



Name of Policy: Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

- 1.1. This is the attendance policy of St Margaret's School (the School).
- 1.2. The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.
- 1.3. The aims of this policy are:
 - To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
 - To ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
 - To prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence/non-attendance;
 - To recognise the linkages between attendance/absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
 - To help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2. Scope and application

- 2.1. This policy applies to the whole School.
- 2.2. This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

3. Legislation & Guidance Framework

- 3.1. This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2026);
 - Part 6 of the Education Act, 1996;
 - Part 3 of the Education Act, 2002;
 - Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;
 - Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, (and 2026 amendments);
 - National minimum standards for boarding schools (Department for Education (DfE), September 2022);
 - The School Census Guidance;
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026;
 - Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);
 - The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

- Equality Act 2010; and
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025;
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2026);
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024);
- Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);
- 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
- Children missing education (DfE, August 2024);
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
- Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024).

3.2 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy;
- Missing Child Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Behaviour management Policy;
- Parent Contract.

4. Publication and availability

This policy is published on the School website:

- 4.1. This policy will be sent to Parents when pupils join the School and Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated;
- 4.2. This policy is available in hard copy on request;
- 4.3. A copy of the policy is available for inspection from The Senior Attendance Champion during the School day.

5. Definitions and interpretation

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

- 5.1. References to attendance include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
- 5.2. References to the Proprietor are references to the board of Governors.
- 5.3. References to a Parent means:
 - All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
 - Any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and
 - Any person who has day-to-day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).
- 5.4. References to a pupil includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school.
- 5.5. SAC means the School's Senior Attendance Champion.

6. Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

- 6.1. The Governing Board (The Board) has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.
- 6.2. The Board recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC;
- 6.3. To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Board has allocated the following tasks:
 - Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice;
 - Monitoring the implementation of the policy as required, and at least termly;
 - Analysing attendance and absence data as required, and at least termly;
 - Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider as required, and at least annually;
 - Improvements to the School's processes under the policy;
 - Formal annual review the Board annually;
 - Ensuring that the School has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.

7. The importance of good attendance

- 7.1. The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:
 - The importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day-to-day life;
 - The interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and/or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;
 - The importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents;
 - That attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
 - Children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding Issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

8. School responsibilities

- 8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.
- 8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.
- 8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.
- 8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and/or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies, and the

school's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence, and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

- 8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent, and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

9. Staff responsibilities

The Head

The Head is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school;
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- 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 pupils with SEND face in-school barriers;
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs;
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels;
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times;
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days;
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

The SAC

The Board has appointed a senior member of staff of the School's leadership team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.

Details of the individual appointed are on page 3 of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

The SAC's responsibilities are:

- To set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;
- To establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;
- To regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- To have oversight of and analyse attendance data;
- To communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents;
- To liaise with pupils, parents and external agencies, where needed;
- To create intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents.

9.1. Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance:

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day-to-day responsibility for monitoring

and promoting good attendance and punctuality.

They should:

- Have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- Record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;
- Seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;
- Make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- Look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;
- Deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- Consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and
- Discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible), and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

9.2. All staff

- The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.
- The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

10. School arrangements

- 10.1. The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers, and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices 1-3.
- 10.2. To support a focused learning environment and eliminate distractions that impact punctuality, the School operates a strict default mobile-phone-free environment during the school day in line with statutory guidance.

11. Monitoring attendance

- 11.1. The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them.

Such analysis may include:

- Monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends, and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;
- Using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the Special Educational Needs coordinator and Designated Safeguarding Lead);
- Undertaking frequent individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeting actions for those cases;
- Conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full-year data to identify patterns and trends;
- Benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- Monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

- Providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

12. Pupil responsibilities

- 12.1. School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School, therefore, has high expectations of all pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.
- 12.2. Pupils in Year 1 upwards should be aware that:
- They are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;
 - They are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;
 - They should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;
 - They should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;
 - Any unexplained absence will be followed up;
 - Persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School.

This may take the form of:

- Offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
 - Communication with Parents;
 - Reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and
 - Sanctions against them or their Parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.
- If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Pastoral Lead in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

13. Additional needs

- 13.1. The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong, trusting relationships, and working together to put the right support in place.
- 13.2. The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.
- 13.3. The School will also work with Parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.
- 13.4. Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan, the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- 13.5. Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.
- 13.6. A temporary part-time timetable (Code C2) will only be used in very exceptional circumstances to meet a pupil's individual needs (such as medical or reintegration plans). Any such arrangement requires the written agreement of both the School and the Parent. The plan must include a target end date, regular

review dates, and must not be used to manage behaviour. If the pupil has an EHC plan, the School will notify the Local Authority to review the plan; if they have a social worker, they will be kept actively involved.

- 13.7. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.
- 13.8. The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.
- 13.9. Supporting Young Carers: The School recognises that some pupils may have significant caring responsibilities at home. We understand that these duties can create distinct, complex barriers to regular attendance, attainment, and wider emotional wellbeing.
 - 13.9.1. In accordance with Department for Education (DfE) requirements, Young Carers are now recorded as a specific cohort in the School Census. To ensure early identification and the prompt implementation of support, the School operates as follows:
 - 13.9.2. The SAC and pastoral team will actively look for early indicators that a pupil has caring duties (e.g. sudden changes in punctuality, patterns of homework completion, or signs of fatigue)
 - 13.9.3. Tutors and staff will receive training to ensure professional curiosity in identifying these pupils
 - 13.9.4. Family Partnership: Where a pupil's caring role is identified or suspected of contributing to school absence, the School will work collaboratively and non-judgementally in partnership with the pupil and their parents to understand the specific out-of-school barriers
 - 13.9.5. The School will put support in place (such as flexible deadlines, homework clubs, or designated pastoral check-ins) to mitigate the impact of their duties
 - 13.9.6. Where a Young Carer's needs extend beyond the school gates, or where the caring role is severely impacting their attendance and welfare, the School will coordinate with the Local Authority. The School will work with the Local Authority to facilitate family access to support through local early help arrangements and specialist young carers' services
 - 13.9.7. Under Section 17ZA of the Children Act 1989, a young carer is entitled to a formal assessment of their needs. The School, via the DSL, will proactively make a referral to the Local Authority for a Section 17ZA Young Carer's Needs Assessment in any of the following circumstances:
 - Where it appears to the School that the young carer has, or may have, support needs that cannot be fully met by in-school adjustments alone;
 - Upon the direct request of the young carer themselves;
 - Upon the direct request of the young carer's parent or guardian.
 - 13.9.8. If the caring responsibilities present a safeguarding risk or lead to severe chronic absence (below 50% attendance), the School will escalate the case to statutory children's social-care services for a comprehensive assessment

14. Parent/carer responsibilities

- 14.1. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.
- 14.2. This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances, such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence

in advance from the School.

- 14.3. The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short- and long-term consequences of poor attendance.
- 14.4. Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy
- 14.5. Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract, and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

15. Training

- 15.1. The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter, so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

As a minimum, this will include all staff understanding:

- The importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and
- The School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

- 15.2. Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders.

This should include:

- The law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;
- The process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;
- The necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
- Any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.
- The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16. Information sharing

- 16.1. Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.
- 16.2. The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).
- 16.3. The School is required to actively participate in regular, collaborative Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs) with our designated point of contact from the Local Authority's School Attendance Support Team. In accordance with statutory expectations, the School will participate in TSMs at least termly.
- 16.4. If the School maintains attendance levels consistently above the national average for its phase, the frequency may be reduced to a minimum of one meeting per school year by mutual agreement with the Local Authority.
 - 16.4.1. The School's SAC, or a nominated deputy, is responsible for leading, preparing for, and attending all scheduled TSMs. Representatives from relevant external services (such as early help, children's social care, or health professionals) may also be invited to participate where appropriate to ensure a coordinated response.

16.4.2. TSMs are not administrative audits of the register, nor are they exhaustive discussions of the entire pupil roll. Instead, they are highly focused case-review sessions. Time during these meetings will be strictly prioritised to address: severely absent pupils (attendance below 50%), persistently absent pupils (attendance below 90%), determination of a Lead Practitioner (typically the School, though a Local Authority officer or partner service may lead in highly complex, multi-need cases), and escalation and exception cases.

16.5. The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority.

As a minimum this includes:

- New pupil and deletion returns;
- Attendance returns;
- Sickness returns.

16.6. The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

16.7. The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information that can be used to provide the relevant information to the DfE. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

16.8. Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

17. Record keeping and confidentiality

17.1. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

17.2. The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

Appendix 1:

School arrangements

1. Managing attendance

- 1.1. The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and as set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for at least six years, as stated by law.
- 1.2. The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8.30am to close at 4.00pm for Seniors, and 3:15pm for Juniors, but this period may be extended, for example for out-of-school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

2. The role of Parents/Carers

- 2.1. The School expects all Parents to:
 - Make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
 - Notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and, when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and
 - Cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.
- 2.2. Parents of pupils should ensure their child attends School by 8.30am for morning registration for all year groups.

3. Registration and attendance checks

- 3.1. Morning registration is at 8.30am; e-registers will remain open until 8:55 am after the start of morning registration.
- 3.2. To ensure accuracy and pupil safety, registers are taken electronically at the start of every lesson throughout the school day (pupils in Y3 to Y11). For statutory recording purposes, official afternoon registration takes place simultaneously for all pupils across the School between **1:50pm and 2:20pm**. The statutory afternoon register remains open for a maximum of 30 minutes.
- 3.3. Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.
- 3.4. If a pupil is absent when the register starts being taken at 8:30am, but arrives before the register officially closes at 8:55am, they will be recorded as a late arrival (Code L).
- 3.5. If a pupil arrives *after* the register has closed (8:55am) without an unavoidable or pre-arranged authorised cause (such as a medical appointment), they will be recorded as an unauthorised late arrival (Code U) for that session. If a satisfactory explanation is provided, the record will be amended to the appropriate authorised absence code (e.g. Code M)
- 3.6. The School uses E-Registration and Attendance Management Systems via iSAMS.

4. Reporting absence

- 4.1. If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent/carers should contact the school office by email / telephone by 9.00am on the first morning of absence;
- 4.2. Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.
 - 4.2.1. In the vast majority of cases, a parent's timely notification (via the modes mentioned above, by 9:00 am on the first day of absence) that their child is too ill to attend school will be accepted without question or concern
 - 4.2.2. The School will not routinely demand medical certificates, doctor's notes, or prescription slips to authorise standard minor illness absences
 - 4.2.3. The School will only request supportive evidence for an illness-related absence in exceptional, targeted circumstances where there is a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or when actively supporting a pupil with a prolonged, severe, or repeated pattern of sickness-related absence
 - 4.2.4. When such evidence is deemed necessary to accurately record the absence code (Code I) or to understand the pupil's health needs, the School will apply the following non-rigid protocol:
 - Engage with Parents (and the pupil) to understand health or anxiety barriers and clarify attendance coding.
 - Check existing family-held records, such as prescription labels, appointment slips, or ongoing care letters, to avoid requesting unnecessary GP notes.
 - Work with school health or mental-health support teams to establish phased reintegration plans or routine adaptations for long-term conditions.

5. Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

6. Managing absence

If a pupil is absent and parents/carers have not been in touch to explain then in the first instance the School office staff will contact parents/carers to ascertain the reason.

- 6.1. Daily absence lists are reviewed by the SLT and SAC and sent to the Pastoral Leads for each section of the school to follow up where appropriate.
- 6.2. Absences are reviewed weekly by the SLT and SAC, following which the SAC may contact parents/carers to discuss the absence.
- 6.3. In the case of persistent lateness, sanctions in line with the School's Behaviour Policy will be used.

7. Authorised absences

- 7.1. Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

8. Applications for an authorised leave of absence

- 8.1. Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Head. The School does not permit leaves of absence during term time for the purpose of holidays, leisure, or recreation.

- 8.2. The School does not have a blanket policy or automated thresholds under which leaves of absence are granted automatically in response to specific types of family events or circumstances.
- 8.3. The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record, the relevant background context behind the request, and the potential impact of the proposed absence on the pupil's educational continuity and wider wellbeing.
- 8.4. Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head.
- 8.5. Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the School day except in cases of emergency when the School office should be informed.
- 8.6. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. Any additional days taken beyond this determined period will be recorded as unauthorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.
- 8.7. A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

9. Reporting duties

- 9.1. The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attend and their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.
- 9.2. Where a pupil is attending the School under a sponsored Student or Child Student visa, the School is required to comply with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) sponsor duties. If a sponsored pupil accumulates 10 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence (without prior permission or an acceptable explanation), the School's Level 1 user will report the absence to UKVI via the Sponsor Management System, within required reporting deadlines.
- 9.3. Each time the School's attendance register is completed, it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.
- 9.4. Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Child Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy if any absence of a pupil from the School give rise to a concern about their welfare.

Appendix 2:

Admission register

1. Admission register

- 1.1. In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2024, the School will:
 - Maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2. The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.3. The School must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 1.4. The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers, and details of the school they last attended.
- 1.5. A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in Regulation 9 of the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*. When any of the situations set out in Regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.
- 1.6. Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide the local authority with the following information:
 - The address of the pupil;
 - The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
 - At least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
 - The pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
 - The name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
 - The ground (prescribed in Regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.
 - The full name of the pupil
- 1.7. **Ground N – Pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school or non-maintained special school (Regulation 9(1)(n)):** Because St Margaret's is an independent school, Ground N represents the primary statutory ground under which a pupil is deleted from the register when they cease to attend. When a parent formally withdraws a pupil from the School (such as by submitting notice in accordance with the Parent Contract), or when the pupil completes their final year of education and ceases to be enrolled, the pupil's name must be deleted from the admission register under this ground.
- 1.8. In circumstances where parents are moving away and withdrawing their child from the School, but are unable to confirm how or where the child will continue their education (for example, the family is relocating but has not yet secured a place at a new school):
 - The School will not delete the pupil's name until they have completed their final day of scheduled attendance and have physically moved out of the local area

- Attendance must be recorded accurately up to the final date of registration
- A formal Deletion Return containing the pupil's last known address, emergency contact numbers, and the grounds under which the pupil's name is to be deleted will be submitted to the Local Authority within 5 days of the deletion

Appendix 3: Attendance register

1. Attendance register

- 1.1. The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024.
- 1.2. The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 1.3. The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.4. The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 1.5. The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.6. On each occasion, it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
 - Physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
 - Absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or attending a place other than the school; or
 - Absent.
- 1.7. The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
 - Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
 - For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of School staff;
 - Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity.
 - Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
 - Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.
- 1.8. Where a pupil is placed with an Alternative Provision (AP) provider, the School remains responsible for their safeguarding and must conduct attendance and safety reviews of the placement at least half-termly.

2. Recording absence

- 2.1. Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance relating to:
 - Leaves of absence;
 - Other authorised reasons;
 - Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;
 - Unauthorised absence.

3. Remote education

- 3.1. The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 3.2. The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.
- 3.3. In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:
 - 3.3.1. Ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and, if appropriate, a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;
 - 3.3.2. If remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
 - 3.3.3. Setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in-person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.
 - 3.3.4. Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not normally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.
 - 3.3.5. The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4. Unauthorised absence

- 4.1. The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance, or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:
 - Holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
 - The reason for absence has not been provided;
 - A pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
 - A pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.
- 4.2. Where an absence is temporarily recorded under Code N, the school office must actively follow up with the family. The correct absence code must be entered into iSAMS as soon as the reason is established, and no later than 5 school days after the session. If no valid reason is secured within 5 school days, the mark must legally be amended to Code O.

Appendix 4:

Attendance Codes – A Guide for Parents

At St Margaret's School, we believe that school is somewhere pupils want to be - a calm, safe, and supportive environment where every child can thrive. Good attendance is a team effort between the School, pupils, and parents.

When we take the register twice a day, we are legally required to use a national system of codes to record whether your child is in school, learning off-site, or absent. To help you understand how these codes are used, we have grouped them into four straightforward categories.

Category 1: Present and Learning

These codes mean your child is on time, in class, or taking part in an approved educational activity. All of these count as your child being present.

- Present (Codes / and \): Your child was physically present in their classroom for morning (/) or afternoon (\) registration
- Late but Present (Code L): Your child arrived after the register started but before it officially closed. We keep registers open for 30 minutes after the session starts
- Approved Off-Site Learning: These codes are used when your child is learning outside the School gates under supervision. They do not count as absences:
 - Code V: Attending a school-arranged and supervised educational visit or field trip
 - Code P: Participating in an approved, supervised sporting activity
 - Code W: Taking part in a work experience placement arranged by the school or Local Authority
 - Code K: Attending educational provision arranged directly by the Local Authority (such as specialised college courses or unregistered alternative provision)
 - Code B: Attending another approved, supervised educational activity (such as an off-site educational workshop).

Category 2: Authorised Absence

An "authorised" absence means that you have notified us of a valid reason for your child being away, and the School has formally accepted or pre-approved that explanation.

- Illness (Code I): Your child is too unwell (physically or mentally) to attend school. Our policy operates on trust - we do not require you to provide routine doctor's notes or medical certificates for standard illnesses.
- Medical or Dental Appointments (Code M): Pre-planned clinical appointments. We kindly ask that you schedule routine check-ups during school holidays or after school hours wherever possible. If an appointment must happen during the school day, your child should only be absent for the duration of the appointment
- Exceptional Circumstances (Code C): Temporary leaves of absence granted at the Head's sole discretion. Please note that, in line with government guidelines, leisure, family holidays, or recreation do not qualify as exceptional circumstances
- Phased Reintegration (Code C2): Your child is temporarily attending on an agreed, transitional part-time timetable to support their return to school after a period of illness or difficulty.
- Dual Registration (Code D): Your child is scheduled to attend another school where they are also registered (such as a specialised unit or hospital school) for that session.
- Religious Observance (Code R): Absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious celebration by the faith body to which your family belongs.
- Exams and Transitions:
 - Code S: Sparingly used, pre-approved study leave in the run-up to public examinations
 - Code J1: Attending an interview for a future school place or employment

- Suspended (Code E): Your child has been temporarily suspended from school on disciplinary grounds, and no alternative educational provision has begun yet
- Regulated Performances or Work (Code C1): Your child is absent to participate in a licensed performance or regulated employment abroad
- Occupational Travel (Code T): Specifically for children of families of no fixed abode travelling in the course of their trade or business

Category 3: Unauthorised Absence

An "unauthorised" absence means your child was absent, and the reason given was either not accepted as valid, was unapproved, or no explanation has been received. Unauthorised absences can lead to further support interventions or, if persistent, legal processes.

- Unauthorised Holiday (Code G): Your child was taken out of school for a family holiday or leisure trip during term time without the Head's prior approval.
- Late After Register Closed (Code U): Your child arrived at school after the register closed (usually more than 30 minutes after registration started) without a satisfactory explanation.
- Reason Not Yet Established (Code N): A temporary placeholder used when your child is absent, and we are still attempting to contact you to find out why. Please note that Code N must legally be resolved within 5 school days; if we cannot establish a valid reason by then, it must be changed to Code O.
- Unauthorised or Unknown Absence (Code O): Your child was absent without any explanation, or the reason provided did not meet the criteria for an authorised absence.

Category 4: Presence Not Possible

These codes represent rare, statutory exemptions where your child is physically unable to attend school due to external circumstances beyond their control. These do not count as absences and do not affect your child's attendance record.

- No Local Authority Transport (Code Q): Your child is absent because the Local Authority has a legal duty to provide home-to-school transport but has failed to do so.
- School Premises Closed:
 - Code Y3: Part of the school premises is out of use, and your child cannot be practicably accommodated.
 - Code Y4: The school is unexpectedly closed to all pupils (for example, due to extreme severe weather or utility failures).
- Travel and Public Health:
 - Code Y1: Your child's normal school-provided transport is unavailable.
 - Code Y2: Widespread travel disruption caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
 - Code Y6: Your child is well enough to attend but is legally required to stay at home in line with public health guidance or infectious disease laws.
- Legal or Custodial Circumstances:
 - Code Y5: Your child is unable to attend because they are in criminal justice detention.
 - Code Y7: An unavoidable emergency cause affecting the child directly (such as required court attendance or specific bail conditions)