



Learn to Love & Love to Learn.....in readiness for life



Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2022-23

Overview

At St Anne's Catholic Primary School, we seek to ensure that all our pupils seize opportunities and realise their potential. We provide a welcoming, caring environment where everyone is an individual and feels wanted and secure.

Good Attendance and Punctuality are vital if our children are to make expected progress, and school have high expectations of pupil attendance and punctuality. Therefore, we work closely with parents to ensure high levels of attendance are maintained.

To do this we have an effective and efficient communication system and our attendance procedures are linked closely to our safeguarding procedures. We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

Key staff with designated responsibilities for Attendance :
The named Senior Leader with overall responsibility for Attendance as named Attendance Officer is Sharon Wyde – Deputy Headteacher.
Supported by:
Sophie Volynchook Designated Safeguarding Lead and Assistant Headteacher
Emma Rowson /Sam Flaherty (Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Operational Safeguarding - Wellbeing and Welfare Managers Pastoral Support)
Amanda Paton – Wellbeing and Welfare Manager with responsibility for Operational Attendance and Pastoral Support
Jane Gates – Administrative Assistant with responsibility for school registers, attendance admin letters and initial first day response to absence.
LA School Education Welfare Officer : Salma Hussain (Service level agreement)
Study Bugs Attendance Reporting and Assistant Software (Service level agreement)
LA School Attendance Engagement Officer: Dean Buckley (Service level agreement)

The pastoral and attendance team will regularly inform the Headteacher of school attendance patterns and analysis for the whole school and groups of children. Fortnightly meetings will be held with the team and the headteacher. Education Welfare and school attendance action plans will be implemented and reviewed each half term by the headteacher.

At St Anne's we are committed to:

Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.

· Ensuring equality and fairness for all.

- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

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 2022'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Attachment Aware Behaviour Policy

- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.

- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Our Aims and what we do to achieve them:

1. To improve and maintain the overall percentage Attendance by establishing clear guidelines and activities in school. These will be communicated by assemblies, parent information via newsletters/website and our tracking systems, parent meetings and communication.
2. To ensure Attendance remains of the highest priority for pupils, parents, staff and governors. Attendance figures are published and shared with stakeholders, certificates and rewards are promoted and the school's high expectations of good attendance are regularly communicated to parents and pupils. All staff share responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality as part of the school ethos and curriculum.
3. To maintain a framework which defines clear roles and responsibilities with regard to Attendance. Our office staff will contact parents if we have not been provided with a reason for absence. For those children whose absence is below 90% or beginning to cause concern, the school will make contact with the family and the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) is advised and then makes contact with parents via telephone or a home visit. If necessary, where further support is identified, formal attendance meetings are scheduled. Links with the LA are robust and enable data to be shared and support provided. The school follows the LA graduated response to attendance intervention.
4. To provide support and advice to parents/ children. The need for good attendance is highlighted in:

*curriculum lessons * assemblies * awards * outside agency links

Parents are informed about any issues that arise and regular register reviews are carried out to monitor Attendance patterns. Good habits are outlined specifically and further encouraged from EYFS onwards.

5. To have a systematic approach to data collection and analysis. We have a standard method of recording across the whole school to ensure rigour and consistency. The school engages the use of an Education Welfare Officer who works alongside the School Wellbeing and Welfare Manager (Operational Attendance) and also the Attendance Engagement Officer. Governors are presented with Attendance data at termly meetings.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home/school. We do this by initiating first day response contact, using standardised letters and providing additional information for parents and encouraging their co-operation. School pastoral staff and EWO will conduct home visits and support as necessary. Where families are vulnerable and need support with attendance as part of a wider picture of need, school will consult with social care and /or other external agencies.
7. To further develop the system of rewards. Children receive certificates and where appropriate additional rewards for good/improved attendance. All children have six

opportunities per year to achieve 100% half-term attendance and be entered into a raffle. The 'winner' – drawn out in July – is presented with a prize at the end of the year.

8. To promote effective partnerships with EWO (Education Welfare Officer) and other outside agencies. We do this by having designated staff including the named school Attendance Officer, and an EWO consultant whose role it is to track data, analyse it and take action. Regular reviews are carried out and meetings arranged as necessary.

SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The

school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be

regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable – in consultation with external professionals and the LA.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Missing Pupils

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school building/premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and parents have informed the school in advance. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.

- The following areas will be systematically searched:

- All classrooms

- All toilets

- Pastoral Rooms

- Playgrounds

- The school grounds

- School Offices and Store rooms

- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the secure school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.

- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.

- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.

- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.

- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.

- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate sanctions will be issued in line with the school's policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

The school will use attendance data, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-

case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with

other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

PA (Persistent Absences)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need

- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils and parents to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

Informing and working with the Local Authority services as appropriate to offer family support and encourage engagement.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will initiate:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.

Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance

officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing body will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing body will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.

The governing body will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

Absence Notifications

Parents and Carers are responsible for informing school if their child is unable to attend school with an explanation for the absence. School can be contacted in the following ways:

- * Studybugs- through the app or via the link on the school website
- * School email- stannesrc@sthelens.org.uk
- * Attendance and Pastoral phone line – 01744 671908. There is a facility to leave a message if the call is not answered. Please state the child's name, class and reason for absence.

School Day and Protocols

- * Staff will open the doors at 8:45am
- * Staff will close the doors at 8.55am
- * The electronic register is taken by 9:00am
- * Any child arriving late, after the doors have closed, enters via the main office. Parent/carers will inform the office staff of their arrival and complete the details required on the Entry Sign system.
- * Registers close at 9:30am
- * If we have not received notification of a child's absence a text message will be sent, asking parents to contact the school, stating the reason for their child's absence.
- * If there is no response to the text message a telephone call is made.
- * By 10:00am, if there is still no contact, the HT/SLT will be informed. Action will be taken as deemed appropriate, eg: the Education Welfare Officer will be advised and/or a home visit may be carried out.
- * The Education Welfare Officer will report back to the HT/SLT/Attendance Manager following contact/home visit.

The times of the school day for children in Reception to Year 6 is as follows:

Doors open and the school begins at 8.45am

There is a 15 minute morning break time for all classes and 1 hour lunchbreak for all classes.
The school day finishes at 3.15pm.

Family Holidays

The Government takes a firm stance against parents who take their children out of school for a family holiday. Holidays during term time are not encouraged or supported by school. All requests should be put in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered on an individual basis. However, current guidance and **our policy is not to authorise family holidays during term-time**, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Penalty Notices may be issued to each parent of a child in respect of a child being taken on holiday in term time. The school term dates are shared with parents well in advance, usually over a year in advance and are available to view on the school website. A paper copy of term dates can also be provided by the school office free of charge upon request.

Pupils have 13 weeks leave from school each year and holidays should be planned and taken then, not outside of this time.

Pupils who miss school in term time due to family holidays, are at increased risk of falling behind academically and not meeting age related expectations at the end of the school year.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence is considered to be unauthorised when.....

- * Parents allow children to stay off school unnecessarily
- * Children play truant
- * Reasons for absences have not been satisfactorily explained
- * Children who arrive too late at school to receive a mark without an acceptable reason, ie after registers have closed - after 9.30am
- * Children are taken on holiday in term time.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance will be the subject of continual monitoring by those with designated responsibility within the school as outlined in this policy. Attendance outcomes for the school are monitored daily and weekly by the office admin team, and the attendance team who respond to families and works alongside the school EWO and Engagement Officer. Plans are put in place for families who meet the criteria for support and all government accountability is observed in line with penalty notices. The Headteacher will be responsible for liaising with and disseminating information to the Governing Body.

Outcomes

St Anne's will do all it can to ensure that our children are happy and attend school regularly and punctually to ensure that they gain the greatest possible value from their

education. The progress of families supported by an attendance plan will be carefully monitored by the school and EWO.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and the Attendance Officer annually.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Policy agreed September 2022

Next Review September 2023.