

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ST. LUKE & ST. PHILIP'S PRIMARY, A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



VISION STATEMENT

'The family of St Luke and St Philip's will ensure excellence is encouraged, minds are opened, diversity is embraced, respect is expected and talents are nurtured under the umbrella of God's love.'

ETHOS

Our school provides grounding in the Christian Faith for all its children with emphasis on collective worship as part of its daily life. Our Christian values of trust, truth, love, peace and thankfulness are built into the ethos and teaching of our school with the support of all Governors and staff for its Christian foundation. We also seek to encourage an understanding and respect for other world faiths.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL VALUES



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 is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

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 committee

The governing committee 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
- The school attendance officer meets with the link governor on a termly basis to review attendance throughout the school.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher 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

3.3 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
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Samantha O'Connell and can be contacted via the school telephone number - 01254 54866.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer 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
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Tracey Etchells and can be contacted via tracey.etchells@cidari.co.uk / School office Tel: 01254 54866.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office on the same day.

3.6 School office staff

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before e.g. 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.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school every day on time

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 once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- 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 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.15am . The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15 pm for all pupils and will be kept open until 1.30pm for all pupils.

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 8.55am or as soon as practically possible by calling 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.
- If the school office is unable to contact the parents/carers this will be passed on to the Pupil Wellbeing Lead to carry out a welfare check.

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 unauthorised absence, using the appropriate code
- All lates are recorded on our late record and followed up on a fortnightly basis. If this is a regular occurrence then parents are invited into school for a meeting with our Attendance lead

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 have to contact the police.
- 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

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education inclusion officer.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

- The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels during termly parent meetings. This information will be discussed in order to inform parents of the importance of attendance in school.

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'.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#).

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as Death of an immediate family member e.g. a parent, sibling or grandparent, members of the armed forces who are returning from active service, emergency services personnel who are unable to take leave at certain times of the year or a child or parent receiving medical treatment abroad.

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 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.

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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- Other possible ‘exceptional circumstances’ where the headteacher may grant term-time holiday.
- Family bereavement
- Exclusion
- Involvement in a public performance

5.2 Legal sanctions

In order to ensure a consistent approach to school attendance enforcement the national framework for penalty notices for school absence specifies the following:

Penalty Notice Threshold

The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period

- 1. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The sessions of unauthorised absence do not have to be consecutive. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

Penalty Notice Amounts

Penalty notices are issued at £160 and should be paid within 28 days. They can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days. Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at a higher rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.

Limits on Issue

Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Attendance board visibly displayed in the school entrance and Reception class
- Weekly certificate and stickers for the best attending class
- 100% attendance = class ice cream party
- Prize at the end of each term and year for the winning class
- Children who have 100% attendance are rewarded with a small prize each term and the opportunity to have 1 raffle ticket per term put into the prize draw at the end of the year
- Children with 100% attendance for the whole year will have accumulated three raffle tickets to put into the prize draw to win a special prize.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school 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.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.

Use data to monitor and evaluate with Senior Leader Team and Key Stage Leaders to see the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 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 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
- Hold termly meetings with the LA Education Inclusion Officer
- Monitor attendance for children approaching 90% attendance.
- Send letters home to parents for children's attendance below 90% and parents are invited to attend a meeting with the Attendance Lead and below 80% a meeting with the Headteacher and Attendance Governor. During the meeting, parents are informed that another unauthorised absence will trigger a 15 day warning.
- Following from this see section 5.2 - Legal Sanctions.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the attendance officer / headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing committee.

9. Links with other policies

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Behaviour policy

Policy reviewed by: Tracey Etchells

Approved by:

Policy approved: October 2025

Next review date: October 2026

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
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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

The legal responsibility for ensuring outstanding attendance lies with the Parent/Carer