



# Attendance Policy

(November 2024)

**Approved by:**

Federation Curriculum  
board

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024

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November 2024

**Next review due by:**

November 2025

St Paul with St Luke & St. Saviour's Primary Federation's vision is of a collaborative learning community, rooted in the principles of the Church of England, striving for every child to flourish as a child of God. We want every child to have the best educational experience and outcomes so that they are confident learners equipped to be responsible, compassionate citizens, leading happy, healthy and productive lives. Jesus said: 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). He calls us to a full life in mind, body, heart and spirit. We believe the purpose of education is to nurture and enable every child to flourish and shine as a unique child of God. Human flourishing enables the fruits of the spirit, the greatest of which are faith, hope and love. Teaching is a relational, creative act, we need a pedagogically effective lesson structure, we also need an attitude and presence, of being with and alongside the children in our care. Therefore, we expect all our teachers, all our adults to embody faith in, hope for and love of the children in our care. This is to be demonstrated at all points through wise relationship with one another.

### **The Foundations of the Vision based Deeply Christian Serving the Common Good**

- ❖ **Educating for knowledge and skills, wisdom and forgiveness:** enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.
- ❖ **Educating for hope and aspiration and responsibility:** enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.
- ❖ **Educating for koinonia, friendship and compassion:** a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.
- ❖ **Educating for dignity and respect:** the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

### ***Aims***

- We believe that good attendance plays an essential part in pupils' social and emotional development and academic attainment. Attending school punctually and regularly allows pupils to participate fully in the school community and builds the discipline necessary for a good transition to secondary school and the increasing independence of young adulthood.
- We have clear systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality and where problems and patterns are identified we believe in providing early support to ensure that difficulties are dealt with before they escalate.
- We work in partnership with all children's services to ensure that all of our pupils are enabled to achieve punctual, regular school attendance.
- We will apply the Attendance Policy rigorously and consistently to build an environment where good attendance and punctuality is an expectation of all members of the school community.

### ***Attendance Team***

The Attendance Team comprises:

- Family Support Officers, Madeha Khalique (SPSL) & Rachel Sablon (STS)
- Local Authority Attendance and Welfare Advisor - Ranu Begum
- School Social Worker - Farhana Rohim
- Senior Leadership Team - Mr Hall and Mrs Smith
- Link Governor - Aune Turkson-Jones

### ***Safeguarding***

Absence from school is recognised as a Safeguarding issue as it places children at risk. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti- bullying.

In cases where failing to attend school on a regular basis has been identified as a safeguarding matter, the school's child protection policy and procedures will be applied.

### ***Authorised Absence***

- Authorised absence means that the school either has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away, or accepted an explanation offered on the day/afterwards as justification for the absence. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent contacts the school to explain the absence.
- ONLY the school can authorise an absence. Parent do not have this authority. Consequently, not ALL absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.
- The Government and Local Authority expects children to attend school EVERY DAY unless there is a valid reason. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to inform the school if your child is not attending for any reason. You can either come direct to the school office on the morning of the first day of absence or telephone the call before 9am on 0207 987 4889 and leave a message on the school answer phone stating your child's full name, class and reason for absence. This must be repeated for every day your child is absent.
- When a pupil is unable to attend school through illness, parents/guardians have a duty to inform the school by phone or in person on the first day of absence and to give the reasons for their child's absence.
- Where a pupil is absent for 5 days or more due to illness, parents are expected to provide relevant evidence of the illness, for example, a doctor's appointment card stamped by the surgery, a doctor's note, the prescribed medication or a copy of the prescription.
- At the Attendance Team's discretion, in some cases parents may be asked to provide medical evidence for fewer than 5 days' absence.
- Where parents/guardians have not informed the school of their child's absence, the school will phone on the first day of absence. If no contact is made, a text will be sent and subsequently a letter will be sent home to remind parents/guardians of their responsibilities to inform the school and give a reason for their child's absence.
- All routine Doctors and Dentists appointments (including check-ups and treatments) need to be made after school or during school holidays.
- Emergency appointments such as attending hospital or specialist clinics will only be authorised on the production of an appointment letter or card. If the appointment is part-way through the morning or afternoon your child is expected to come into school beforehand and return as soon as the appointment finishes.

### ***Unauthorised Absence***

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, even if parents do provide evidence the school does not have to accept this evidence and authorise the absence.
- If parents/guardians fail to give a reason or proof of absence, the pupil's absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Unauthorised absence is considered truancy by the Borough. Where a pupil has had five unauthorised absences from school within five weeks the school will refer the family to the Attendance and Welfare Advisor.
- The school rigorously completes the Persistent Absence workbook and uses this as a tool to monitor and address attendance issues

### ***Extended Leave***

● In line with Borough and National policy, parents requesting leave during term-time will be informed that they need to make a request in writing for a decision to be made by the Headteacher. The application will be looked at by the Headteacher, alongside the child's current and past attendance and any supporting evidence provided by the family. The Headteacher will use her discretion looking at the above as to whether to authorise the absences or not. Regular school attendance will be a factor in determining whether the leave is approved or not.

● Where the request for leave has not been approved than the family will be advised that the absences will be unauthorised and a referral will be made to the AWA for the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

● Where possible, the school/AWA will meet parents before they take leave or, if necessary, afterwards to confirm school policy.

● After 21 consecutive school days' leave, pupils will be removed from the school roll.

● Please ensure all holidays are booked during the school holidays.

### ***Nursery***

● Education for Nursery aged pupils is not a statutory requirement. However, at St Paul with St Luke & St. Saviour's we encourage and promote regular school attendance and punctuality for ALL the children on our roll to maximise growth and development. This is especially true for our children attending the nursery as by attending school regularly and punctually good practices and routines are instilled from a very young age, friendship groups are formed and early learning can begin which helps with transition into statutory education.

● As nursery education is not a legal requirement please be aware that statutory guidance that governs education for statutory aged children does not apply especially with regards to the off-rolling criteria. If a child on roll in our nursery does not attend regularly or punctually parents will be invited in to discuss the reason to hopefully improve matters. If improvements have not been made than the school can potentially off roll children with immediate effect.

### ***Siblings***

● Where one child in a family is ill, parents are expected to bring any other sibling(s) to school as usual.

### ***Known Medical Cases***

- Children with on-going health issues that we know of or short-term acute illness such as chickenpox may be exempt from the follow-up procedures and dealt with on an individual basis at the discretion of the Attendance Team.

### ***Headlice***

- If live lice are detected on children while at school, their parent/carer will be called to collect the child, treat their hair and, if time, return the child to school.

- If a parent/carer calls the school in the morning to say that their child will be absent due to headlice, they will be advised to treat their hair and then bring them into school as soon as possible.

### ***Lateness***

- School begins at 8.55 a.m. Pupils should be in the playground to be received by their Class Teacher. Pupils are encouraged to be in the playground at 8:45am.

- School gates are locked at 8.55am. If a child arrives after that time they should come to the main office to register their arrival.

- Lateness is monitored by the Attendance Team and followed up as necessary. Persistent lateness will result in a referral to the Attendance and Welfare Advisor who on behalf of the LA can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

- **If a pupil will be arriving to school late than parents/guardians must phone the school before 9.30am to order a school lunch.**

### ***Registration***

- Registers are kept in accordance with the guidelines issued in the LEA's circular 3.99, the Marking and Maintenance of Registers.

- Teachers complete their class register twice a day online, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is a legal requirement. Numbers of pupils are written on the class display board and in the office attendance board, updated daily.

- The appropriate codes and instructions for completion are shown on the front of each register.

- A yearly register inspection is carried out by the Attendance and Welfare Advisor.

### ***Follow Up Procedures***

- Registers are monitored by the school's Attendance Officer, who also keeps a record of the daily absence communication from the parent/carer. The Attendance Officer will, if necessary, make initial contact with the parent/carer to follow up a child's unexplained absence.

- Pupils' attendance and punctuality is monitored weekly and monthly by the Attendance Officer. Any concerns are referred to the Attendance Team.

- Letters are sent out to parents of children whose attendance drops to between 96% - 90% and also below 90% (PA)..

- Parents/guardians whose child's attendance or punctuality remains a concern will receive a letter to inform them of the concerns and invite them to an individual meeting with members of the Attendance Team to discuss the particular issues and agree actions to improve the situation.

- Urgent concerns will be referred to the Family Support Officer.

- Where there is no improvement in attendance and/or punctuality following the above interventions, a referral will be made to the AWA using the LA referral form. Once a referral is made and if concerns persist then the LA can consider whether legal action needs to be pursued. This can be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absences or a Court Warning Notice letter which can result in prosecution.

### ***School's Responsibilities***

- To offer a diverse and differentiated curriculum so that all pupils are motivated to come to school.
- To provide an attentive environment where all pupils are listened to and consulted so that any problems may be resolved within the school.
- To attend to any additional physical or emotional needs of pupils with sensitivity and discretion.
- To follow up all unexplained, unauthorised and patterns of absence with parents, and refer to other agencies where appropriate.
- To provide advice and support for any family experiencing difficulties.

### ***Governors' Responsibilities***

- To oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy.
- To analyse attendance and punctuality figures in terms of the implementation of the policy.

### ***Parents/ Guardians Responsibilities***

- To send their child to school regularly and punctually, as defined in the Education Act 1996.
- To inform the school at the start of the first day of their child's absence with the reasons and to keep the school informed on subsequent days, as appropriate.
- To attend meetings when requested to discuss attendance/punctuality issues.
- To make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours, where possible.
- To bring an appointment card or letter to school if an appointment has to be made during school hours.

### ***Pupils' Responsibilities***

- To attend school regularly and punctually.
- To participate in their learning to the best of their ability.
- To let an adult, know of any problems that may affect their motivation to attend school.

### ***Regular Information for Parents/Guardians***

- Parents/guardians are informed of their child's attendance at the end of each term and attendance is noted on school reports.
- The attendance percentage statistics for each class are published in the weekly newsletter.

### ***Rewards and Incentives***

- Attendance Certificates are awarded in assembly at the end of each half term for 100% attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for the year are invited to a special trip out.

**Appendix A: St Paul with St Luke & St Saviour’s C of E Primary School Federation Attendance Targets**

- Excellent: 98% and above**
- Good: 97%-98%**
- Satisfactory 95%-97%**
- Poor: 90%-95%**
- Persistent Absence/Serious cause for Concerns: 90% and Below**

*Date: November 2024*

*Review: November 2025*