Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Policy Created by;	G. Regan
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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

Rooted in our Catholic faith and the values of the Salford Diocese, we aim to meet the needs of every child through a challenging, enriched curriculum, providing a safe, secure, and stimulating learning environment. Regular school attendance forms the vital baseline for this shared journey.

1.0 Introduction & Policy Aims

1.1 Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. At St Anne's R.C. Primary School, we believe that regular school attendance enables children to maximize educational opportunities and become confident, resilient and competent adults.

1.2 We value all pupils. We build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have support in place to attend school and to identify the root causes of absence.

1.3 Attendance is a matter for our whole school community. This policy runs through all aspects of school improvement and is supported by our statutory policies - it complies with the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

1.4 **Policy Objectives:**

- Setting high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Promoting good attendance and its deep benefits to academic and social development.
- Reducing absence, with targeted focus on persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are legally entitled.
- Acting early to identify and address emerging patterns of absence.
- Linking directly with Manchester City Council's Model Attendance Policy, the Manchester Code of Conduct, and the Manchester Inclusion Strategy.

2.0 Attendance Data & Benchmarking (Last Academic Year vs. National)

2.1 In line with statutory DfE expectations and Ofsted report card evaluations, St Anne's rigorously tracks attendance data, benchmarking our outcomes against national primary averages to drive targeted support:

Metric	**St Anne's R.C. Primary (2025/26)**	**National Primary Average (2025/26)**	**Performance & Action Plan**
Overall Attendance	**94.2%**	**94.0%**	**Above National Average.** Maintained robust baseline through early identification.
Persistent Absence (PA) *(Missing 10%+)*	**12.8%**	**13.5%**	**Outperforming National.** Targeted EBSA plans and Attendance Contracts reduced PA.
Severe Absence (SA) *(Missing 50%+)*	**1.8%**	**1.3%**	**Outperforming National.** Fast-track multi-agency and statutory escalation pathways applied.

2.2 Leaders and Governors review this data half-termly to identify emerging trends, monitor key cohorts (including SEND, disadvantaged pupils, and young carers), and evaluate the impact of pastoral interventions.

2.3 **National Attendance Improvement Drive & ABIEs:** In line with the DfE framework, St Anne's works towards individualized, data-informed Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectations (ABIEs) set for mainstream state schools. The school monitors baseline targets regularly to track reduction in persistent absence and ensure continuous alignment with local and national expectations.

3.0 Legal Framework & Alignment

3.1 This policy directly implements the DfE statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (updated July 2026) and links directly to the Manchester Model Attendance Policy (2026–2027).

3.2 It is based on the following statutory legislation:

- 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 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 / 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- DfE Guidance: *Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance*
- Manchester City Council's *Children Missing Education (CME) Protocol* and *EBSA Pathway*

4.0 Safeguarding & Attendance

4.1 Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children. Difficulties with attendance and lateness are frequently early indicators that a child or family requires support.

4.2 Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing education are treated as primary safeguarding matters. Where absence indicates potential neglect, exploitation, or hidden harm, the school will initiate early help or safeguarding procedures in line with our *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

4.3 **Emergency Contacts:** Parents/carers must provide the school with at least three up-to-date emergency contact numbers. Parents are required to verify these details annually and/or if we are struggling to contact them during the school day.

5.0 School Gate Timings, Punctuality & Registration Schedule

5.1 To ensure pupil safety, operational efficiency, and full statutory compliance, the school gates and daily registration schedule operate strictly as follows:

Time	Gate / Registration Action	Official Code / Status
08:35 am – 08:50 am	**Morning School Gates Open**	Gates open to allow pupils to arrive safely on site.
08:45 am	**Morning Registration Opens**	Official registration taken in class. Present (/).
08:50 am	**Morning School Gates Close**	Gates close for site security. Arriving after 08:50 AM requires entry via the main office.
08:50 AM – 09:15 am	**Late Arrival Window**	Marked as **Late before register closed** (L).
09:15 am	**Final Statutory Registration Closure**	Arriving after 09:15 AM is recorded as **Late after register closed** (U).
01:00 pm	**Afternoon Registration Opens**	Afternoon registration taken in class. Present (\).
03:05 pm – 03:25 pm	**Afternoon School Gates Open**	Gates open for parent pickup and staggered dismissal.

Statutory Compliance & Ofsted Alignment Notes:

- **32.5 Hours Minimum Week Requirement:** The school day structure delivers over 32.5 hours per week, fulfilling DfE national expectations for mainstream state schools.
- **Registration Closure Window (30 Minutes):** Morning registers open at 08:45 AM and close legally at 09:15 AM (30 minutes), ensuring national consistency across the register.
- **Code 'U' Penalty Notice Impact:** Arriving after 09:15 AM results in Code U, which is an unauthorised absence for the entire morning session. Accumulating 10 unauthorised sessions (e.g., 10 U marks or 5 full days) within a rolling 10-week period meets the statutory national threshold for Manchester City Council penalty notices.

6.0 Authorised vs. Unauthorised Absence Protocols

6.1 Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher and Deputy- not by parents.

6.2 **Reporting Absence & Same-Day Afternoon Attendance Encouragement:**

- Parents must notify the school by **09:00 am** on the first day of absence and every subsequent day.
- **Encouraging Afternoon Attendance:** If a child is unwell or has a medical appointment during the morning session, the school will actively encourage parents to bring the child to school for the afternoon session (01:00 PM) as soon as they are fit or when

their appointment concludes. Attending the afternoon session allows the pupil to access learning, maintain routine, and receive an afternoon present mark (\).

6.3 **3-Day Continuous Absence Protocol & Professional Judgement:**

- If a pupil reaches 3 continuous days of absence, a designated member of the attendance or safeguarding team will apply professional judgement to determine whether a supportive home visit or alternative welfare intervention is required.
- Professional judgement considers the child's vulnerability level, historical attendance patterns, previous engagement from parents, and whether valid medical explanation has been provided. For pupils with high pastoral needs or open safeguarding plans, home visits may still occur on Day 1 or Day 2.

6.4 **Medical Appointments & Illness:**

- Coughs, colds, and minor ailments do not justify absence in line with NHS guidelines.
- Medical evidence (appointment cards, prescription labels) is required if attendance drops below 95% or for frequent medical claims.

6.5 **Addressing Hidden Absence Drivers & Term-Time Leave:**

- **Addressing Hidden Drivers:** The school actively works with families to combat routine single-day absences for non-medical reasons. Taking days off for birthdays, family treats, or routine single-day absences is unauthorised.
- **Term-Time Holidays:** Term-time holidays are classified as unauthorised (Code G). Exceptional leave requests must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher prior to travel. Unauthorised leave exceeding statutory thresholds triggers immediate referral to Manchester City Council for penalty notices or legal prosecution.

7.0 Policy Framework: Part-Time Timetables

In accordance with the Manchester Local Authority Part-time Timetable Guidance (July 2026) and DfE statutory expectations, St Anne's R.C. Primary School enforces strict restrictions on reduced hours.

7.1 **Principle of Full-Time Education:**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and special educational needs (minimum 32.5 hours per week). A part-time timetable must **never** be used as a behavioural sanction, an informal exclusion, or a long-term strategy.

7.2 **Exceptional Circumstances & Approval:**

A reduced timetable is only permitted in exceptional, temporary circumstances (e.g. part of a short-term medical re-integration plan or EBSA support plan).

It requires:

- Written agreement and consent from parents/carers.
- A clearly defined, time-limited plan with specific targets and a clear end date for return to full-time education.
- Regular formal review meetings involving the pupil, family, and relevant external agencies.
- Completion and submission of the mandatory Manchester City Council Online Part-time Timetable Notification Form.

7.3 **Safeguarding & Daily Contact:**

The school retains full safeguarding responsibility for any pupil on roll placed on a part-time timetable during off-site hours.

- A thorough risk assessment must be completed before implementation.
- The school will maintain daily contact with the pupil/family during non-attendance sessions to verify safety and well-being.
- Arrangements must not discriminate against access to Free School Meals (FSM) or pupils with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

7.4 **Vulnerable Pupil Groups:**

- **Pupils with EHCPs:** Must only be placed on a part-time timetable in very limited circumstances following an interim/annual EHCP review in consultation with the Manchester City Council EHCP Team.
- **Children in Care (CiC):** Requires prior consultation and written consent from the Designated Teacher, Social Worker, and the Manchester Virtual School, recorded within the Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- **CP / CIN Plans:** Must have Social Worker oversight and a multi-agency risk assessment embedded into the family plan.

7.5 **Attendance Registration Coding for Part-Time Timetables:**

- Sessions where a compulsory school-aged pupil is absent due to an agreed, formal part-time timetable are registered using Code C2 (Leave of absence for a compulsory school-aged pupil subject to a part-time timetable).
- Pupils must be present at registration time to receive a present mark (/ or \).
- Non-compulsory school-aged pupils missing sessions under a reduced timetable receive Code X.

8.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- **Governing Board & Link Governor:** Holds school leaders accountable for attendance trends, reviews data termly, verifies statutory compliance, and ensures appropriate staff training. The appointed Link (Safeguarding) Governor for Attendance conducts termly deep-dives into attendance registers, code application (including Code U and C2 usage), persistent absence subgroups (SEND/FSM), and the impact of early help interventions. Attendance data is shared weekly with the Governing Body and an Attendance report is discussed at appropriate Governing Body meetings and thrice yearly at full Governors.
- **Headteacher:** Oversees policy implementation, approves statutory action requests under Manchester's Statutory Action Escalation Pathway, and ensures CME protocols are executed.
- **Attendance & Senior Mental Health Lead** Drives whole-school attendance strategy, oversees EBSA pathways, connects health and well-being interventions, and liaises with external teams. Where non-attendance is linked to anxiety, school-based distress, or neurodivergence, the Lead deploys the *Manchester Emotional Barriers to School Attendance (EBSA)* pathway.
- **Attendance Lead & Office Staff:** Executes daily First-Day Calling, conducts weekly data benchmarking, updates Arbor records, and monitors U code patterns.
- **Class Teachers:** Accurately record morning (08:45 AM) and afternoon (01:00 PM) registers and promote positive attendance habits.
- **Parents/Carers:** Ensure punctual daily attendance, report absences by 09:00 AM, provide 2 emergency contacts, and engage with school support plans.

9.0 Monitoring & Graduated Response Pathway

St Anne's applies a 3-Stage Graduated Response to manage attendance effectively:

STAGE 1: Universal (95% - 91%) ⟶ STAGE 2: PA Focus (90% - 50%) ⟶ STAGE 3: SA & Legal (Sub-50%)

Stage 1: Universal Culture & Early Intervention (95% – 91%)

- Continuous data tracking. Trajectory warning letters dispatched if attendance dips toward 90%.
- **Friday Attendance Focus:** Data analysis shows that Fridays present a higher risk for sporadic absence. St Anne's operates a targeted 'Friday Focus' drive, utilizing Friday enrichment activities, celebratory assemblies, and engagement incentives to ensure pupils maintain strong end-of-week attendance habits.
- **3-Day Absence Protocol:** Applied using professional judgement to assess whether supportive home visits or interventions are necessary.

Stage 2: Targeted Support & Persistent Absence (90% – 50%)

- **Persistent Absence (PA):** Defined as missing 10% or more of school.
- Attendance panel meetings scheduled; formal Attendance Contracts, Early Help Assessments, or EBSA support plans initiated.

Stage 3: Severe Absence & Legal Enforcement (Below 50% / Persistent Unauthorised Sessions)

- **Severe Absence (SA):** Defined as missing 50% or more of school.
- **Intensive multi-agency escalation:** Where support is refused and unauthorised absence persists, the case escalates via the Manchester City Council Statutory Action Escalation Pathway.

10.0 Legal Sanctions & Fixed Penalty Notices

Sanctions are requested through Manchester City Council in accordance with the National Framework:

- **Statutory Threshold:** 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week window.
- **Notice to Improve:** A formal warning letter granting up to 6 weeks for attendance to improve before a penalty notice is requested.
- **First Penalty Notice:** £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days; rising to £160 if paid within 28 days.
- **Second Penalty Notice (within 3 years):** Flat rate of £160 per parent, per child.
- **Third Offence (within 3 years):** No further penalty notices can be issued. The Local Authority will proceed directly to prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (fines up to £2,500 or potential custodial sentence).

Appendix A: DfE Attendance & Registration Codes Summary

Code	Type	Meaning / Scenario
/ / \	Present	Present at Morning / Afternoon registration.
L	Present	Arrived late before register closed (08:50 AM – 09:15 AM).
U	Unauthorised	Arrived late after register closed (After 09:15 AM). Counts as full session absence.
C2	Authorised	Compulsory school-aged pupil absent due to an agreed part-time timetable.
I	Authorised	Illness (medical evidence requested if <95%).
M	Authorised	Medical or dental appointment.
G	Unauthorised	Term-time holiday not authorised by school.
O	Unauthorised	Absence without valid explanation or unverified reason.
E	Authorised	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision.
B / V	Approved Ed Activity	Off-site educational visit, sporting activity, or alternative provision.
X	Non-compulsory	Non-compulsory school-aged pupil not required in school / part-time timetable.

St Anne's R.C. Primary School Every Day Counts! Parent Guide to Attendance & Punctuality

At St Anne's, we want every child to grow in faith, knowledge and love. Coming to school on time every day helps your child make friends, build confidence, and succeed in their learning. Daily School Timings

- **08:35 am** – Morning gates open.

- **08:45 am** – Class registration starts.
- **08:50 am** – Gates close. If you arrive after 08:50 AM, please bring your child through the main office.
- **09:15 am** – **Registers Close**-arriving after 09:15 AM is marked as an **unauthorised absence** (U code) for the morning.
- **1:00 pm** – Afternoon registration.
- **3:05 pm – 3:25 pm** – Afternoon gates open for pickup.

Did You Know? Arriving late after 09:15 am counts as a missed half-day of school and can lead to a Council penalty fine if it happens regularly!

What to Do If Your Child Is Absent

1. **Call Us Early:** Phone the school office before **09:00 am** every day your child is off.
2. **Emergency Contacts:** Please ensure we have at least **3 up-to-date phone numbers** so we can reach you.
3. **Slightly Unwell or Appointments?** If your child feels better later in the morning or returns from a medical appointment, **please bring them in for the afternoon session (1:00 pm)**. Half a day of learning is always better than missing a whole day!
4. **3 Days of Absence:** If your child is off for 3 continuous days, our Safeguarding Team will check in with you and may carry out a friendly home visit to offer help.

Attendance Targets: Where Does Your Child Sit?

100% - 95% 🟢 GREEN ⟶ Excellent! Giving your child the best chance to succeed.
94% - 91% 🟡 AMBER ⟶ Room for improvement. We will contact you to offer support.
90% or less 🔴 RED ⟶ Persistent Absence. Requires a formal support plan.

Holidays & Avoidable Days Off

- **Term-Time Holidays:** Cannot be authorised by the Headteacher. Unauthorised holidays will be referred to Manchester City Council and will result in a penalty fine.
- **Birthdays & Days Out:** Birthdays, treats or routine single days off are not valid reasons to miss school.
- **Minor Ailments:** Mild coughs, colds and headaches can usually be managed in school.

Manchester City Council Fines (National Framework)

- **Threshold:** 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 days) within a 10-week window will trigger legal action.
- **First Fine: £80 per parent, per child** if paid within 21 days (rising to £160 if paid within 28 days).
- **Second Fine (within 3 years):** Flat rate of **£160 per parent, per child**.

We Are Here to Help!

If your child is struggling with anxiety, school routine, or health concerns, please reach out to us early. We can set up a supportive re-entry plan or mental health support.

- **Attendance Lead:** Mrs Regan
- **School Office Phone:** 0161 740 5995
- **Email:** admin@st-annes-jun.manchester.sch.uk