and wellbeing throughout. (See Appendix 5 - Responding to Prolonged Absence Due to a Medical Condition)

- **Monitoring and Accountability** All attendance interventions and follow-up actions are carefully recorded and systematically monitored to ensure accountability and consistency across the school. This rigorous process supports the Trust's clear expectation that every absence matters and that every child is known and supported. By logging all actions taken, staff are able to track pupil progress closely and regularly review the effectiveness of the support provided. The Senior Lead for Attendance has access to this evidence, enabling them to oversee and verify that appropriate and timely actions are being implemented. This oversight allows for timely adjustments to strategies, ensuring that interventions remain targeted and responsive to each pupil's individual needs. Furthermore, the process encourages reflective practice among attendance and pastoral teams, who regularly analyse patterns and outcomes to continuously improve attendance approaches. Through this structured and transparent approach, schools can confidently provide tailored support, maintain clear oversight, and foster a culture of shared responsibility for improving attendance.

5.3 Twin-Track Model: Prevention & Intensive Intervention

Twin-Track Model for Attendance Intervention

The Trust implements a Twin-Track Model to promote high attendance and reduce persistent and severe absence. This approach ensures both early prevention and targeted intervention by addressing issues before they escalate and providing intensive support where absence is already entrenched. (See Appendices 6 & 7 - 'Prevention and Escalation Response to Persistent Absence' and 'Managing Severely Absent Pupils')

Track 1: Early Identification and Preventative Support (Attendance Below 95%)

Routine Monitoring and Communication

Attendance is monitored continuously, with half-termly attendance report cards sent to all parents/carers. This ensures families are regularly informed and can take early action if concerns arise.

Initial Support (Below 95%)

If a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, parents/carers are invited to an Attendance Support Meeting. This meeting provides an opportunity to explore the reasons behind the absences, identify any early signs of disengagement, and offer early help if needed.

Individual Consideration and Sensitivity

Each case is approached with professional judgement and sensitivity. Schools recognise that some absences may be due to legitimate personal circumstances (e.g. bereavement,

medical conditions). These situations are handled with care, and next steps are tailored accordingly.

Ongoing Support and Early Help

If concerns persist, a personalised Attendance Support Plan is created and reviewed through regular meetings. Should there be no improvement within the agreed timeframe—or if attendance continues to decline—a further meeting will be held, involving the Trust Attendance Lead and/or a Senior Leader (SLT). The original plan will be revisited, additional support will be considered, and a new attendance target set. The importance of partnership and the potential for formal action, including a Notice to Improve, will be clearly communicated.

Track 2: Intensive Intervention for Persistent and Severely Absent Pupils (<90% / <50%)

Pupils who are persistently absent (below 90%) or severely absent (below 50%) require immediate, coordinated, and sustained intervention. These pupils are at increased risk of educational disengagement, social isolation, and unmet safeguarding or welfare needs.

To ensure no child is left behind, all severely absent pupils are flagged through weekly attendance monitoring and are a standing item in weekly safeguarding meetings. This consistent approach enables schools to share contextual information, coordinate support, and take timely, multi-agency action.

Support begins with early family engagement, including home visits where appropriate and a thorough risk assessment to explore root causes—whether linked to medical needs, mental health, SEND, or social care. A tailored Attendance Support Plan is developed in consultation with parents/carers, outlining clear steps for gradual reintegration, emotional support, and academic re-engagement.

Support strategies may include:

- Individual reintegration plans
- CAMHS referrals
- Educational Psychologist referral
- EHCP application and reviews
- Therapeutic interventions
- Short-term, reviewed part-time timetables
- Referrals to early Help/Social Care and other relevant external agencies.

Where attendance fails to improve despite comprehensive support—or if there is persistent lack of parental engagement—the school may escalate to formal intervention, including legal enforcement, in line with Trust and local authority policy. Enforcement is always a last resort, used only when all other avenues of partnership working have been exhausted.

By using this Twin-Track Model, the Trust ensures no pupil is overlooked, and that attendance concerns are addressed promptly, proportionately, and compassionately, balancing early prevention with structured accountability. This structured approach ensures that all pupils with severe absence are actively monitored, supported, and given every opportunity to re-engage with education in a safe and positive way.

5.4 Home Visits

Home visits are a vital part of safeguarding and supporting pupils. They offer an opportunity to build trust with families, observe the child's living environment, and better understand the context behind issues such as poor attendance, lateness, or behavioural challenges. These visits are also a way to ensure the wellbeing of children who are absent from school, allowing families to speak more openly in a setting where they feel at ease.

A Support-First Approach - The primary aim of home visits is to support, not judge. Engaging families in their own home fosters open communication and makes it easier to identify barriers that prevent children from attending school or thriving academically. When families feel heard and understood, they are more likely to collaborate with the school in finding effective solutions.

When and How to Conduct Visits - Home visits should be made on the third day of a child's absence and every three days thereafter. If the child is vulnerable and there are concerns on the first day of absence, a visit should take place immediately. All visits should occur during school hours and in daylight. Before visiting, staff must consult the safeguarding team for background information, inform the school office of their movements, and ensure the visit is recorded in their online calendar.

Safety Measures - Staff should ideally visit in pairs. When this isn't possible, lone workers must follow the school's safety protocol. This includes parking for a quick exit, carrying a charged work phone, and using a pre-agreed code if in danger. If a situation feels unsafe, do not enter the home—stay at the door and request to see the child. Inside the home, remain alert to your surroundings, sit or stand near the door, and leave if uncomfortable.

During the Visit - Begin with light conversation to put the family at ease. Be open and clear about who you are and why you're there. Approach the visit with empathy and without judgment. Encourage discussion by asking open-ended questions and acknowledge what the child and family are doing well. Always listen carefully, and work with the family to develop a plan that suits the child's needs.

If No One is Home - Leave a calling card with school contact details, requesting a call back. Don't give up after one attempt. Consistent, respectful follow-ups help build trust and demonstrate your commitment.

Recording and Following Up - All visits must be documented on the school system, including who was present, what was discussed, and any actions agreed upon. Reflect on whether the visit was productive—did you gain useful information, was the family cooperative, and is there evidence of impact such as improved attendance or engagement?

Staff must never transport a child to school in their own vehicle. Always prioritise your own safety, especially when working alone. Home visits, when conducted with professionalism and care, are a powerful tool in supporting students and strengthening the home-school partnership. (See Appendix 8 - Procedures for Conducting Home Visits)

5.5 Incentives and Rewards

We recognise and celebrate attendance in a way that motivates all pupils and values both effort and outcomes. Rather than focusing solely on perfect attendance, we take a more

inclusive and holistic approach—acknowledging the progress, resilience, and consistency that many pupils demonstrate in striving to improve their attendance.

Our incentives are designed to be fair and accessible to all pupils, including those who may face personal, health, or family challenges. By celebrating small steps as well as big achievements, we aim to build a culture where every improvement is recognised, and every pupil feels that their efforts are seen and valued. Incentives are not limited to high achievers—they are structured to encourage every pupil to set personal goals and feel proud of their progress.

Regular communication with pupils and families helps to reinforce these messages. Attendance incentives are shared with pupils and direct communication with parents and carers. This consistent messaging supports our broader commitment to developing a positive, caring school culture—one that sees attendance as a shared responsibility and a key part of each pupil's journey toward success and wellbeing.

By framing attendance as something to be celebrated, not penalised, we help foster a more supportive environment—one where pupils are encouraged to come to school not out of obligation, but because they feel safe, motivated, and heard.

5.6 Part-time Timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. (See Appendix 9 - Procedure for Implementing a Part-Time Timetable)

A part-time timetable should:

- Have the agreement of both the schools and the parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that considers the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period
- Careful management is required for children with Special Educational Needs and those with high levels of anxiety, for whom full-time school attendance may not be appropriate.

If it is agreed that an Attendance Plan is necessary, the following steps must be taken:

- Agreement sought and approval given by the Headteacher
- A short-term Attendance Support Plan agreed and recorded
- An Attendance Support Plan Risk Assessment agreed and recorded

- Once completed, distribute the signed documents to parents / carers and any external agencies involved with the pupil,
- Record the plans with the Local Authority

Review and update the plan at least every two weeks to ensure targets are being met with the view to the pupil returning to a full-time education in the shortest time necessary.

5.7 Children Missing Education (CME) Process

Children Missing Education (CME) Process

If a child fails to attend school for up to 10 consecutive school days and no reason is provided, school should complete the following procedures:

- Daily contact should be attempted including by telephone, email and text. A home visit should be made to establish the child's whereabouts and a reason for the absence. The emergency contact list should be utilised including contacting other agencies that are involved with the family.
- If the family are at home during the home visit, school should follow non-attendance procedures and not CME.
- If there is no answer at the property, leave a calling card requesting contact from the home occupier. This will help establish if a new tenant is living at the address.
- If the property appears empty, i.e. void of furniture or belongings, leave a calling card. Knock on neighbours and ask about the family's whereabouts and when they left, BUT DO NOT BREACH GDPR.
- If the family are abroad and have not returned as agreed OR a return date was not provided, try and establish communication with the family to confirm a return date. If no return date is provided, school can set a date of return and review. School can make a factual judgement about whether the family may have moved away permanently.
- Complete further home visits for further confirmation of the family moving away.

If after 20 school days and no contact has been made or no confirmed destination school is known, a CME referral should be submitted to the Local Authority.

5.8 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Elective Home Education (EHE): Balancing Parental Choice and Safeguarding

Parents have the legal right to choose the form of education that best meets their child's needs, including home education. They are often well placed to understand what their child requires to thrive. While many parents deliver a high standard of home education, this is not guaranteed in all cases. Therefore, it is essential that home education is both suitable and safe, ensuring that no child is left vulnerable or overlooked.

Schools play a vital role in safeguarding children. Teachers are often the first to spot early signs of neglect or abuse. When a child is removed from the school environment, these safeguarding opportunities may be lost, so it is critical that any move to home education is carefully managed.

School's Role:

When a parent notifies the school of their intention to home educate, the school should take a supportive but structured approach to ensure the child's wellbeing is prioritised.

The first step is to arrange a meeting with the parent or carer to discuss the decision. During this meeting, staff should clearly explain the elective home education process, including the implications and responsibilities involved. While schools must remain neutral—neither persuading nor discouraging the parent—they can share that the school's position is not to recommend home education. Schools should highlight the benefits of continued school attendance, such as access to specialist teaching, structured social opportunities, and broader support for personal development.

If the parent decides to proceed, the school should request confirmation of the decision in writing. Although not legally required, written confirmation is considered best practice and helps ensure clarity for all parties.

Following the parent's confirmation, the school must:

- Complete the required On/Off Roll form and EHE referral and forward to the local authority
- Clearly state whether the child has a social worker or is involved with other external agencies.
- Remove the child from the school roll once the referral has been submitted.

The local authority will then assess the suitability of the home education. This includes forwarding the referral to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) to evaluate whether the proposed education and environment meet acceptable standards.

In cases where the child is subject to a child protection investigation or is under a child protection plan, the parent no longer holds an automatic right to home educate. Additionally, if the local authority determines that the education being provided is unsuitable or the home environment is unsafe, it has the authority to intervene and require the child to return to formal schooling.

5.9 Strengthening Attendance through Parent Engagement and Transition Planning

a. The Importance of Parent Engagement: Building Positive Relationships

Engaging parents effectively is one of the most powerful ways schools can support good attendance. When parents feel respected and listened to, they are more likely to work in partnership with the school to overcome challenges that may be affecting their child's ability to attend regularly.

Positive relationships between school staff and families help build trust and create an environment where honest, open conversations can take place. This trust is essential in identifying the real reasons behind poor attendance—whether related to illness, anxiety, family circumstances, or other barriers. Once these reasons are understood, schools and families can work together to find supportive, practical solutions that are in the best interest of the child.

A strong partnership with parents also reinforces the message that education matters. When parents believe the school values their input, and recognise their role in their child's success, they are more likely to prioritise attendance and ensure their child is ready and able to learn.

It is important that school staff approach all interactions with empathy, consistency, and a non-judgmental attitude. Positive engagement is not just about responding to problems; it also involves acknowledging progress, celebrating success, and maintaining regular, meaningful contact. These small, consistent efforts contribute to a school culture where families feel welcome and supported.

Ultimately, when schools and parents work together, children benefit. They are more likely to attend school regularly, feel secure, and achieve their full potential. Building positive relationships with parents is not just good practice—it is essential for creating the trust, partnership, and consistency needed to support every child's success in school and beyond.

b. Transition and Attendance: Supporting Continuity and Engagement

Strong transitions are critical for maintaining and improving pupil attendance. The Trust expects all schools to prioritise planned, personalised, and data-informed transition processes, particularly for pupils who are vulnerable, have SEND, are disadvantaged, or have existing attendance concerns.

Year 6 to Year 7 Transition

Secondary schools are expected to ensure that the transition from primary to secondary is thorough, coordinated, and inclusive of both pupils and their families. A successful transition process plays a critical role in securing attendance from the outset of Year 7.

Key expectations include:

- Reviewing Year 6 attendance data as part of the transition planning process. Pupils with a history of low, inconsistent, or severely disrupted attendance should be flagged early for additional transition support and monitoring.
- Early engagement with feeder primary schools, including joint planning meetings, attendance reviews, and handover discussions to share pastoral, academic, and safeguarding information.
- Tailored transition visits for pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged, or those identified as vulnerable. These should be adapted based on individual needs and attendance history.
- Assignment of key contacts (e.g., pastoral leads, SENDCos, mentors) to vulnerable pupils prior to the start of Year 7 to provide continuity of care, build relationships, and ensure that attendance is supported from day one.
- Home visits during the summer holidays for identified vulnerable pupils. These visits are designed to strengthen relationships with families, offer reassurance, and maintain regular contact. This approach should also be used at key transition points throughout the secondary phase.

Transitions Between Year Groups (Years 7-11)

Attendance often dips at points of change; therefore, internal transitions between year groups must be planned with intention and a focus on maintaining continuity. Schools should:

- Ensure a structured handover process between year teams, involving pastoral leads, SENDCo's and key staff.

- Review attendance data and known vulnerabilities as part of transition planning to inform support.
- Communicate any staffing or structural changes (e.g. new form tutors, changes in routine) clearly to pupils and parents, helping reduce uncertainty and anxiety.

Transition Reviews for At-Risk Pupils

Pupils with persistent absence, significant medical needs, or complex social/emotional issues should be prioritised for targeted transition review meetings, which include:

- Carrying forward and updating Attendance Support Plans
- Involving multi-agency professionals where appropriate.
- Reaffirming parental partnership and outlining next steps for the upcoming academic year.

Partnering with Families During Transition

Families play a vital role in successful transitions. Schools must:

- Engage parents early and consistently throughout the transition process.
- Offer personalised communication and meetings to introduce key staff and support structures.
- Provide clear, accessible information about attendance expectations, routines,

5.10 Accountability Levels for School Attendance

A culture of high attendance is built on collective ownership and clearly defined responsibilities. Every member of staff has a role to play in promoting, monitoring, and supporting regular attendance. The following outlines key responsibilities by role to ensure clarity, consistency, and shared accountability across the school community.

Class Teachers / Form Tutors:

- Monitor daily attendance and punctuality for their class or tutor group.
- Foster a culture of high attendance through daily routines and positive reinforcement.
- Identify early signs of attendance concerns and escalate to pastoral or attendance teams.
- Communicate with pupils and parents about attendance in a supportive, proactive manner.
- Ensure registers are completed accurately and promptly, in line with statutory guidance. (See Appendix 10 - Class Teacher, Daily Register Procedure)

Curriculum Leads:

Curriculum Leads play a vital role in supporting whole-school attendance by monitoring and promoting high attendance within their departments.

- Ensure all department staff complete lesson registers accurately and on time. Monitor for any missed or incorrect entries, follow up promptly with the relevant staff members, and liaise with the Attendance Officer as needed. Escalate ongoing issues to senior leaders.

- Identify patterns of lesson specific absence (e.g. repeated absence on particular days or subjects) and refer concerns to SLT or the Attendance Lead.
- Work collaboratively with teachers and pastoral teams to support pupils with subject-related attendance challenges, including offering and providing catch-up support or adapted learning strategies.
- Promote engaging, inclusive teaching that encourages regular attendance and a positive subject culture.
- Share subject-specific attendance concerns with senior leaders and contribute to attendance review meetings where departmental insight or context is needed.

Attendance Officer / Pastoral Support Staff:

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date attendance records in line with statutory requirements.
- Monitor attendance data regularly to identify trends and persistent absence.
- Conduct first-day absence calls and ongoing follow-up for unexplained absences. (See Appendix 11 – Attendance Officer Daily Attendance / Absence Response)
- Liaise with Alternative Provision settings to confirm attendance of off-site pupils.
- Organise and contribute to Attendance Support Meetings with families, ensuring clear communication about next steps and potential consequences.
- Track attendance interventions and individual improvement plans consistently.
- Liaise and coordinate referrals with external agencies where appropriate (e.g., Early Help, EWO).
- Complete local authority documentation and referrals in a timely, accurate manner.
- Represent the school at Targeted Support Meetings with the local authority.
- Lead or support Early Help Assessments where attendance is a concern.

SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)

- Monitor attendance data for pupils with SEND and identify emerging concerns.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are in place to support regular attendance, in line with IEPs and EHCPs.
- Collaborate with staff, families, and external agencies to remove attendance barriers for pupils with SEND.
- Contribute to the design and implementation of Attendance Support Plans for pupils on the SEND register.
- Provide regular updates to SLT on attendance trends and targeted support for pupils with additional needs.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

- Lead the development and implementation of the whole-school attendance strategy.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of attendance policies and interventions.
- Support staff in managing persistent absence, including chairing escalation meetings.
- Chair escalation meetings if there is no improvement within agreed timeframes.
- Meet regularly with the Trust Attendance Lead to review school-wide and group-specific data.

- Ensure attendance remains a priority in staff briefings, CPD, and leadership meetings.
- Champion a whole-school approach by ensuring all staff understand their role in improving attendance.

The Trust Attendance Lead:

- Set clear expectations and provide a unified framework for school attendance across the Trust.
- Monitor attendance data across all schools, identifying areas of concern and sharing effective practice.
- Provide training, advice, and professional development for school Attendance Leads and pastoral staff
- Support schools in evaluating their attendance strategies and challenge where progress is insufficient.
- Participate in formal escalation processes where persistent absence remains unresolved.
- Ensure Trust-wide compliance with statutory requirements and local authority protocols.
- Promote consistency, early intervention, and shared accountability across the Trust community.

5.11 Attendance: Continuous Professional Development

Consistent, high-quality attendance practice is only possible when staff are confident, skilled, and supported through meaningful professional development. As a Trust, we are committed to investing in our people so they can deliver effective, compassionate, and evidence-informed interventions that make a real difference in children's lives. To ensure strong and coherent practice across all STOCCAT schools, we provide regular, targeted CPD opportunities for all staff involved in attendance work.

Attendance Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) are a central part of STOCCAT's approach to staff development and school improvement. They bring together professionals from across our schools to share expertise, collaborate on effective strategies, and raise standards in attendance. Led by the Trust Attendance Lead, these networks focus on evidence-informed approaches to improving attendance, reducing persistent absence, and strengthening both pupil and parent engagement. The PLNs unite attendance leads, pastoral teams, SENCOs, and senior leaders, creating a strong community of practice committed to improving attendance outcomes across the Trust.

Each PLN session provides a structured forum for sharing best practice, reviewing Trust-wide attendance data, and developing collaborative responses to complex or persistent challenges. The sessions also include focused input on national updates, policy developments, and research-informed strategies, ensuring that all staff remain current and aligned in their approach. These networks are not only developmental but strategic, shaping school-level priorities and supporting a culture of consistency and ambition.

In addition to PLNs, all schools are expected to include attendance training as part of their annual CPD offer. This ensures that all staff—regardless of their role—understand the importance of attendance and the part they play in promoting it. Teachers and support staff are supported to build strong relationships with pupils and to recognise early signs of

disengagement, while attendance officers and pastoral staff access continuous training in areas such as communication, data analysis, safeguarding, and family support. Senior leaders are also developed in how to drive school-wide attendance improvement through strategic oversight, team leadership, and accountability structures.

Insights and actions from PLN sessions feed directly into both school-level and Trust-wide strategies, helping to ensure that practice continues to evolve in response to evidence, experience, and the lived realities of our pupils and families. This culture of collaborative, reflective, and ongoing professional development is essential to achieving our shared goal: that every child in our care is supported to attend school every day, ready to learn and thrive.

5.12 Register Audit

The Trust conducts twice-yearly audits of electronic attendance registers across all schools to ensure accuracy, consistency, and compliance with Trust policies and statutory requirements.

Purpose: To verify accurate attendance recording and ensure correct use of attendance codes for all pupils—including those attending alternative provision or off-site settings—confirming adherence to established procedures.

Frequency: Audits are conducted twice yearly in each school, with additional spot checks as necessary.

Process: reviews electronic attendance registers across all year groups and classes to ensure they are complete and accurate. This includes verifying that attendance codes are applied consistently and correctly for every pupil. During these reviews, any irregularities are carefully identified and addressed.

Reporting: Audit findings are documented in standardised reports and shared with school leadership teams. Schools are required to develop and implement action plans addressing any issues, with progress monitored by the Trust.

Support and Follow-up:

The Trust offers targeted training and support as needed to improve attendance recording practices and promote continuous improvement.

Through these audits, the Trust ensures reliable attendance data, enabling effective monitoring and timely intervention for all pupils.

6. Quality Assurance

The Trust is dedicated to maintaining high standards of attendance management across all schools through a comprehensive Quality Assurance framework. This framework ensures clear accountability by requiring school leaders to meticulously record all attendance interventions at every level, fostering transparency and consistency in how attendance issues are addressed.

Quality assurance oversight is provided at multiple leadership levels, including the Trust Attendance Leads, Headteachers, and Senior Leaders for Attendance. These leaders

regularly review attendance data, intervention records, and adherence to Trust policies to ensure practices align with our standards.

Regular monitoring and reporting form a crucial part of this process. Supported by the Trust, schools conduct weekly reviews of attendance data, that identify trends, celebrate successes, and pinpoint areas requiring improvement. Schools submit detailed attendance reports and action plans, which the Trust evaluates to ensure continuous progress.

Evaluating the impact of attendance interventions allows the Trust to refine strategies and share effective practices across all schools. Findings from quality assurance activities inform ongoing training, resource development, and strategic planning to strengthen the attendance culture and improve pupil outcomes.

Through this robust Quality Assurance process, the Trust promotes accountability, drives continuous improvement, and ensures every pupil receives the support they need to maintain consistent attendance.

7. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Inaccurate Registers, Escalation Process.
- Appendix 2 - Challenging and Improving Attendance Checklist.
- Appendix 3 - Individual Attendance Support Plan.
- Appendix 4 - Attendance Support for SEND and Disadvantaged Pupils.
- Appendix 5 - Responding to Prolonged Absence Due to a Medical Condition.
- Appendix 6 - Prevention and Escalation Response to Persistent Absence.
- Appendix 7 - Managing Severely Absent Pupils.
- Appendix 8 - Procedures for Conducting Home Visits.
- Appendix 9 - Procedure for Implementing a Part-Time Timetable.
- Appendix 10 - Class Teacher, Daily Register Procedure.
- Appendix 11 - Attendance Officer Daily Attendance / Absence Response