

St. Peter's R.C. Primary School

Attendance



Policy	Attendance
Date	September 2024
Date of review	September 2025
Chair of Governors	<i>To be ratified by governors on 3rd December</i>
Headteacher	<i>Clare Scott</i>

Mission Statement

We, the family of St Peter's, united by our faith by God, love, learn and grow together.

School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session. From September 2024, schools are required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).

Overall Aims:

- Maintain an attendance rate in line with national averages.
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.
- Maintain good punctuality.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders settle into school more easily.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Parents:

- Ensure your child attends school regularly.

School Day:

- Nursery AM Session: 8:45-11:45am PM Session: 11:45-3:15pm
- Reception, KS1, KS2 9:00-3:15pm
- Absence should only happen when your child is significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend school, or if there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty/period of difficulty.
- Inform the school if there is a personal reason for absence eg family bereavement.
- Telephone the school office on **020 8270 6524**, or email the school office office@st-peter.bardaglea.org.uk on the first morning of any absence to give us the reason and tell us when the child is likely to return to school.
- Parents to provide the school with an update on their child's absence on a daily basis. School may request medical evidence for absence.
- Arrange all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays. We do not encourage early collection to attend appointments.

- Make sure the school always has your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, child-minders and at least one emergency contact
- Late children must be signed in by an adult on the electronic system providing a reason for lateness and lunch option.

Pupils

- Attend school regularly.
- Be in school when the gates open at 8.45 so learning can begin at 9:00

St Peter's School

- Follow up unexplained absences by texts, phone calls and letters as necessary.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the, parents' evenings, the Home-School Agreement, pupil annual reports and on the school website.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.

School Attendance Champion

- Regularly monitor attendance and punctuality.
- Carry out First Day Calling daily when the school has not been informed of the reason for absence.
- Inform parent/carer if there are concerns regarding a child's attendance and punctuality. This may include meeting in school to discuss and offer support.
- Send formal letters to invite parents in for a formal meeting when attendance is 90% and below.
- Send parents 'Notice to Improve' letters before a penalty notice is issued.
- If the school continues to have concerns, advice will be sought from the local authority for next steps.
- Oversee the accurate registration of pupils.
- Follow up long-term absences or persistent absence.
- Monitor attendance of pupils on the Persistent Absentee list (PA)
- Regularly contact pupils who attend another alternative provision.
- Notify the local authority of children who have missed school for 10 consecutive days or more without the absence being authorised.

Teaching/Admin staff will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupils' attendance and lateness is recorded daily.
- Any concerns regarding lateness and absences should be reported to Rebecca Anthony who will act accordingly.

Authorised Absence

Some absences may be authorised at the discretion of the school. eg Agreed one day absence for Religious Observance, on-going medical conditions when medical evidence is provided.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent that the school will not authorise. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Eg holidays, pupils that are Persistent Absentees.

If a child has unauthorised absences without good reason legal action can be taken in regard to these, this can be either a Penalty Notice fine and / or Prosecution through the courts.

Punctuality

- It is important for children to be on time for school so they do not miss learning time.
- Arrival (particularly if the lateness is frequent/persistent) after the close of registration at 9.30 will be marked as unauthorised absence code ‘U’ in line with attendance codes. This is effectively half a day’s absence.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information is reviewed at attendance meetings.
- Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day.
- When children are collected late, parents are liable to be fined by the school.

If a child is not collected from school and we are unable to contact parents, the school may contact children services.

Request for leave of absence, inclusive of holidays in term time

Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days that will be authorised. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher’s discretion.

If leave of absence is not authorised the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice to each parent of £80 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale, the penalty will increase to £160. If the higher penalty notice is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will consider legal proceedings.

An ‘Holiday Request’ form must be submitted to Headteacher at least 10 days before the period of absence. The form is available from the school office. Flights & Tickets etc. should not be booked before permission is granted by the Headteacher.

Irregular Attendance

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered. With effect from September 2024, penalty notices for irregular school attendance will be issued. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

Penalty Notice 1:

£80 if paid within 21 days of issue, or £160 if paid between day 22 and day 28

Penalty notice 2:

£160 if paid within 28 days of issue

3rd Penalty Notice request within 3 year

Parent liable for court proceedings

The Department of Education issue guidance relating to absences during term time. For further information please refer to:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63049617e90e0729e63d3953/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School) parents are required to:

- Give the school comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. If a parent chooses to home school their child, the school must have written confirmation of their intention to do so.
- When pupils leave and we do not have information, about where they have gone, then the child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. The school will endeavour to locate the child but failure to do so means the child will be reported to the attendance Officer and the LA.
- The Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Child

Appendix A

Present

Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate.

Absent

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school.

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made.

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for

the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive day of any suspension or exclusion. Where alternative provision is made schools should record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. This applies whether or not the child is registered at a school and whatever type of school they attend. The education must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. Local authorities should have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs.

Code M: Medical or dental appointment

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

Code R: Religious observance.

Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents).

As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt,

schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to minimise the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:

- Setting term dates around days for religious observance;
- Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;
- Schools taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and
- Providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Code T: Traveller absence.

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should not be used for general absences by those groups. It must only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code should not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups.

Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Where a pupil has no fixed abode because their parent(s) is engaged in a business or trade that requires them to travel, there is an expectation that the pupil attends at least 200 sessions per year. The pupil must attend school as regularly as the business permits and therefore, if the business or trade permits the pupil to attend for more than 200 sessions per year, they should do so.

To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes, it is expected that the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is not one of the types of absence listed as authorised or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school.

Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided.

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner.

Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code.

Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 working days after the session. Code N should not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, schools should amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Code O: Absent without authorisation.

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed. Roding Registers close at 9.30am.

Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.

Attending an approved educational activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, school are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity.

The activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and for pupils of compulsory school age the school must record the nature of the activity.

Attending another school at which the pupil is re

Code D: Dual registered at another school.

The law allows for a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the school in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absence are promptly followed up.

Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school

Code B: Off-site educational Activity.

Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

For pupils of compulsory school age, schools must also record the nature of the activity, examples are:

- attending taster days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school.

The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school. If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. However, the final decision on approving the activity rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.

The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code V: Educational visit or trip.

Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

The educational visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by a person authorised by the school.

Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the organiser of the visit or trip notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because:

- the school site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances in which a pupil is unable to attend school.

Administrative codes

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school.

Where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time.

For example, where parents have chosen for their 4 year-old child to attend part time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age.

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register.

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Schools must enter a pupil's name on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place offered, the local authority can inform schools on behalf of the parents and notify the school when the parent has agreed that the pupil will attend school. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications for school places.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must establish the reason and record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station.