



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Our Mission Statement

At St Anne's RC Primary School, we work together, learn together, play and care together in God's love to enable each unique person to achieve their full potential. We aim to meet the needs of every child through a challenging, enriched curriculum, where everyone feels valued and respected. Providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment through an inclusive partnership between children, parents, our school, our church and the wider community.

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1. Aims

At St Anne's, we are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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 monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. The Deputy Headteacher reports back to Governors on Attendance figures and monitoring accordingly

3.2 The headteacher /deputy headteacher

The headteacher/deputy 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
- Supporting the attendance administrator Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance administrator

The school attendance administrator:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Deputy headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers, local authority attendance team to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges letters and panel meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises and supports the deputy headteacher with issuing fixed-penalty notices- including gathering of paperwork to support the same

3.4 The class teachers

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

3.5 School administration staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school SIMs system/CPOMs if appropriate.

3.6 Parents and carers

Our Parents and carers have a very important part to play in supporting their children's education. In order to secure their child's regular and punctual attendance parents and carers are expected to:

- Talk to their child about school and take a positive interest in their child's progress
- Instill the value regular and punctual attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact school when their child is absent providing a reason and expected date of return
- Avoid unnecessary absences such as family holidays and wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Provide supporting medical evidence for absences whenever requested to do so by the school
- Engage with intervention strategies if their child's attendance and/or punctuality is highlighted as a cause for concern

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

At St Anne's, we keep an attendance register on SIMs, and place all pupils onto this register. Our attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the afternoon 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 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 8.45 am on each school day- the school building is accessible for children from 8.35am when school staff are in their classrooms.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45 am and will be kept open until 8.50am. The register for the second session will be taken as the children return to class after their lunchtime break (Key Stage dependent).

Absence

When a registered pupil is recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the Attendance team and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence from 8am and no later than 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness- **code I** 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-via ParentApp.

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- **code M** 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

The register is taken twice a day. Once at the beginning of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session. Each school day therefore counts as two attendances.

Parents are requested to make sure their child is on site and ready to come in to school at least 5 minutes before the morning register is taken.

Pupils arriving after the stated time must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school. They will be marked as present but arriving late.

- Any lateness between 8.51am and 9.14am will be marked with an **L code**
- Any lateness thereafter will be marked with a **U code** (unauthorised)

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason why
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

Where attendance is not a concern, pupil attendance is reported to parents annually in the written end-of-year report it may also form part of parent consultation meetings

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher/deputy will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

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

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. School will only authorise 2 Religious days a year and this must be requested in writing .
- 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

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

School procedures for targeting persistent absences include-

First day calling and messaging procedures

Standardised and escalating series of school letters

Late gate initiative

Text messaging, phone calls and/or home visits

Mentoring of identified pupils

Friendship /nurture/therapeutic groups

Referral to school health team

Referral to other agencies and /or the Local Authority for targeted support (Early Help Assessment)

Issuing of Penalty Notices

Documenting interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated and referring to the Local Authority for legal action

5.3 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.

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

The decision on whether or not 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

School strategies for rewarding and improving attendance include-

Regularly updating the whole school community about attendance matters and procedures through the weekly newsletters
Celebrating the achievement of the pupils through congratulation letters, certificates and rewards

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance administrator and deputy headteacher, monitors pupil absence on a monthly basis (sooner if necessary) .

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days (illness) the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days (unauthorised with no contact from parent/carer) the school undertake a welfare home visit as part of the CME protocol.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer/Manchester LA support.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
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.

At St Anne's, we monitor weekly Attendance data using SIMs and also FFT Aspire -

Weekly Attendance Monitoring
Attendance for the week
Lates for the week
Unauthorised absence O and U codes
Any class bubbles closed
X codes

X codes no of pupils
Y Codes for pupils
Pupils PA
Pupils PA (Weekly)
Actions i.e. home visit, Attendance Review panel meeting, Advisory letter

This allows us to –

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify pupil groups whose absence may be a cause for concern i.e. Pupil Premium, SEND
- Monitor and evaluate those children/families in need of further intervention and support
- Make comparisons to the National picture

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and 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
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