



PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

(Non-Statutory Policy)

(Pupil Wellbeing Committee)

(Approval by Pupil Wellbeing Committee – 3 Year Review Cycle)

Date to be implemented from:	May 2021
Date to be reviewed by:	May 2024
Date Reviewed by Sub Committee:	5 th May 2021
Approved by: Signed: (Chair – Pupil Wellbeing Committee) (Print Name) Date	
<i>This Policy supersedes any previous Policy of this name or instructions that pre-date this edition</i> <i>This Policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this School.</i>	

1 Policy Statement

1.1 St Andrew's School affirms that individuals are entitled to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities. The School strives to ensure that all individuals are equally valued and everyone is treated with respect.

1.2 St Andrew's School publishes its Pupil Attendance Policy as good practice and will meet any other legislation or requirements to ensure pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors are 'work ready'.

1.3 The Policy will be readily accessible within the School on the Website and in hard copy on request.



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2 Reviewing the Policy

2.1 Reviewing the Policy – St Andrew's School will assess the implementation and impact of this Policy on a continuous basis and undertake a regular formal review on an annual basis to ensure it is fit for purpose.

3 School Vision

3.1 Our vision is to become an outstanding School within a loving, Christian community.

3.2 Our parents/carers, children and staff will work together to enable all children to:

- achieve their potential
- learn in a safe, stimulating environment
- enjoy learning now and in the future

4 Purpose of Policy

4.1 At St Andrew's School, we are a Values School committed to being '***In School, on time, every single day***'.

4.2 There is a clear link between high levels of attendance and high levels of progress.

4.3 At St Andrew's School, we are committed to achieving outstanding levels of attendance for individual children and for our School as a whole. We believe that if children attend School regularly and punctually, they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them

5 Aim of Policy

5.1 The aim of this Policy is to provide a framework which translates the values and aims of the School into effective procedures to enable each child to achieve outstanding attendance at School, and thus reach their potential.



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- 5.2 This policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
 - Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance
 - Ensuring that the attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absence are recorded promptly and consistently
- 5.3 The Policy will ensure that responsibilities of the School, parents/carers and pupils are made clear.

6 Definitions

6.1 The Governing Body (under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995) are responsible for making sure the School keeps an attendance register to record which pupils are present at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions of the School day and also indicates whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

6.1.1 An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from School for a legitimate reason and the School has received notification from a parent/carer. Only the School can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Hence, not all absences supported by parents will automatically be classified as authorised by the School.

6.1.2 An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from School without the permission of the Headteacher.

6.2 Parents whose children are of compulsory School age and registered at School are responsible for ensuring that their children attend School regularly. If they fail to do this they are guilty of an offence and may be given a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

6.3 Good attendance is considered to be 96% and above; Outstanding attendance is 98% and above.

6.4 LB Barnet LA allocates Education Welfare Officers (EWO) to Schools to enforce regular School attendance. In doing so, it enables Schools and parent/carers to meet their respective responsibilities. St Andrew's CE Primary School is required by the LA to alert the EWO of any pupil of compulsory School age who fails to attend School regularly.



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7 School Attendance Overview

7.1 Children must receive an education between the School term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the School year they turn 16. Parents/carers can be prosecuted if they don't give their child an education. Parents/carers can send the child to School or educate them themselves.

7.2 If the School is providing the education, then the child can only miss School if either:

- They are too ill to go in
- Advance permission from the School has been agreed with the parent/carer

7.3 Parents/carers MUST gain prior permission from the Headteacher to take children out of School during term time and this is only permissible if:

- there is a formal application to the Headteacher in advance and
- there are exceptional circumstances and
- the Headteacher will only consider applications for leave of absence which are made by the resident parent/carer with whom the child normally resides.

It is up to the Headteacher's discretion how many days the child may be absent if leave is granted.

7.4 LB Barnet states that '*If a child's attendance is below 90% - unless due to serious medical issues – parents/carers should expect to be challenged about it*'. The Governors of St Andrew's school will seek to uphold this.

7.5 LB Barnet has also stated that '*taking holidays in School time is NOT acceptable*.' The Governors of St Andrew's school will seek to uphold this.



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8 Procedures

8.1 Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers whose children are registered at St Andrew's CE Primary School are responsible by Law for ensuring that their children attend and stay in School. Parents and Carers should:

- ensure that their children arrive at School on time, properly dressed and ready to learn
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending School regularly and impress upon their children the need to observe the School's Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy
- take an active interest in their children's School career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour, attending Parents' Evenings and other relevant meetings, work in partnership with St Andrew's to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify St Andrew's if their child is absent from School. This should be done as soon as possible on the first day of absence providing an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed (preferably in writing, by e-mail) - when the child returns to School
- not keep children out of School for trivial reasons (eg. to go shopping)
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during School hours
- not book holidays during term time

St Andrew's CE Primary School

St Andrew's CE Primary School is responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance. We believe early intervention is essential in dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality.

We will:

- work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole consistently applying this Attendance Policy across the School
- support parents/carers in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance



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- accurately complete Attendance Registers at the start of the School day and at the start of the afternoon session - recording whether pupils are present or absent
- close registers at 9:20am and 1:20pm each day, after which time children arriving late to School will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence
- differentiate in the registers between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised (*see below*)
- reward good and improving attendance and punctuality with praise, Attendance Certificates and the Class Attendance Cup

8.2 Following up Absence and Improving Attendance

- 8.2.1 Good and Outstanding attendance and punctuality will form part of celebration assemblies and will be promoted by class teachers throughout St Andrew's CE Primary School on a weekly basis. The Class Attendance Cup awarded for the highest attendance, will form part of monthly monitoring of overall School attendance by the Headteacher and will be included in the Newsletter.
- 8.2.2 Attendance will be discussed with parents/carers at each Parents Evening whenever there is a cause for concern from either parents/carers, the class teacher or Headteacher.
- 8.2.3 St Andrew's will, on the first-day of absence of any child, (where parents/carers have not already contacted the School) contact parents/carers to ask for the reason their child is not at School.
- 8.2.4 Parents/carers whose children are returning to School after an absence should confirm the reason for the absence (preferably by email) with the School Office who will record the reason for absence. Children will be recorded as having unauthorised absence until a satisfactory reason for absence is established (with evidence if requested)
- 8.2.5 Only St Andrew's CE Primary School can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent/carer has provided a note or other explanation in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the School to accept it. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence will be



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treated as unauthorised.

8.2.6 Holidays requested during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.

8.3 Authorising Absence

Absence will only be authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with leave as authorised by the Headteacher
- the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause (evidence for illness will be sought when the absence occurs immediately prior/following a School holiday or around a weekend)
- the pupil is self-isolating as required by the law under exceptional circumstances
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents/carers who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- there is a family bereavement
- Time out of School for examinations

8.4 Involvement of the EWO

8.4.1 Where the School has identified a pattern of poor attendance (either authorised or unauthorised) and/or punctuality is causing a concern, we will ask the EWO to intervene to assist both the School and parents/carers to improve attendance and/or punctuality.

8.4.2 The Local Authority has the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to School on a regular basis.

8.4.3 If a pupil who is registered at St Andrew's fails to attend School regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the EWO and the School fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, LB Barnet LA will take legal action.



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Barnet Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed penalty notices will be issued when a child is absent from School during term time due to: a family holiday; OR illness which is not substantiated with medical evidence lasting 5 or more consecutive days; OR illness adjoining a School holiday.

- The Penalty notice will be issued via the LA on the advice of and at the discretion of the Headteacher
- The Fixed Penalty Fine will be £60 per parent per child (e.g. a family holiday for two parents and two children would be £240) payable within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid the LA may prosecute.
- The Governing Body views Fixed Penalty Notices as an effective part of the School's drive to improve attendance and reduce unauthorised absences

8.5 **All staff** will:

- Ensure they return accurate Registers on time
- Talk with their class about the importance of attendance and punctuality
- Talk with parents/carers about the importance of attendance and punctuality
- Encourage parents/carers to bring their children to School on time and regularly and use the correct late monitoring and first day call procedures operated by School Office
- Monitor any pupil who may be arriving late or missing School in case of bullying or Safeguarding issues
- Celebrate Good and Outstanding attendance with the class
- Model good practice and attendance and punctuality

8.6 The **School Leadership** will:

Headteacher

- Create an atmosphere of learning and ethos of good attendance and punctuality
- Encourage pupils to attend on time and regularly and celebrate good practice through the awarding of the Class Attendance Cup each Friday and the end of year Outstanding Attendance Certificates



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- Ensure teachers have effective strategies to improve attendance
- Monitor any disease, illness and conditions that prevent children from attending School
- Provide comments to be included in individual pupil's reports in respect of Attendance less than 90%
- Work with the wider community to tackle poor attendance
- Make informed decisions about requests to take children out of School during term time that could be detrimental to the safety of the child
- Liaise with Barnet LA regarding concerns about persistent or worrying pupil absence
- Ensure pupils, staff, parents/carers and Governors all understand this Policy and its implications
- Monitor and evaluate this Policy at regular intervals

Governance

- Ensure the statutory responsibility to record the attendance of pupils
- Ensure that the follow up processes for absence are effective
- An important risk factor in abuse, fgm, radicalisation, grooming, bullying and neglect is poor School attendance and Governors should ensure that attendance 'alerts' are effective in discharging the responsibility for Safeguarding
- Monitor the response to poor attendance and make recommendations for improvement
- Governing Body will receive termly reports on attendance and Punctuality



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9 Sources of further information and support

School attendance– LB Barnet

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/directories/directme/school-attendance>

School Attendance and absence – Gov.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/school-Attendance-absence/overview>

Questions Governors can ask about Attendance – School Governing

<http://schoolgoverning.blogspot.co.uk/2011/04/questions-governors-can-ask-about.html>

School attendance – DfE

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/school-attendance-0>

What is an education welfare officer? – TheSchoolRun.com

<https://www.theschoolrun.com/what-is-an-education-welfare-officer>