



St Benedict's Catholic Primary School

Appendix 3 - Strategy to reduce persistent and severe absence 2026 – 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the school's culture of high attendance, which is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities, is effective in reducing both persistent absence and severe absence.

- **Persistent absence is when a pupil's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions (i.e., attendance falls below 90%).**
- **Severe absence is when a pupil's overall absence equates to 50 per cent or more of their possible sessions (i.e., attendance falls below 50%).**

It also outlines the school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

Rationale

- This strategy is intended to support the overall implementation of the **KCSP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027, including the Well-being Plan and the Framework for Continuous School Improvement**. It is essential that all leaders, staff, pupils and parents understand and support the school's expectations around the need for pupils to attend school regularly so

that they get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Data and research show that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 (age 11) and key stage 4 (age 16) have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

KPI 1: To reduce overall persistent absence at KCSP Trust schools so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

KPI 2: To reduce overall severe absence at KCSP Trust schools so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

- The monitoring of impact will be measured through school leaders' own self-evaluation including analysis of schools' attendance data, benchmarking against Trust schools, other schools locally and regionally and national data, and school-based visits by the School Improvement Team. The outcome of any Ofsted inspections will also be taken into consideration.

Identification and Early Intervention

1. Using Data to Target Attendance Improvement Efforts

- **Identification of At-Risk Pupils and Cohorts**

We will use real-time attendance data to identify pupils who are:

- **Persistently absent** (attendance below 90%)
- **Severely absent** (attendance below 50%)
- At risk of falling into these categories based on emerging patterns (e.g. frequent late arrivals, sporadic absences)

- **Targeted Interventions**

Data will inform tailored interventions such as:

- Attendance mentoring and pastoral support
- Parent/carer engagement meetings
- Referral to external agencies where appropriate
- Curriculum or timetable adjustments for pupils with specific needs

- **Cohort Analysis**

We will analyse absence trends across:

- Year groups
- Pupil Premium and SEND cohorts
- EAL pupils
- Pupils with known safeguarding concerns

2. Monitoring Absence Rates for Identified Pupils and Cohorts

- **Weekly Attendance Dashboards**

Attendance data will be reviewed weekly to monitor:

- Individual pupil attendance trajectories
- Cohort-level trends
- Impact of interventions

- **Automated Alerts and Flags**

Our MIS will generate alerts for:

- Pupils whose attendance drops below key thresholds (e.g. 95%, 90%, 50%)
- Pupils with consecutive days of absence
- Patterns such as frequent absence on specific days

- **Review Meetings and Action Planning**

Attendance lead will hold fortnightly review meetings with:

- Headteacher
- Class Teacher
- SENCO and safeguarding leads

These meetings will use data to update action plans and escalate concerns where needed.

Termly Reporting to Governors and SLT

Attendance data will be collated termly to:

- Evaluate progress against targets
- Review effectiveness of strategies
- Inform whole-school attendance policy updates

How the school will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils/pupil cohorts who need it most
Key Performance Indicators

KPI 1: To reduce overall persistent absence so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND	Implementation	Milestones	Expected Impact
School leaders to engage with training linked to Trust, Local and National initiatives focused on school attendance.	Attendance Training.	September 2026 (KCSP) February 2027	Latest initiatives explored and implemented within the school context.

Implement new Trust Attendance Policy	'Thrive Under 5' initiative – pupils should not miss more than five days of school in any academic year.	September 2026	Increased awareness and positive reinforcement should strengthen the culture of regular attendance and reduce avoidable absence.
Early identification and monitoring: Analysis of all attendance data on a weekly basis	Weekly checks of attendance data to be carried out by Attendance Officer and reported to senior school leadership for all children including SEN. PPG children and any children who are regarded as vulnerable and receiving support from external agencies.	This data will be compared week by week and explanations for any patterns investigated.	Persistent absence is identified earlier, allowing intervention before absence becomes entrenched. The school can monitor whether disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are improving at a rate that closes attendance gaps.

Individualised support for complex barriers: Drilling down to individual absenteeism if data is indicating a downward trend towards 90%	VYED used to take a banded approach to attendance. Increased monitoring for any children in 5% to less than 10% or below. Use of St. Benedict's Forest Attendance Adventure (child-friendly version). The school works with pupils and families to understand barriers, establish in-school support, set measurable targets and involve the local authority or other agencies where appropriate. Support is regularly reviewed. Families invited to take part in an Attendance Project (focused monitoring period).	As above with individual child absence being monitored specifically on a daily basis.	Barriers to attendance are addressed. Individual child absence is deterred before the child reaches below 90% and is regarded as approaching persistent absence.
Use of pastoral support	Meeting individual parents in an "attendance clinic" with a senior leader and pastoral support to support the parent in bringing their children to school.	As required.	Stronger home-school partnership and earlier resolution of barriers should increase parental engagement and improve pupils' regular attendance.
	If the attendance data is still now moving to 90% and below, asking for support from the Medway Attendance Advisory Practitioner for Schools and Academies might be attained.	Ongoing	The Rate of persistent absenteeism is reduced.

Positive attendance culture: having a system of rewards for all children especially those with persistent absenteeism.	Promoting “No more than 5 to ensure you thrive”, weekly attendance shields awarded to classes in a whole school assembly, attendance results published in the weekly newsletter and school noticeboard, 100% attendance badges, assemblies and the Forest Attendance Adventure.	Ongoing	Increased awareness and positive reinforcement should strengthen the culture of regular attendance and reduce avoidable absence. Thus, reducing figures of persistent absenteeism.
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Spending PPG to improve attendance	Use of PPG funding to support and encourage PPG children who may be in danger of becoming persistent absentees to attend school by coming to breakfast club, so that children have an added incentive to come to school. Selecting these children individually to join a “before school” club facilitated by school staff which they might find attractive as an incentive to attend school.	Ongoing	As above.
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KPI 2: To reduce overall severe absence so that it is no greater than the national average percentage, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND	Implementation	Milestones	Expected Impact
Specific identification of severe absence and critical support pathway	Individual very focused work with families of severe absentees e.g. Headteacher/delegate involvement, measurable targets, multi-agency support and escalation to local-authority statutory processes where required. Unexplained absence is followed up on the first day; continued unexplained absence triggers further contact and, where appropriate, home visits, external-agency involvement or safeguarding/welfare action.	Targets for weekly attendance are met on a day-by-day basis until such time as the child is attending for the majority and then all of a school week.	Intensified leadership and multi-agency intervention should support the re-engagement of pupils experiencing severe absence and reduce the number remaining at this level. Thus, reduction of severe absence and improved attendance. Faster identification of pupils who are missing education reduces the risk that severe absence becomes prolonged and ensures safeguarding concerns are addressed promptly.

