



**POLICY – ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Date of Adoption:	SEPTEMBER 2023 UPDATE	Date of Review:	ANNUAL
Author:	OFFICE MANAGER	Committee responsible for Review:	FGB
Version:	APPROVED AT FGB	Date approved:	13.09.2023

Office use only:

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## 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 governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the schools policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data



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- 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 Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance**

The Designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

**The Designated Senior Lead for attendance at St Paul's is: Mrs R Chambers**

### **3.3 The Office**

The school office is responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence

### **3.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.5 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call, email or send a Parentmail to the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time by 9am.

## **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 school day and at the start of the afternoon.

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 9am, when doors close on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken just after 9am when the doors close and will be kept open until approximately 9.30am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.00pm for Reception Classes, 1.15pm for KS1 and 1.30pm for KS2.

### **4.2 Unplanned absence**



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The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling, emailing or sending a Parentmail to the school office staff (see also section 7).

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 as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

### 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.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. Please refer to the flow chart at the end of this policy for further information.

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will provide an annual attendance report to inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher 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, taking into account 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 10 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the website. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

### 5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:



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

## 6. Attendance monitoring

### 6.1 Monitoring attendance

The Schools will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

### 6.2 Reducing persistent and 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 (and/or local authority) 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
- Write to parents if a child's attendance drops below 90% (they are persistently absent)
- Consider involving an education welfare officer

- The Headteacher will agree an attendance action plan to support the attendance of pupils for whom there are emerging attendance concerns. Attendance meetings may be held for pupils whose attendance is less than 90%. These action plans will be reviewed half termly.

## **7. Monitoring arrangements**

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

## **8. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy





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**APPENDIX 1**

**ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME**

*To be completed at least one month before the proposed leave of absence*

Name of Student:	Class:
Purpose of Absence:	
Reason for Absence during term time:	
Proposed start date of absence:	Date of return to school:
Are there siblings at another West Berkshire School: YES/NO	
If so, which school is it?	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent/Guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**School to complete:**

Number of days absence requested:	
Percentage Attendance:	
Has absence during term time been requested previously and if so, when and how many days:	
Absence is:	APPROVED/NOT APPROVED
Reason:	
Date Parent/Guardian informed of decision:	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2: Attendance and Punctuality

### Attendance and Punctuality at St Paul's Catholic Primary School

**Our target is that children attend school at least 96% of the time.**  
Children with attendance below 90% are considered to be 'persistent absentees'. This means that the school and the Local Authority need to work together to put in place targeted support to remove barriers.

School Leaders (including Governors) regularly monitor attendance of individuals, class and groups of pupils.

### Children should stay at home if they have ...

A fever  
Vomiting or diarrhoea  
Flu or heavy colds  
Childhood diseases such as chickenpox

### Coughs, colds and Covid

If your child is unwell with something that can be passed to others, they must stay at home until they feel better.

If your child is unwell, please call the school office, send a ParentMail or email **every day** that they are unwell, giving as much detail as possible.

### Unauthorised Absences

The school will not authorise absences for:

A child being tired

Day trips

Holidays

Birthdays

Visiting relatives (including overseas)

Shopping

Parent or sibling illness

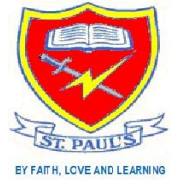
Treating of headlice

Non urgent medical or dental appointments.

Exceptional leave of absence longer than the duration originally authorised

### Term Time Holidays

Permission for absence for a holiday or for travelling to visit relatives will not be given



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**Exceptional or Special Leave**

In an emergency, exceptional or special circumstances, parents or carers must make a request to the Headteacher for short periods of leave. These circumstances may include: the funeral of a close family member or a religious festival.

In making the decision, the Headteacher will consider:

The child’s current attendance percentage

The child’s previous year’s attendance percentage

Previous applications and absences

Just 5 minutes late every day for a year = 16.25 hours of lost learning

Did you know ...

80% attendance over 5 years is the equivalent to one whole year of education lost!

**Every Minute Counts!**

Doors open 8.50am until 9.00am (children are late after 9am)

Registers are taken at 9am

If your child arrives between 9am and 9.30am they are marked with a late mark, if they arrive after 9.30am they are marked as absent for the whole morning session on their attendance record

### APPENDIX 3: Absence Flow Chart

