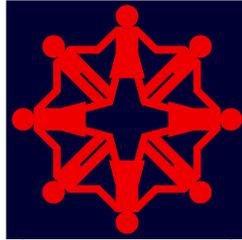


**All Saints' C of E Primary School**



# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**Reviewed: February 2017  
Next review: February 2018**

## **1. Introduction**

We believe that attendance and punctuality at All Saints is vital to the well-being and future prospects of all our pupils. Attendance and punctuality is intrinsically linked to our school strategy for raising achievement. This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development of a learning environment where high attendance and excellent punctuality is the “norm”.

Pupils’ life opportunities benefit from good routines of punctuality and attendance that are established in primary school and then continue into secondary education and employment. Research has shown that when younger children develop poor habits of attendance and punctuality in their primary years, these are often transferred into secondary education. This can result in negative attitudes towards school, a lack of motivation and may increase the potential of a young person being involved in youth crime and it being harder for them to gain employment.

At All Saints we are committed to ensuring our provision offers every child the best life chances possible and therefore we work hard with them and their families to achieve this.

## **2. Aims**

- To establish good routines for attendance and punctuality that every child can continue into secondary school and adult life;
- To achieve an overall attendance percentage which is in line with national data and to reduce unauthorised absence to well below national or local trends
- To establish a clear system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality and ensure that this is clearly communicated to all staff, pupils and parents who are all working to agreed routines and standards;
- To develop a learning environment for the school where pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and to be punctual because they feel valued members of the school community, safe and secure;
- To put in place an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality;
- To offer pupils and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

## **3. Objectives**

### **3.1 For Pupils**

- To ensure that they maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for their attendance at school
- To support their fellow pupils and thereby their class in winning awards that relate to attendance and punctuality
- To follow the school procedures for dealing with attendance and punctuality eg, bringing in signed letters from parents after a period of absence or late arrival for the school day.

### **3.2 For Parents and Carers**

- To be fully supportive of the school with regard to attendance and punctuality as part of signing up to a Home-School Agreement
- To support the school and their child(ren) by not requesting authorised absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible all other authorised absence, for example, dental appointments during the school day
- To follow procedures for dealing with attendance through making contact with the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am and following this up with a signed letter to the school when their child returns.

### **3.3 For Teachers**

- To act as role models by being punctual when collecting their class at the beginning of the day and after breaks
- To take the register at the beginning of the day and pm registration on time
- To take responsibility for dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality e.g. by discussing concerns with parents
- To take responsibility for raising the profile of excellent attendance and punctuality through participating in school reward systems e.g. highest class attendance of the week and using the schools' reward systems
- To assist in reintegrating any of their pupils after a period of prolonged absence.

### **3.4 For Parent Liaison and Attendance Officer (PLAO)**

- To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the schools' computerised registration systems for attendance and punctuality e.g. by processing registers, preparing and distributing attendance data
- To liaise with teachers and establish reasons for absence including telephone calls to parents/carers on the first day of absence, letters and home visits
- To assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality e.g. by sending letters home and liaising with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and external organisations.

### **3.5 For the School Leadership Team**

- Through the Head Teacher to co-ordinate and monitor the policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality throughout the schools
- To raise the profile and importance of attendance and punctuality e.g. through the assembly programme and the reward systems that are put in place
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to attendance and punctuality data
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to pupils, through the curriculum, personalised learning, behaviour policy etc create the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality
- To ensure that the schools' expectations in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality are communicated clearly to all.

### **3.6 For the Governing Body**

- To annually review and agree the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- To annually agree attendance targets
- To receive regular reports from the Headteacher and to record questions and answers to these in minutes whilst maintaining confidentiality of pupils/ parents/ carers/ staff
- To take a lead role in supporting the schools in the implementation of its approach to attendance and punctuality and especially in its response to parents who request absence which is unauthorised

- To praise classes and pupils through the presentation of attendance rewards. A 'Governors Award' of a medal will be presented to those pupils who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the year and their names displayed in the school and on the school website
- To act as role models by being punctual at events where poor punctuality undermines the aims of this policy
- For the Church and Community Committee to monitor the impact of the policy and work with the school and outside agencies in being proactive in addressing matters of concern
- For the Finance and Personnel Committee to receive reports from the Headteacher regarding attendance and punctuality of staff. Confidentiality of staff will be respected.

#### **4. Absence**

Under the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attend the School on a regular and full-time basis. Every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. The school must record the reason for any half day absence. Unauthorised absence and extended periods of unauthorised absence may lead to legal action being taken against parents/carers.

We are privileged to be a culturally diverse school and understand the importance for families to observe religious events, we therefore provide **one day authorised absence** per 'Religious Observance' event.

##### **4.1 Absence due to illness**

Under normal circumstances, the only reason a pupil should miss any lessons is if they are too ill to attend. This is an example of an authorised absence, i.e., a pupil has missed a morning or afternoon session for a valid reason.

If a child is absent because they are ill parents are asked to contact the school by telephone before 9.30am (please follow the prompts and leave a message on the absence line), this should be followed up by a letter on their child's return to school. If the illness is for more than five days the school requires medical evidence of the illness in the form of a doctor's appointment card or copy of a prescription.

In cases where the level of absence reaches:

- three separate occurrences of illness
- Overall attendance is at 92% or below

It becomes of particular concern. At this point a 'Medical Evidence Letter' will be sent, from the date on the letter any further or future illness and or medical absence will require medical evidence to be provided to the school. This is to show that whilst absent your child is being supported by a Doctor.

If the absence is not due to illness or medical reasons parents/carers will be required to provide a letter or email with supporting evidence, unfortunately without this being supplied the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

## **4.2 Unauthorised absence**

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This includes keeping pupils away from lessons unnecessarily and absences which the school considers to have not been properly explained.

The Education Act (Pupil Regulations) 2006 and the Dfe Circular 10/99 states that a **leave of absence** can only be authorised at the discretion of the Head Teacher in exceptional circumstances. Applications must be in writing and with as much notice as possible for the attention of the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher considers any such requests from parents. Each request will be considered individually taking into account:

- The age(s) of the pupil(s)
- The time of year in regards to any end of Key Stage assessments being made
- Overall attendance percentage(s) in the current academic year
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made.
- The pupil(s) attainment and progress.

If the school does not agree to the request then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If the leave of absence involves any travel arrangement, these must not be booked until permission is granted. The leave of absence application will be provided on request by the school office who will then pass the request to the Head Teacher along with the recent registration certificate and any other relevant information.

A letter of approval (or a letter stating the request is not approved) will then be sent to the parent/guardian clearly stipulating that approval is only given in exceptional circumstances and that **no** further requests will be considered. Parents/Guardians are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed, a fixed penalty notice may be issued. Section 6.3 outlines the School policy when a leave of absence is taken without being approved.

All data relating to attendance will be kept for a minimum period of three years from the last date of entry.

## **5. Procedures for Registration**

### **5.1 Class registration**

Being punctual means being present in the relevant playground for the set times of the start of school. Good practice should also involve pupils being a few minutes in the playground before the set time so that they can socialise with their friends and not feel rushed at the beginning of the school day.

Morning registration sets the tone for the rest of the school day. Times for the start of the school day are:

**Morning Nursery:** 8.45am. Parents bring pupils into the nursery. A member of staff takes the register.

**Reception:** The playground gate opens at 8.40am, children will line up outside of their own side entrance gate and be taken into their own playground accompanied by their parent/carer. From their playground they will go into class at 8.45am with their teacher for early morning work. On a Wednesday parents/carers will be able to join in with their children for early morning work from 8.45am – 8.55am, parents/carers taking part will need to sign in at the classroom. The class register will be taken at 9am each day.

**Year 1 and 2:** The playground gate opens at 8.40am and children will wait for their teachers in line until 8.45am. Children will then enter the classroom with the teacher for early morning work. On a Wednesday parents/carers will be able to join in with their children for early morning work from 8.45am – 8.55am, parents/carers taking part will need to sign in at the classroom. The class register will be taken at 9am each day.

**Years 3 to 6:** The gates for the junior playground will open at 8.45am and children will walk straight to their classes for early work. The register will be taken at 9am each day. It is the teacher's responsibility to formally take the register.

Pupils who are late need to be accompanied by their parent into the reception area, parents/carers or the PLAO will log the child/children's names into our online system. Any lateness will be challenged. Where there is a legitimate reason e.g. unavoidable transport problems, then no further action is required. However, where there is no valid reason e.g. oversleeping, the PLAO will check for patterns of lateness and follow the sanctions described in the Attendance Policy regarding persistent lateness. Lates are monitored and the amount of minutes late are tracked, this allows us to accurately account for the amount of learning time a child has missed.

Any absence after registers have closed is recorded as a "U" i.e., late after the registers closed and thus will be treated as an unauthorised absence.

## **6. Punctuality**

Procedures for dealing with lateness at the beginning of the day are dealt with in Section 5 above.

### **6.1 Late Collection**

Whilst we recognise that emergencies or unavoidable situations which may result in a parent or carer being late at the end of the school day sometimes occur, regular late collection is not acceptable and undermines the school's work in ensuring pupils learn and value good routines in relation to punctuality.

Therefore, **parents and carers** are expected **to collect their child/ children promptly at the end of the school day, KS1-3.20pm and KS2 –3.25pm**. If you are going to be late to collect your child from school you must telephone the office before the end of the school day.

If a child is not collected by 3.45pm they will be sent to Afterschool Club. Parents/carers of any child sent to Afterschool Club will be charged a late collection fee of £10. Late collection is monitored by the PLAO and where it is considered to be happening too frequently or patterns are found to be occurring parents/carers will be written to in order to resolve the situation. If this does not resolve the issue they will be required to meet with the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff. Please be advised that late collections even if once a week over a period of time are considered a cause for concern, as this can be categorised as 'neglect', which is a safeguarding issue.

## **7. Strategies for Ensuring High Attendance and Excellent Punctuality**

### **7.1 Rewards and Incentives**

The Head Teacher will take overall responsibility for encouraging and rewarding publicly the need for high attendance and excellent levels of punctuality. This will commonly be achieved through class assemblies and encouraging a competitive spirit with other classes e.g. classes will compete in having the highest attendance statistics and best levels of punctuality. Informal praise and formal awards should both be used and supported by all school staff. Formal attendance and punctuality awards will comprise:

- **100% Attendance and Punctuality Awards**
- **Weekly Class Attendance Prize**

These will be highlighted on our school website.

### **7.2 First Day Contact and Dealing with Absence**

The PLAO will attempt to contact any parent/carer on the first day of absence by telephone/text and establish the reason for absence. She will enter information regarding pupil absence in the Information Log. Where contact has not been possible, the PLAO may ask teachers for support in following up any absence with pupils and obtaining signed notes from parents.

A list of all outstanding absences will be processed by the PLAO and distributed to the Head Teacher. When a letter from the parent is not forthcoming, the PLAO will process a letter to the parent/carer requesting a reason to cover the dates(s) concerned. When this has been received they will update the register.

### **7.3 Attendance Support**

The PLAO will closely monitor attendance and punctuality through the following computerised processes:

- Daily lists of absences
- Follow up procedures on the first day of absence
- Weekly statistics
- Rewards for attendance and punctuality as outlined above.

Where pupils are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness, then teachers will liaise with parents and make arrangements for work to be made available.

Where there is a significant pattern of absence, the Head Teacher will:

- Involve the PLAO in developing strategies for intervention including a letter being sent home to parents/carers informing of the cause for concern and the negative impact on pupils' learning
- Attend as relevant, meetings to discuss any pupil causing concern regarding attendance and punctuality
- If attendance falls below the persistence absence figure of 90%, work with the PLAO in convening a meeting, involving parents, in establishing targets for attendance and punctuality along with strategies for support in successful reintegrating pupils back into the school. A referral may also be made at this stage to the EWO. The school will use a Persistent Absence case study to track and record the attendance and intervention support of any student whose attendance is below 80%
- Ensure pupils with attendance between 80% and 90% are tracked and the appropriate intervention taken e.g. a meeting with parents/carers. Patterns will also be analysed to detect any condoned absence
- For attendance between 90% - 95%, teachers are expected to play an active role in advocating the importance of full attendance to both students and parents/carers
- If the absence is longer than a period of twenty continuous days and is treated as unauthorised absence then the Local Authority will be informed
- All steps will be taken by the EWO to ascertain a pupil's whereabouts whilst absent and documentation should be kept on this process.

The Head Teacher will analyse attendance data and look for patterns of absence and poor punctuality in relation to pupils who may be vulnerable for a range of reasons e.g. pupils with SEN, families who work with Social Services, Looked After Children, pupils who have experienced bullying, Travellers etc.

#### **7.4 Warning Letters and Penalty Notices (PNs)**

When the avenue of supportive interventions such as telephone calls, meetings with parents and any home visits have been used and there has been no improvement in attendance then the governors reserve the right to take legal action, which could lead to a substantial fine and a criminal record.

This policy will involve the use of the following:

##### **Leave of Absence**

The school does not support any holidays requested during term time. If a request is made for a leave of absence and this is not approved and the pupil does not attend during the stated period then a Penalty Notice may be issued by the EWO upon the pupil's return.

Pupils who have less than 92% attendance with any period of unauthorised absence within a 6 week period will receive a warning letter from the school. This letter will state the pupil's overall attendance percentage and that if there is no improvement in attendance, normally within the subsequent 3 week period then a penalty notice may be issued.

##### **Late for the School day (after registers have closed – use of the U code)**

Pupils who arrive at school after registration has closed will be recorded as a U code, which is an unauthorised morning session. Any parent/carer of a pupil who records more than five U codes within a six week period may be issued with a penalty notice. This will be preceded by a warning letter to the parent/carer after the third U is recorded in the school register informing of the consequences of reaching a fifth U in the register.

#### **7.5 Reintegration Programmes**

If a pupil has had a period of absence for longer than five days then the teacher will ensure that he/ she can reintegrate into school life. This will involve the monitoring of the pupil's school work and setting of any homework in order to address any gaps in learning.

#### **8. Monitoring, Evaluation And Review**

The Head Teacher and Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

The Head Teacher will present attendance data and an analysis of this to the SLT and to the Governing Body's Church and Community Committee and whole Governing Body as a standing agenda item.

Actions to improve attendance and/or punctuality will feature in the School Improvement Plan.

\*PLAO – Parent Liaison and Attendance Officer

\*EWO – Education Welfare Officer