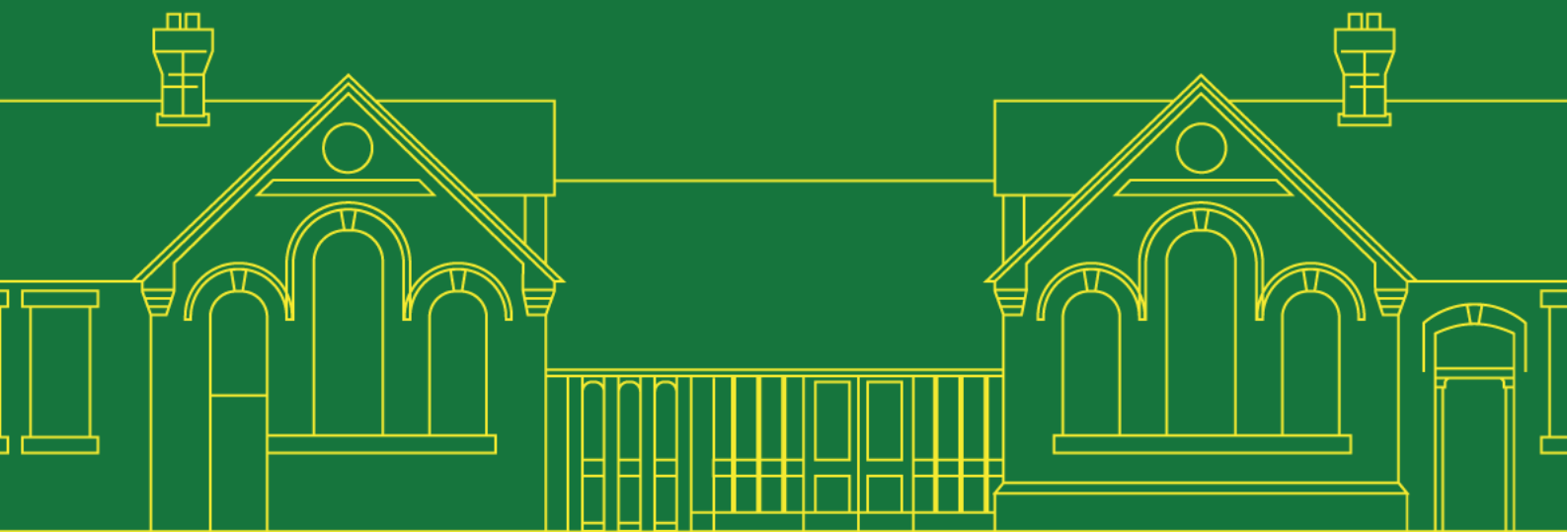




Attendance Policy

September 2026 (Review September 2027)



**STOUR VALE
ACADEMY
TRUST**

Queen Victoria Primary School Vision and Values

At Queen Victoria Primary School, we care deeply for the children of Sedgley; we believe every child is worthy and capable of success and happiness and this shows in every interaction. We create the conditions for children to grow into individuals who **care** about themselves, each other and the world they live in. We strive to make a positive difference by basing everything we do on our CARE principles:

Children are at the heart of everything we do – every day, in every decision, and every action, children's best interests and needs are put first. We have a team of compassionate staff who will move heaven and earth to ensure children get what they need to succeed.

Aspiration – We are full of hope, ambition, and the highest expectations for all children to have bright futures. Therefore, we are ambitious in the curriculum we offer and the standards we expect of ourselves.

Responsible – One of our key purposes is to help our children develop into respectful and responsible citizens who make positive contributions to life in Sedgley and beyond.

Excellence – We are relentless in our pursuit of providing excellence in education, with a balanced approach to academic achievement and personal development.

Our CARE principles are at the centre of our attendance approach. We work in partnership with families, set high expectations, act early when attendance begins to fall and provide support to remove barriers.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless a statutory reason for absence applies.

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations for school attendance through a whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address emerging patterns of absence.
- Building strong, supportive relationships with families and listening to barriers.
- Using targeted support and formal intervention appropriately where attendance does not improve.
- Ensuring attendance is understood as everyone's responsibility.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the statutory and legal framework in force for the 2026–27 academic year, including:

- Department for Education: Working together to improve school attendance (statutory guidance, updated July 2026).
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education Act 1996.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Equality Act 2010.

The school will also follow current Dudley Local Authority attendance procedures and the Local Authority code of conduct for penalty notices.

Why Regular Attendance is so Important

Learning:

Regular attendance gives children the best opportunity to learn, retain knowledge, build relationships and participate fully in school life. Absence interrupts sequences of learning and can make it harder for pupils to keep up with their peers.

Safeguarding:

Attendance is a safeguarding responsibility for all staff. Changes in attendance, repeated absence and unexplained absence can be indicators that a child may need help or protection. Concerns will be shared promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy and acted upon in line with safeguarding procedures.

Promoting, Celebrating & Supporting Excellent Attendance

Queen Victoria Primary School has an attendance ambition of 96% for every pupil wherever possible. This is our school ambition; persistent absence is defined nationally as missing 10% or more of possible sessions.

Attendance has a high profile across school and is everyone's business. Our 2026–27 approach includes:

- A weekly classroom Attendance Bulletin every Monday, sharing whole-school attendance, class attendance, lateness, celebrations and the weekly challenge.

- Attendance Ambassadors in every class, with two in each Year 6 class, who share attendance information and promote positive messages.
- Attendance HERO boards, Spin the Wheel, Attendance Tuck Shop, attendance cards and Gold, Silver and Bronze recognition.
- Positive messages home and personal recognition for strong or improving attendance.
- Class teachers talking positively with pupils and families about exciting learning and opportunities coming up in school.
- Targeted campaigns at points when attendance may dip.
- Positive welcome-back conversations following absence so that children know they have been missed and are wanted in school.
- Targeted work with pupils whose attendance is low or beginning to deteriorate.

Recognition is inclusive. We celebrate improvement, effort and overcoming barriers as well as high attendance, and we do not shame pupils whose absence may be linked to illness, disability, SEND or circumstances outside their control.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- Promote the importance of attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil statutory attendance duties.
- Regularly review and challenge attendance, persistent absence, severe absence and vulnerable-group data.
- Monitor the impact of the school's attendance strategy.
- Ensure appropriate staff training and hold the Headteacher to account for implementation.
- Maintain an identified link governor for attendance who meets leaders at least termly.

The Headteacher

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently.
- Ensure attendance maintains a high profile across school.
- Review attendance data and report to governors and the Trust.
- Authorise leave of absence only where exceptional circumstances apply.
- Work with the Local Authority in relation to formal support and legal intervention.

The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance (Attendance Champion)

- Lead attendance across the school and evaluate attendance systems and expectations.
- Maintain oversight of attendance and absence data and identify priority pupils and cohorts.
- Devise and coordinate targeted strategies, Attendance Support Meetings and Attendance Support Plans.
- Work with families and external services to remove barriers.
- Monitor the impact of interventions and report to the Headteacher, ELT, governors and Trust.

Queen Victoria Primary School's designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs J Reece and can be contacted via the school office.

The Attendance Officer

- Monitor attendance, absence and lateness daily.
- Follow up unexplained absence promptly and establish the reason for absence.
- Monitor register coding and alert staff to inconsistencies.
- Work closely with the Attendance Champion, Headteacher, class teachers, phase leaders and Family Support Worker.
- Prepare attendance information and identify emerging patterns.
- Liaise with Dudley attendance services and other agencies where appropriate.
- Support Attendance Support Meetings and maintain clear records of actions and reviews.

The Attendance Officer for Queen Victoria Primary School is Mrs C Halford. The school telephone number is 01384 888970.

Class Teachers

- Record attendance twice daily accurately and without delay.
- Create a welcoming classroom culture in which children feel safe, valued and keen to attend.
- Deliver the weekly Attendance Bulletin every Monday.
- Work with the class Attendance Ambassador and keep attendance visible throughout the week.
- Promote the 'Miss School... Miss Out' message and talk positively about upcoming learning.
- Recognise good and improving attendance and welcome children back positively following absence.

- Know the attendance picture within their class, including Band 2 pupils and those at risk of persistent absence.
- Have supportive conversations with parents and carers and report concerns promptly.

Phase Leaders and Staff with Specific Responsibilities

- Monitor attendance and punctuality within their phase or identified cohort.
- Use data to identify patterns, vulnerable pupils and barriers.
- Support class teachers with conversations and plans where attendance is deteriorating.
- Discuss attendance concerns and trends through leadership structures.
- SENCO, DSL, Mental Health Lead and other relevant staff contribute specialist support where barriers relate to their area.

Parents/Carers

- Ensure their child attends every day on time unless a statutory reason applies.
- Report unexpected absence by 8.50am on the first day and provide the reason and likely return date.
- Maintain communication with school during longer absences.
- Provide at least two up-to-date emergency contacts wherever possible.
- Arrange routine appointments outside school hours where possible.
- Request leave of absence in advance and understand that it will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Engage with school and other services where attendance concerns arise.

Children and Attendance Ambassadors

- Attend school every day and arrive on time.
- Tell a trusted adult if something is making it difficult to attend.
- Take pride in class attendance and encourage one another positively.
- Attendance Ambassadors share class attendance and punctuality information, celebrate improvement and promote attendance messages.

Admission and Attendance Registers

The admission and attendance registers will be maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register where a statutory ground for deletion applies.

The attendance register is taken at the start of each morning session and once during the afternoon session. Amendments retain the original entry, the amended entry, the reason, the date and the name of the person making the amendment. Register entries are preserved for six years.

Where code N is used because the reason for absence has not yet been established, the school will establish the reason and replace N with the appropriate code as soon as possible and no later than five school days after the session.

Day to Day Processes

Lateness and Punctuality

The school site opens at 8.30am. Pupils should be in their classroom and ready to learn by 8.50am, when the school day begins and the morning register is taken.

Pupils arriving after 8.50am must enter through the main reception. A pupil arriving after the register has started but before it closes will be recorded using code L.

The morning register closes at 9.20am. A pupil arriving after the register has closed without an authorised reason will be recorded using code U. This is an unauthorised absence for that session.

Persistent lateness will be addressed supportively with the family. Where unauthorised lateness continues it may contribute to formal attendance action.

Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school by 8.50am on the first day of an unexpected absence, or as soon as practicably possible. Absence can be reported by telephone on 01384 888970 using the dedicated absence option, by contacting the school office/Attendance Officer, by emailing absences@queen-vic.dudley.sch.uk, or by speaking to an appropriate member of staff at the gate where necessary.

Following up Unexplained Absence

Where a pupil expected to attend does not attend and no reason has been provided, school will make contact that morning. This may include text messages, telephone calls and contact with other emergency contacts.

If contact cannot be established, school will consider the child's individual circumstances and safeguarding risk. Home visits and welfare checks will be used proportionately. Our usual practice is to undertake a safe-and-well home visit by the second consecutive day where contact has not been established, with a first-day visit where there are heightened attendance or safeguarding concerns.

Where there is a genuine concern for a child's immediate welfare, the school may contact Children's Social Care, police or other relevant services without waiting for the usual attendance process.

Illness, Medical Needs, SEND and Emotionally Based Barriers

Most illness-related absence will be authorised where school is satisfied that the pupil is too ill to attend. Medical evidence will not routinely be requested for every illness, but may be sought where there is reasonable doubt or where it is needed to understand a pattern and identify appropriate support.

Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for as much of the day as they reasonably can.

Sickness Returns

The school will make the statutory sickness return to the Local Authority where a compulsory-school-age pupil is recorded with code I and the school has reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will be unable to attend because of sickness for at least 15 consecutive school days, or for a total of at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.

SEND, Disability and Mental or Physical Health

The attendance ambition for pupils with SEND, disabilities or health needs remains high, while recognising that some pupils face additional barriers. We will work with the pupil, family, SENCO, health professionals and other services as appropriate, make reasonable adjustments where required, and ensure attendance action is sensitive to individual need.

Where anxiety or other difficult emotions affect attendance, school will seek to understand the underlying causes and agree practical support. Absence will not be allowed to drift without review; the aim is to maintain or restore access to education safely and successfully.

Planned Absence and Leave of Absence

Parents do not have an automatic entitlement to take their child out of school during term time. Leave of absence may only be granted where the Headteacher considers that exceptional circumstances apply. Each request will be considered individually.

Leave for the purpose of a family holiday or leisure activity will not normally be granted. Where leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of school days authorised.

Requests should be made in advance using the school's Leave of Absence form and, wherever possible, at least 10 school days before the proposed absence. Supporting evidence may be requested where relevant.

Where a request is refused and the pupil is absent, the absence will be recorded using the appropriate unauthorised absence code. The school may request that the Local Authority considers a penalty notice where the national threshold is met and a penalty notice is appropriate.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers of their child's attendance and punctuality. Where attendance begins to deteriorate, class teachers will use supportive informal conversations early rather than waiting for a formal letter. Positive messages are also used to recognise improvement.

Parents/carers may request their child's attendance information at any time.

Graduated Attendance Response

Queen Victoria uses a graduated response which combines clear expectations with listening, support, review and, where necessary, formal intervention. Thresholds guide our response, but professional judgement, safeguarding information, individual circumstances and patterns of absence are always considered.

Stage	Focus	Typical response
Stage 1 – Expect and Monitor	Around 8 days of absence / emerging deterioration	Early communication; class teacher conversation; identify barriers; monitor closely.
Stage 2 – Listen and Understand	Around 10 days of absence / increasing risk	Formal letter and Attendance Support Meeting; listen to pupil/family; agree support.
Stage 3 – Facilitate	Around 15 days of absence / persistent concern	Attendance Support Plan; targeted support; consider Early Help/wider services; review.
Stage 4 – Formalise	Around 18 days / insufficient improvement	Review plan; formalise expectations and support; consider Notice to Improve and Local Authority involvement.
Stage 5 – Enforce	Around 19 days / statutory threshold met / support unsuccessful or not engaged with	Referral for legal intervention where appropriate, including penalty notice or prosecution route through the Local Authority.

These school stages do not replace statutory thresholds. The national penalty notice threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

Attendance Support Plans

Where an Attendance Support Plan is used, it will identify barriers, the pupil and family's views, agreed support, responsibilities, measurable attendance goals and a review date. The plan is intended to be supportive and purposeful. Lack of engagement with agreed support will be recorded and may inform the decision to move to formal intervention.

Legal Sanctions

Legal intervention is not the school's first response where support is appropriate. It may be considered where voluntary support has not worked, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate, and where statutory and Local Authority criteria are met.

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Meeting the threshold does not mean a penalty notice must automatically be issued.

Penalty notice	Amount / response
First penalty notice to a parent for a particular pupil within three years	£160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days; £160 if paid within 28 days.
Second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within three years	£160, payable within 28 days.
Third occasion the national threshold is met for the same parent and pupil within three years	A third penalty notice cannot be issued; other action will be considered, which may include prosecution.

Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority. The school will follow the current Dudley Local Authority code of conduct.

Attendance Monitoring

School will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify children and cohorts requiring support and evaluate the impact of interventions.

- Monitor attendance, absence and punctuality daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and annually as appropriate.
- Analyse whole-school, year-group, class, vulnerable-group and individual-pupil data.
- Track persistent absence, severe absence, unauthorised absence, lateness and emerging deterioration.
- Identify Band 2 pupils early and support movement towards Band 1.
- Provide regular information to class teachers and phase leaders so that timely conversations can take place.

- Review Pupil Premium, SEND, pupils with a social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after children, pupils with medical needs and other cohorts where attendance is lower than peers.
- Report regularly to ELT, governors and the Trust and compare outcomes with Local Authority and national information.
- Evaluate interventions and adapt approaches that are not improving attendance.

Attendance Bands, Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

Category	Attendance	Response
Band 1	96%+	Celebrate and maintain.
Band 2	90–95.9%	Preventative focus; early conversation and targeted encouragement towards 96%+.
Persistent absence	Below 90%	Priority targeted support and case management.
Severe absence	50% or below	Highest priority; joint approach with the Local Authority and other services as appropriate.

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of possible sessions. Severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more. Band 2 is Queen Victoria’s preventative category and enables us to act before a pupil becomes persistently absent.

Statutory Attendance Returns

The school will make statutory attendance returns to the Local Authority in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, including the required attendance return and sickness return where the statutory criteria are met.

Children Who Are Absent from Education

Absence from education can be an important safeguarding warning sign. The school will make reasonable enquiries and work with the Local Authority, Children’s Social Care, police and other partners where appropriate to establish a child’s whereabouts and welfare.

A pupil’s name will only be deleted from the admission register where a ground in Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies. Required enquiries and notifications will be completed before deletion.

Communication with Families

Our aim is to work with families, not against them. Attendance communication should be clear, timely, respectful and focused on the child’s best interests. Parents will be informed when attendance is a concern, listened to regarding barriers, offered

appropriate support and made clear about the next steps if attendance does not improve.

Links with Other Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- SEND Policy.
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Alternative Provision and reduced timetable procedures, where applicable.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Admissions procedures.

Monitoring and Review

The Attendance Champion and Headteacher will monitor implementation of this policy. The Local Governing Body will review attendance information regularly and approve the policy at least annually, or sooner where statutory guidance or legislation changes.

GDPR – Personal Data

This policy adheres to the principles of data protection law. Further information is available in the school's Data Protection Policy.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

Queen Victoria Primary School uses the statutory attendance and absence codes set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance.

Code	Summary
/ \	Present at school at registration.
L	Late before the register closes.
B	Attending another approved educational setting, where criteria apply.
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority.
P	Approved sporting activity.
V	Educational visit or trip.
W	Work experience.
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
C1	Leave for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave for a compulsory-school-age pupil subject to an agreed part-time timetable, where statutory criteria apply.
D	Dual registered – attending another school.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made.
I	Unable to attend because of sickness.
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
M	Medical or dental appointment.
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements.
R	Religious observance.
S	Study leave.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
X	Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend.
Y1-Y7	Unable to attend due to specified exceptional circumstances in the statutory code set.
G	Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.
N	Reason for absence not yet established; must be resolved within five school days.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances.
U	Arrived after the register closed.
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on the admission register.
#	Planned whole-school closure.

Appendix 2 – Attendance Description

Percentage Attendance	Descriptor / School Response
98–100%	Excellent – celebrate and maintain.
96–97.9%	Good / Band 1 – celebrate and maintain.
90–95.9%	Band 2 – preventative support and monitoring.
Below 90%	Persistent absence – priority targeted support.
50% or below	Severe absence – highest priority and joint support.

Appendix 3 – Queen Victoria Attendance Pathway

EXPECT – Set clear expectations; make attendance visible; celebrate success; communicate the value of every school day.

MONITOR – Review data early and frequently; notice deterioration, lateness and patterns.

LISTEN & UNDERSTAND – Speak with the pupil and family; identify in-school and out-of-school barriers.

FACILITATE SUPPORT – Agree practical support; use an Attendance Support Plan; involve wider services where appropriate.

FORMALISE – Where improvement is insufficient, formalise expectations and support and involve the Local Authority as appropriate.

ENFORCE – Where support has not worked, is not engaged with or is not appropriate, use legal intervention in partnership with the Local Authority.