

St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



October 2023



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1.0 - Introduction

St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our pupils every day and provide them with a safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend school regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation that all pupils achieve at least 97%. **As a school, we define regular attendance as 97% or above.**

St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School believes that Governors, Staff, Parents/Carers, Pupils and all members of St Anne's School community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

2.0 - Aims

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below).
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds a consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

2.1 - Promoting Regular Attendance at St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School

Promoting regular attendance and good punctuality is everyone's responsibility, Governors, Staff, Parent/Carers and Pupils.

To help us all focus on this, St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School will ensure:

- There is a designated senior leader for championing and improving attendance.
- Effective strategies are in place to deter poor punctuality.
- An engaging curriculum is provided which will be reviewed regularly.
- High quality teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to minimise disaffection from school.
- Vulnerable groups are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is rigorously monitored.
- Effective partnerships with Parent/Carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/Carers are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.



- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular incentives.
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with pupils in class and during assemblies.
- Attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff ensure these are followed.

3.0 - Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

3.1 - Expectations of Parent/Carers

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a Parent/Carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised creates an offence in law.
- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone the school office if your child is going to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside school hours and confirmation of the appointment is provided.
- Contact school by 9:30 am on the first day of absence, if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence, it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of an emergency we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes, especially mobile telephone numbers.** As a school, we request that four emergency contact details are provided.
- Requests for **exceptional circumstances leave of absence** must be made in writing. This request must be addressed to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts, birthdays, recreational activities, hobbies and interests.

3.2 - If a Pupil is Absent St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School will:

- Telephone and text the Parent/Carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them or received an explanation for their child's absence by 9:30 am.
- If no response is received, a member of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absence continues the Parent/Carer will be invited to meet with the Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) in school.
- If the Parent/Carer does not attend the meeting and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence, the Parents/Carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice Warning letter, in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the EWO.
- If unauthorised absences persist, the Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss further actions with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

4.0 - Understanding Types of Absence

St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School has to legally record every absence. This is why it is important that Parents/Carers directly inform school regarding the reason for any absence, on the first day of absence.



4.1 - Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is when the school **accepts** the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher who makes the decision to authorise absence from school, not a child's Parents/Carers.

4.2 - Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school following a parental request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, holidays, weddings, concerts or to look after siblings.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school after the close of registration.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. Since September 2018, St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued **10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in any one term**. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer to case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

4.3 - Persistent Absence

The Department for Education (DfE) defines pupils as persistent absentees (PA) if their attendance falls **below 90%**. This is for any absence **whether authorised or unauthorised**. The DfE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a Parent/Carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact the Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

4.4 - Severe Absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education (DfE). This cohort of pupils are a priority group for St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child in improving their attendance. It is essential that Parents/Carers work in partnership with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

5.0 - Why Regular Attendance is *Extremely* Important:

Any absence affects a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect a pupils' learning and achievements. Pupils who have time off school often find it difficult to catch up and do well. Relationships with their friendship groups and year group peers can also be affected.

- **90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year.**



Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is ***your legal responsibility*** and permitting your child to have any absence from school without a good reason, is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

6.0 - The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) - provides support and advice for Parents/Carers on problems relating to school attendance and encourages good communications between home and school.

The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family. However, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve a pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists, the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

7.0 - Leave of Absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to Parents/Carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/Carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without ***prior*** consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school ***if*** the leave is granted.

8.0 - Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the school day, they miss learning and disrupt lessons for other pupils. In addition, it can feel extremely embarrassing for a pupil to arrive late for school, which can encourage future absences.

It is also not acceptable for pupils to be collected late at the end of the school day. Please ensure that you contact the office by telephone if you are going to be late. If the office are not informed then your child may be required to attend afterschool club and a charge of £10 applied.

8.1 - How We Manage Lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 8:40am (Nursery), 8:45am (Reception and KS1) and 8:50am (KS2). Registers are taken daily by the Class Teacher. Pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by the time the registers are taken. School recommends that pupils arrive early, to ensure good punctuality.

Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice. The close of registration for St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School is 9:30am.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time, they should contact the Deputy Headteacher who will offer support to resolve the problem.

9.0 - People Responsible for Attendance at St Anne (Stanley) C of E Primary School

All Governors, Staff, Parents/Carers and Pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance, punctuality and achievement of all our pupils. This continued support is vital in making every pupil's journey through the school a success.

We have a home/school agreement that promotes good school attendance and punctuality, which is agreed and signed by Pupils, Parents/Carers and Class Teachers, on an annual basis.



10.0 - Removal from Roll

Since the 1st September 2016, changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations (2016). These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school, we are now required to:

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register.
- Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- School must complete an Exit form and submit to the CME@liverpool.gov.uk inbox.
- Provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are required to:

- Provide the school with comprehensive information about their plans, including the date of a move, your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing.
- If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing in Education (CME)**. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Policy Review Date: October 2024

Appendices - Working towards Best Practice

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance - Whole School Approach

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive in their class line on time. Breakfast Club is available from 7.45 am if required • Be in class on time for registration at 8:45am (Reception & KS1) and 8:50am (KS2)
	Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registers are completed on the MIS system each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in class • Discuss absence with pupils returning to school • Welcoming long-term absentees back into the class
	Admin Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via MIS • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason before 9:30am • Log on MIS, parental voicemails, face to face messages, e-mails regarding absences • Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on MIS • Telephone calls to parent/carers who have failed to contact school regarding their child's absence and pupils who arrive late. • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no phone call has been returned. • SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the class teachers • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems. • Daily late process, log and send actions for relevant staff. • Daily Attendance report sent to DSL.
	Curriculum Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Leader's informal discussions with identified pupils to follow up attendance issues and agree any future actions required. • Curriculum leaders discuss with class teachers when required, identified pupils of concern regarding specific attendance queries and the necessary follow ups required.
	EWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families. • Phone call contact with pupils/parent/carers. • Home visits. • Instigation of legal proceedings. • Tracking of actions, interventions, and feedback to DSL.
	Designated Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with Safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with EWO, Pastoral Team and Curriculum Leaders regarding support work with identified pupils. • Safeguarding home visits as required.



When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance. • Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by making contact with parent/carers as appropriate.
	Admin Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing SLT and EWO of pupil patterns of absence. • Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for DHT, class teachers and pupil rewards. • Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parents/carers. • Pupil rewards. • Provide weekly punctuality data for DHT, class teachers and pupils.
	Curriculum Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise help for pupils to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence.
	Designated Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Tracking of staff not completing registers in line with safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with EWO, Pastoral Team and Curriculum Leaders regarding support work with identified pupils. • Determine priority actions for the following week.
HALF TERMLY	Designated Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement. • Use attendance data to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils. • Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy. • Determine priority actions for the next half term. • Monitor and track attendance of SA/PA. • Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions regarding action plans or pupils causing concern.
TERMILY	Designated Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off site provision. • School Attendance Review alongside the EWO. • Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance. • Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively. • Report to Governors, SLT and SIP on attendance matters. • Ensure school prospectus, Parent/Carers welcome booklet and school newsletters promote attendance. • Determine priority actions for the next term.
	Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors.