

All Saints' C. of E. Primary School



Rooted in Faith, Growing Through Learning

Policy: Attendance, Absence and Punctuality

Date: September 2023

Our Vision
Confident Futures

Our Mission
Inspiring and enabling each other,
through our Christian values,
to flourish
and be outstanding in everything we do

Our Core Values
Kindness
Respect
Resilience

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is
Joanne Ghosh – Head Teacher

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (D-DSLs) are
Gemma Campbell – Deputy Head Teacher
Catherine Williams – Inclusion Manager
Louise Pitteway - EY Phase Leader
Rebecca Lake – KS1 Phase Leader
Janet Sharp – KS2 Phase Leader

Online Safety Lead (OSL)
Janet Sharp – KS2 Phase Leader

Governor with Responsibility for Online Safety
Rob Wilson

Designated Member of Staff for Looked After Children
Catherine Williams – Inclusion Manager

Governor with Responsibility for Looked After Children
Fiona Brown

Governors with Responsibility for Safeguarding
Marigold Hayes and Alex Millbrook

Safeguarding Statement

The Governors and staff of All Saints' CofE Primary School fully recognise and are committed to the responsibilities and duty placed upon them with regard to arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. We expect all staff, including volunteers, to share this commitment, recognising that they have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Parents and carers expect a secure and caring environment in which the children can flourish. We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment in which pupils can learn and which promotes the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of each individual pupil, and which takes a child-centred approach.

To meet this expectation, the school adheres to a wide range of national and local policies and guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and policy is in line with the London Child Protection Procedures 2017 (5th edition amended October 2017), as well as the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, Online Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Health & Safety Policy. Parents and carers are welcome to read the policies on our website or on request from the School Office.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with his/her parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child's welfare.

Part of our legal duty to safeguard children may also include the need to consult with and take advice from other agencies such as the Police or social services should the need arise.

Introduction

Parents and carers have a legal duty to make sure that their children receive appropriate full time education. In addition to the legal requirements, school attendance is a crucial factor in a child's educational and social development. Good attendance at school is vital for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. Irregular attendance or late arrival can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning and confidence.

Aims

At All Saints', we are proud of our attendance record and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. The school also has access to the Local Authority's Educational Welfare Service (EWS), to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. We aim to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.

In order to achieve these aims the school will:

- maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through support, monitoring and celebration.
- raise awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- maintain effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.

- implement procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- support pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance or punctuality.
- celebrate good attendance
- publish attendance figures on the newsletter and/or website.

Safeguarding

The school takes the safety of all pupils very seriously and if a child does not come to school, they need to have a valid reason for their absence. The school needs to be sure that a child has not left home in the morning and failed to arrive at school. The school will therefore attempt to contact parents or carers if the absence has not been explained by phone, letter or email. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of any absence by 9.30am on the morning of the absence. After this time, if no valid reason is provided, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence.

Absence

Absence figures are reported to the Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE), and are also recorded on a pupil's annual end of year report. It is essential that the school is informed of the reasons for a child's absence so that it can be recorded accurately.

Parents should be aware that **the school day contains two sessions**, morning and afternoon. For example, if a pupil is reported to have missed two sessions – it may mean they have missed a whole day's schooling, or the equivalent of two mornings; two afternoons; or a combination of a morning or an afternoon session. Absences are recorded as either being authorised or unauthorised:

Definition of authorised absence:

An absence is classified as authorised when the school has ascertained that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer, e.g. if a child is unwell and the parent has contacted the school to explain the absence. Exceptional cases of religious observance or particular family circumstances may result in an authorised absence being granted by the school. Exceptional cases would be those in which recent or imminent bereavement is a factor.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parent/carers do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parent/carers will be authorised by the school.

Definition of unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is defined as an absence from school without permission from a duly authorised person, i.e. the head teacher, or where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

An absence, therefore, would be unauthorised, for example, if a parent or carer takes their child out of school to go shopping during school hours; allows a child to stay away from school to celebrate a family birthday or to go on a family outing. **Holidays during term-time will be unauthorised – see below.**

Absence during term time

An amendment in 2013 to the DfE 2006 regulations removes references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.

'Exceptional' generally means being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. Each case, of course, will be different and will be looked at with reference to the whole situation before making a decision about any individual request. However, the normality will be that requests will be refused.

Exceptional circumstances are defined by the government as:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting.
- exceptional significant family events or circumstances.

The following will not meet the criteria:

- relatives coming to visit;
- cheaper holidays in England and abroad;
- family day trips;
- visiting family or friends that have different half term holidays
- and may include visits to see family abroad.

A request form (see Appendix 2) for an absence in term time must be obtained from the school office or the website and returned to the Headteacher, at least one month prior to the date of departure. Only in **exceptional** circumstances will the absence be authorised. Parents who choose to take a leave of absence which has not been authorised by the head teacher may receive a penalty notice and fine from the Local Education Authority. The penalty notice currently imposes a fine of **£60 for each parent per child**.

Absence due to ill health

If a child is unwell, parents or carers should call the school on the first morning of absence by phone or email as early as possible and by 9.30am at the latest. On the child's return, a written explanation is required, giving the reason why the child has not been at school. If they have been vomiting or have had diarrhoea, children must leave 48 hours before returning to school.

Out of school dental and medical treatment

Parents are asked that, where possible, appointments are made out of school hours or during school holidays.

Parents and carers should let the school office know in writing, in advance of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected from and/or returned to school.

Persistent absence

The school monitors the attendance data regularly. Good attendance is considered to be 95% or above (see table below in Appendix 1). Any pupil with less than **90%** school attendance is considered to be **persistently absent**. With each school day consisting of 2 sessions, less than 90% equates to missing **38 sessions or 19 days** at any point during the academic year or (on average) between **5 and 7 sessions or 3 days** each half term. This is regardless of the absences being unauthorised or authorised. In such situations, the absence, or persistent lateness, will be investigated by the Senior Leadership Team and parents may be asked to attend an informal meeting with the Headteacher and/or Inclusion Manager to see how the school can support the family and improve attendance. Should persistent absence continue, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

Punctuality

Arriving at school on time gives children the best possible start to the school day. Learning starts promptly so children may miss out on crucial instruction, time for marking response, phonics or reading time. Children will be considered, and marked, as late if they arrive in the classroom after the register is taken which is taken between 9.00 and 9.05am. If children arrive at school after the main gates are closed, they will be likely to miss the taking of the register and a late mark will be recorded. Arrival after 9.10am, when the register is back in the office, can result in an unauthorised absence. Please note that in this situation, children must be signed in by a parent or carer at the office.

Persistent late arrival at school will be followed up by the Senior Leadership team and may be reported to the EWS.

Our Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.

- Contacting and supporting families where concerns are raised about absence or punctuality including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Working alongside the Inclusion manager, making referrals to the EWS.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's EWO, where necessary.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

School Staff are responsible for:

- Completing registers accurately and punctually twice a day (Class Teachers).
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Ensuring the Absence/Late Book is completed.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Headteacher.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance.

The Attendance, Absence and Punctuality Policy was reviewed in September 2023

It was formally adopted and approved by Governors: September 2023

Signed (Chair of Governors): *P.J. Ashworth*

Date: 28th September 2023

Date of Next review (at least annually): September 2024

Appendix 1

What is Good Attendance?

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR			175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments			
190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR 190 days for your child's education.	10 days absence	20 days absence	29 days absence			
	180 DAYS OF SCHOOL	170 DAYS OF SCHOOL	Half a term missed	38 days absence	47 days absence over two months missed!	
			161 DAYS OF SCHOOL			
			152 DAYS OF SCHOOL			143 DAYS OF SCHOOL
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	
GOOD		WORRYING		SERIOUS CONCERN		
		Persistent Absence				



Leave of Absence Request Form

This form should be completed and submitted to the Headteacher at least four weeks before the start of the proposed leave of absence. Separate forms should be completed for each child at the school.

Parents and carers are reminded that Leave of Absence taken without authorisation may result in the issuing of fixed penalty fines by the Local Authority, which stands currently at £60 per child for each parent.

Parents are also reminded that Leave of Absence for the purpose of holidays in term time can no longer be granted.

Name of child:	
Class:	
Name of parent(s)	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Reasons for request:	

Signed _____ **Dated** _____

For School Use Only

Authorised/Unauthorised?	Attendance
Headteacher Signature	Absence Code