



Attendance Policy

St John's and St Peter's Church of England Academy

Approved by: Board of Trustees **Date:** 14.02.2024

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St John’s and St Peter’s CE Academy is a welcoming school family that seeks to serve the Ladywood community by equipping its children and families for success.

By placing God’s love in action at the heart of everything we do, we hope to see our children flourish, our culture transformed, and our community thrive.

Through high-quality education and an enriching curriculum, we will equip every child with the knowledge and skills they need to overcome challenges and therefore achieve their full potential.

Our hope is that every child at St John’s and St Peter’s CE Academy can uniquely contribute to the community and make it a place they are proud to call home.

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Local Academy Board

The Local Academy Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Executive Headteacher

The EHT is responsible for:

- 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.

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leader Team is responsible for:

Senior Leaders will:

- have an identified member of SLT responsible for attendance – Pastoral Care Manager
- set clear and challenging attendance targets as part of school self- review
- ensure that all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of this policy
- monitor trends and arrange for letters to be sent when required
- provide target intervention and support for families whose children have been highlighted as having poor attendance
- utilise the support of available specialists in relation to attendance if required
- have a system in place for parents to report a child's absence report to the Governing Board attendance figures and trends
- promote the importance of good attendance through devotion
- celebrate and reward good attendance during devotions
- be responsible for making a referral to the Local Authority when/if required
- monitor individual, class, and year group attendance

3.4 Class teachers

Teachers will:

- set a good example of punctuality and good attendance.
- ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times, are accurate and up to date.
- take appropriate action when pupils are late.
- monitor class and individual attendance patterns.
- inform SLT/ Headteacher of any concerns about attendance or where attendance is impacting on a pupils' achievements.
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations.
- praise pupils for good punctuality and good attendance.

3.5 School office staff

School office staff will:

- make first day calling for children absent without explanation.
- call all numbers on the contact list in order until receiving an answer.
- leave a voice message if there is a voicemail option.
- notify the attendance officer if an overseas ring tone is noted.
- call the contact list at least twice.

- issue first day contact methods i.e. email if there is no other response.
- monitor late entrants into school and adjust attendance codes accordingly along with the time of arrival.
- record medical appointments on Arbor and state whether medical evidence has been seen if required.
- monitor register coding and alert staff of inconsistencies.
- Update attendance officer if they have concerns about a child.

3.7 Parents/carers

The school always tries to work in partnership with parents. If pupils are not in school, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school on the first day of absence. If a pupil is absent, and no message has been received, the school will try to contact the parents to discover the reason as soon as possible.

If there is a specific problem with attendance caused by factors within school, this can usually be resolved quickly and informally between parents and school. If the problem is caused by domestic circumstances the school can assist parents by engaging the support of other external agencies

In addition to this we ask parents to:

- ensure their child attends school regularly and is properly equipped and in a fit state to learn every day that school is open.
- ensure that their children are punctual at the start of the school day.
- notify the school of any absences by 9.30am. All absences will be recorded as 'O' unauthorised until an explanation or evidence is provided. The onus is on the parent to inform the school and provide appropriate evidence if required.
- book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day whenever possible.
- provide explanation of absences on the first day a pupil returns to school if this has not already been done.
- provide the school with up-to-date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility. If contact details change, then we must be informed of new details within 24 hours.
- complete a 'Leave of Absence' request form for any time required off school that is not due to illness or medical appointments i.e. exceptional circumstances. This must be made in writing (using the application form available from the school office) to the Headteacher 15 days in advance of the proposed start date of the absence. The circumstances you consider 'exceptional' must be detailed.
- collect their children on time.
- avoid taking holidays in term time.
- avoid requesting non-urgent leave of absence.
- work with the school to improve matters if attendance becomes a problem.
- keep school fully informed on all matters that might affect attendance and their child in school.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school regularly and promptly.
- arrive at school on time.
- attend morning and afternoon registration promptly.

- › understand the value of good attendance.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and also at the start the second session, after lunch. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present or absent.
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry.
- › The amended entry.
- › The reason for the amendment.
- › The date on which the amendment was made.
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm.

Pupils are marked late if they arrive more than 15 minutes after these times (L). Registers are officially closed half an hour after these times and pupils are then marked as 'Unauthorised absence' (U) if they arrive later during the session, unless an acceptable authorised reason is given.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff on 0121 675 1398 (see also section 7). The office staff will then inform the class teacher and update Arbor.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents will be asked to read and complete a leave of absence form available from the main office. The Attendance Officer will liaise with the Designated Senior Leader and a decision will be made as to whether the absence will be authorised. The office staff will liaise with the parent regarding the decision.

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

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

If a child is late, the school gate has been locked but the registers are still open, they must come into school through the main office where a member of the office staff will make a note of their name and their year group. This will be recorded so that consistent lateness can be monitored.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit. If the family cannot be reached, then the school will contact Education Legal Intervention Team or Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS). The police will be called if we think there is an immediate risk to the child. The police or social care, depending on the circumstances of the family.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- If absence continues and with have no contact with any of the emergency contacts or response to home visits a referral to the Children Missing in Education (CME) will be made.
- Children Missing in Education (CME) - Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children. This is why we will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

- Text to be sent to the parent of any child who is below the national average.
- A letter from the Pastoral Manager/Attendance Officer to be sent outlining the importance of good attendance.

- A letter of concern informing parents/carers of their child's attendance
- If attendance does not improve an informal meeting between parents and the Pastoral Manager. In this meeting parents and/or carer will be asked to sign a Parenting contract.
 - A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between a parent and/or carer, the school and the Local Authority (LA), in order to improve the attendance of children and young people. This intervention identifies clear actions, with all parties named being accountable for their roles and responsibilities. This may be used in evidence and presented to the Magistrates Court, should it be deemed that an offence has been committed under Section 4441a of the Education Act 1996.
 - Section 444 – Education Act 1996
 - Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil.
- If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, this parent is guilty of an offence.
 - 1(1A) If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that his child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails.... to cause them to do so, they are guilty of an offence.
 - At each meeting an agreement is drawn up based upon the full assessment of the situation. This agreement clearly identifies each party's responsibilities for resolving the presenting problem. Where the parental actions agreed at the Parenting Contract Meeting are not complied with and unauthorised absence continues, legal intervention will be instigated against the parent(s)/carer(s).(appendix 2)
- The family will be offered Early Help. This will consist of an Early Help Assessment which help identify the support required.
- Formal letter requesting a meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Designated Senior Lead for Attendance.
- School Attendance Review Meeting.
- Legal action will be taken in extreme cases.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

The Headteacher/ Attendance officer will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Unacceptable reasons for leave of absence

It is not acceptable to assume your child can have days out of school for the following events;

- Moving House
- Funerals
- New babies
- Other child in family is sick and parent cannot get other child to school

- Parent on holiday and child staying with a relative – relative cannot bring child to school– it is expected that other arrangements are made with family members/neighbours/friends to bring your child to school
- Parent sick on a long-term basis and cannot get child to school – it is expected that other arrangements are made with family members/neighbours/friends to bring your child to school
- Inclement weather i.e. severe snow – if you live within a 1 mile radius of the school, unless there is a babe in arms in the household, or you live in a remote setting, you are expected to get your child to school

Other unauthorised reasons are:

- Buying new school shoes/summer uniform because parents forgot to do it in the holidays
- Parent/Carer/sibling being sick/illness
- Going on holiday early to avoid traffic/holidays are cheaper in term time
- Waiting in for the builder's/Gas man/delivery driver to arrive
- 'Only Year 11 matters'
- Withdrawing your child from school when alternative arrangements have been made to address the reasons, they are unable to attend or take part in a specific lesson or event

Religious Observance

'Religious Observance' requests will usually be granted for a maximum of three days during a year for, "a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs" (Pupil Registration Regulations 2006). These days should relate to significant festivals in the relevant faith calendar.

Again, the school will decide whether or not to authorise requests and cases will be considered on their individual merits. Parents/Carers will be informed of the school's decision as soon as possible.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

All staff are trained and made aware about possible reasons for extended absence from school. One of these could be Female genital mutilation (FGM), which is a form of child abuse common to some African, Asian, and Middle Eastern communities in the UK. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. Victims are usually aged between four and ten, primary school age. It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Any information or concern that a child is at immediate risk of or has undergone FGM or forced marriage will result in a child protection referral under school procedures to the Designated Senior Person in the first instance and then to Children's Social Care Services and/or the Child Protection Team, West Midlands Police Service. Records of all incidents will be kept following the same procedure as for all other child protection concerns in school in line with current policy.

Please note that teachers and members of staff with teaching responsibilities have a specific legal duty to act with regards to concerns about female genital mutilation and must personally report to the police a disclosure that FGM has been carried out, in addition to liaising with the DSL/Children's social care.

Re-entry strategies for long term absentees:

When long-term non-attenders return to school the staff attempt to make them feel welcome back at school without drawing attention to the prolonged absence. The pupils are placed back in their class and given their individual programmes of work to continue.

If there are specific reasons where this is not felt to be appropriate, separate arrangements would be made. This would be considered on an individual need's basis.

5.1 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Local councils and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason. They can give you:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order
- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

You can be given one or more of these, but the council does not have to do this before prosecuting you.

Parenting Order

This means you have to go to parenting classes. You'll also have to do what the court says to improve your child's school attendance.

Education Supervision Order

If the council thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you're not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order.

A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The local council can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well.

School Attendance Order

You'll get a School Attendance Order if the local council thinks your child is not getting an education.

You have 15 days to provide evidence that you've registered your child with the school listed in the order or that you're giving them [home education](#). If you do not, you could be prosecuted or given a fine.

Fine

Your local council can give each parent a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- A whole school approach.
- A culture that it is 'cool' to be school.
- An enjoyable broad curriculum.
- The Daily Mile.

- Class Dojo points are rewarded.
- Meet Lucca (school dog) at the gate

7. Attendance monitoring

- Attendance and absence are monitored daily by the school office and the Pastoral Care Manager. The Attendance Officer analyses the data on a weekly basis and identifies pupils/families that may need additional support.
- Cohort data is monitored and analysed half termly the Designated Senior Lead for Attendance. They look at any historic and emerging patterns and absence and then develop strategies to address these patterns. These interventions are carefully evaluated for impact.
- Attendance data at cohort level is presented to governors at each Local Academy Board meeting, along with any strategies currently employed to manage specific attendance.

7.1 Reducing persistent or severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance through Early Help

Specific strategies to be used:

- Text to be sent to the parent of any child who is below the national average.
- Informal meeting between parents and the Pastoral Manager.
- Letter from the Pastoral Manager to be sent outlining the importance of good attendance.
- Formal letter requesting a meeting with the Designated Senior Lead for Attendance.
- School Attendance Review Meeting.
- Legal action will be taken in extreme cases.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Designated Senior Lead for Attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Parent Contract



Attendance Contract

Date/time of meeting:	
Venue:	

Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
School:	

Present at meeting:	
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Action agreed
<p>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day. • Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return. • Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur. • Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly? If so, school staff will be informed.

Attendance target:	100%
Timescale for improvement:	

Date for review meeting:	
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I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... School Representative

..... Other Agency