

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



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UNCRC (United Nation Convention of the Rights of a Child) Articles included in this policy;	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24, 28, 34, 36 and 39

Our Mission Statement

Together we grow in faith, knowledge and love.

Together we show respect, kindness and confidence.

Together our community shines.

Our Mission Statement highlights the power of unity and shared values in fostering growth and positive relationships within a community. At St Anne's we work together with respect, kindness and confidence to truly make a difference. We aim to meet the needs of every child through a challenging, enriched curriculum. Providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment. We know when we come together our community thrives and shines

1. Introduction & Aims

At St Anne's RC Primary School, we believe that excellent attendance is essential for every child to achieve their potential. Attending school regularly builds resilience, strengthens relationships, and prepares pupils for lifelong learning.

This policy is informed by: - Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (2024) - Manchester City Council's School Attendance Guidance (2025) - The Education Act 1996 and associated regulations

National context: Absence rates, while reducing, remain higher than pre-pandemic. In 2024–25, 13.5% of primary pupils were persistently absent, and 2.3% of all pupils nationally were severely absent (missing over half their lessons). Severe absence is at a record high, making early intervention more important than ever.

Our aim: To secure excellent attendance for all pupils by promoting positive attendance habits, working in partnership with families, and applying consistent systems of monitoring and support.

2.. Legal Framework

This policy complies with: - Education Act 1996 - Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and amendments - DfE guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (2024) - Manchester City Council Attendance Policy (2025)

3. Definitions

- **Authorised absence:** Where school accepts a reason (e.g. illness, religious observance).
- **Unauthorised absence:** Where no valid reason is given, or absence is avoidable.
- **Persistent absence (PA):** Missing more than **10%** of sessions (authorised or unauthorised).
- **Severe absence:** Missing more than **50%** of sessions.

These thresholds follow Manchester City Council definitions and trigger school and local authority intervention.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Governors: - Monitor attendance data termly. - Hold school leaders accountable for strategies to improve attendance.

Headteacher: - Lead whole-school culture that prioritises attendance. - Ensure statutory registers are maintained accurately.

Attendance Officer: - Operate First Day Calling procedures. - Track, monitor, and report attendance patterns. - Escalate concerns through staged interventions.

Class Teachers: - Record attendance twice daily - promote good attendance through classroom culture.

Parents/Carers: - Ensure children attend school on time every day - provide school with reasons for absence by 9am.

Pupils: - Attend school daily and on time - take responsibility for arriving prepared to learn.

Attendance / Senior Mental Health Lead: - Support pupils with Emotional Barriers to School Attendance (EBSA) in line with Manchester's EBSA framework - work with families and external agencies for early intervention, particularly where mental health or neurodivergence affects attendance.

5. Procedures for Recording Absence

- Registers taken twice daily (am/pm).
- All absences coded according to DfE regulations (Appendix A).
- Parents must contact school by 9am to explain absence.
- If no contact is made, First Day Calling is initiated.
- Home visits may be conducted where concerns arise.

Avoidable absence: In line with Manchester City Council, avoidable absences (term-time holidays, minor ailments) will not be authorised. Parents will be directed to NHS and CMO guidance on when children should attend school during mild illness.

6. Monitoring & Escalation

Stage 1: Early contact and support - Letters sent at 90%, 85% and 80% thresholds. - Meetings arranged with parents to discuss barriers.

Stage 2: Targeted intervention - Individual attendance plans. - Referrals to external support, including Early Help. - EBSA pathway activated if relevant.

Stage 3: Enforcement - Escalation through Manchester City Council's graduated approach: Parenting Contracts, penalty notices, legal action if required. - Regular case review with MCC's School Attendance Team.

7. Partnership & Local Collaboration

- St Anne's engages with Manchester's Attendance Network and annual Attendance Conference.
- Staff access training and updates through One Education and MCC.
- The school will engage with national initiatives, including DfE's Attendance and Behaviour Hubs, to share and adopt best practice.

8. Data Monitoring & Reporting

- Attendance data analysed weekly by Attendance Officer.
- Termly reports to governors benchmarked against MCC and national averages.
- Attendance outcomes shared with parents through newsletters and reports.
- From November 2025, Ofsted report cards will include attendance as a key performance measure, reinforcing accountability.

9. Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding priority. Patterns of absence will be scrutinised for signs of neglect, exploitation, or hidden harm. Children Missing Education (CME) procedures will be followed in line with Manchester City Council's CME policy.

10. Special Considerations

- **Traveller families:** Absences for travelling may be authorised in line with DfE guidance, with expected attendance during settled periods.
- **Religious observance:** Absence authorised for the day of a recognised festival.
- **Exceptional circumstances:** Requests must be made in writing and authorised at the Headteacher's discretion.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by governors to ensure alignment with statutory guidance and Manchester City Council requirements.

Appendix A – Attendance Codes

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes (DfE 2024/25)

The following national attendance and absence codes are taken from the DfE guidance *Working together to improve school attendance* (effective 19 August 2024).

Present

- / = Present (AM)
- \ = Present (PM)
- L = Late arrival before register closed

Authorised absence

- C = Leave of absence authorised by the school
- E = Excluded (no alternative provision made)
- H = Holiday authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances
- I = Illness (not medical/dental appointments)
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Study leave (secondary use)
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Unauthorised absence

- G = Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period
- N = Reason for absence not yet provided (must be resolved ASAP)
- O = Absent without authorisation
- U = Late arrival after register closed

Approved educational activity (not counted as absence)

- B = Off-site educational activity
- D = Dual registered (at another school)
- J = Interview
- P = Sporting activity (supervised by school)
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience

Administrative codes (not counted in attendance data)

- X = Non-compulsory school age absence / or not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus or other exceptional public health reason (where DfE permits use)
- Y = Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. transport strike, school site closure, local/national emergency)
- Z = Pupil not yet on roll
- # = Planned whole-school closure (e.g. holiday, INSET day)

Appendix B – Local & National Attendance Context 2025

- MCC definitions: Persistent absence >10%, Severe absence >50%.
- Primary school absence 2024–25: 5.2% overall (3.7% authorised, 1.5% unauthorised).
- Persistent absence nationally: 13.5% of primary pupils.
- Severe absence nationally: 2.3% of all pupils (~170,000 children).
- Local priorities: Avoidable absence, EBSA framework, CME procedures.
- National initiatives: DfE Attendance & Behaviour Hubs, Ofsted report cards (from Nov 2025).