

St. Andrew the Apostle

Attendance & Punctuality Policy



Succeeding Together in Faith and Love

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 96% (In the Green Zone)
100%-97% Green Zone
96%-91% Amber Zone
90%-below Red Zone
- Maintain parent/carers' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- Work together with parent/carers, pupils and other agencies to promote regular and punctual school attendance
- Operate a whole school approach to attendance ensuring that all school staff are responsible for attendance and attendance related matters

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees find school routines and school-work easier to cope with
- Regular attendees find learning more satisfying
- Regular attendees have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent/carer you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences before 9.30am with the reason for absence, clearly stating when the child will return to school and keeping in regular contact with school should the absence continue
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school holidays
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

St. Andrew the Apostle

- Follow up unexplained absences with phone calls and letters on the first day of absence
- Remind parent/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, school website, letters, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement
- Publish our attendance rate weekly in the school newsletter
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance in weekly celebration assembly
- Publish your child's annual attendance rate with her/his school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance and/or punctuality
- If we continue to have concerns, we may make a referral to the School Attendance Officer

Staff responsible for leading attendance:

- Learning Mentor – Mrs Russell
- Head teacher – Mrs Webster

Strategies

1. Letters sent home at each half term when attendance is below 96% with attendance reports highlighting to parents/carers
2. At the full term if attendance is still under 97% then an appointment is made to see the Learning Mentor
3. If attendance is still not above 97% then an appointment will be made to see the Head teacher
4. If attendance does not improve to 97% then an appointment will be made to see a school Governor
5. If improvements are not made to reach 97% attendance then a referral will be made to the Local Authority which may lead to a fixed penalty notice (fine)

WHAT IS AN EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICE?

As a parent/carer it is an offence if your child fails to attend school regularly. Absences are classed as unauthorised if without a valid reason or school cannot or has not given permission. In some circumstances parents/carers may be prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

An Education Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and aims to improve attendance. If paid within the timescale, this prevents the matter escalating to the Magistrates Court for the period concerned.

WHEN ARE EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES USED?

You may be issued with an Education Penalty Notice for any of the following reasons:

- More than 10 sessions (5 days) in any 10 week period of **consecutive** unauthorised absence including an unauthorised leave of absence (e.g. holiday).
- More than 10 sessions (5 days) in any 10 week period of **non-consecutive** unauthorised absences.
- Unauthorised absence due to truancy – including pupils stopped on truancy operations.

St. Andrew the Apostle

- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).
- Being found in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2022'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we will deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Shopping for new school clothes
- Unapproved Leave of Absence
- **Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory**

St. Andrew the Apostle

Continued unauthorised absence (where no satisfactory reason has been provided to the school as to the reason for absence) may leave the school no option but to make a referral to the School Attendance Service for the service to case work for the following half term which may lead in an Education Penalty Notice (fine).

Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8:55am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom but school doors are open from 8:45am

It is the parent/carers/carers responsibility to ensure that if their child arrives late to school then they **MUST** come to the office and be accompanied by a responsible adult and signed in with a reason for lateness

- It is important to be on time as the first session of the day is focussed on key learning in Reading, Writing and Maths
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parent/carers
- Arrival after the close of registration at 9:10am may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parent/carers are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address, the new school and start date must be stated
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

Remember: We cannot take your child off our school roll until your child starts in the next school. Both **you** and the next school must inform us of the start date. Failure for you to inform us of a forwarding school will result in your child being classed as missing and we have to inform the local Authority and Police of their missing status.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and the school cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations under Safeguarding Procedures, which

St. Andrew the Apostle

will include liaising with Children's Social Care (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Schools' responsibilities:

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register.

Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.

Legal Note

Parent/carers have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and the Local Authority. St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School works in partnership with The School Attendance Service and regularly meet to discuss pupils whose school attendance is causing a concern; parent/carers will be aware of our concern prior to our discussion with the School Attendance Service and a referral to the School Attendance Service may be made. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parent/carers are prosecuted (taken to court) if unauthorised absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

Child Protection Statement

At St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School, every child has the right to be safe and to be cared for in a way that ensures their safety and meets their individual needs. We recognise that all children need protection at all times from anything or anyone that may cause them harm and work together following the schools Safeguarding Policy to ensure this. We respect all members of the school's community and treat information with confidentiality. **The above attendance policy is served in conjunction with our role to Safeguard All our Pupils.**