ST PAUL'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

2021 -

Our Vision and Values

Our vision is biblically rooted, taken from Isaiah 60 and links directly to the conversion of our Saint, Saint Paul.
“We arise, shine and become who God wants us to be.’’
Our values are informed by the values central to Christianity.

Faith – We can do it with God’s help
Hope – For our future dreams
Love – Love one another as we would like to be loved

Mission Statement

St Paul’s Church of England Primary School is committed to maximising the achievements of all our pupils. Educational research shows that regular and punctual attendance at school is directly linked to pupil attainment. Considering this we aim to promote regular attendance and good punctuality, to ensure all our pupils achieve their full potential. This is so that they not only arise ,shine and become who God wants them to be but also that they can rise, shine and become who they want to be.

At St Paul’s C of E Primary School, we care about the welfare and education of all our pupils therefore, we endeavor to work alongside parents, the local community, and the Education Welfare Service, to pursue our goal of excellent attendance.

St Paul’s C of E Primary School believes:

- that parents have the primary responsibility for bringing their children to school on time every day.
- all children should be enrolled and attend a full day of school, each day of the school term.
- absence and lateness damage a child’s achievement, their friendships, and their relationships in school.
- that not attending school / being late can place a child in unsafe situations, as well as impact their future life chances.
- In the legal and moral responsibility, to do everything it can to ensure regular school attendance for all children.

Aim

This policy aims to meet and exceed our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Making the promotion of good attendance and punctuality everyone’s responsibility within the school community.

- Demonstrating that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Maintaining and developing effective communication between home and school.
- Making Parents aware of their legal responsibilities

Legislation and guidance

Section 7 of The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives appropriate full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, or special needs, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence must be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE)

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 Parents/Carers of a child of compulsory school age, who fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, may be found guilty of an offence, and can be prosecuted by the local authority. The fines available to the courts if parents are found guilty of the section 444(1) offence include a level 3 fine of up to £1,000. If they are found guilty of the section 444(1A) the level 4 fine is, up to £2,500 and the court can also sentence parents to imprisonment for up to three months.

The Education Regulations 2007(and its related amendments) introduced the use of Penalty notices where fines of £60/£120 can be imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered. Penalty notices can only be issued by a Headteacher, or someone authorised by them (a Deputy or Assistant Head), a Local Authority Officer or the Police. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences. Penalty notices can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and its related amendments) stipulates that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should thus determine the number of authorised school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children are punctual and ready to learn at school each day.
- Informing the school of the reasons on the first day of any absence and any subsequent days.
- Booking medical and dental appointments out of school hours (where possible) • Providing medical evidence when required to support reasons for absence.
- Informing the school of any changes to their contact details.
- Collecting their children on time
- In exceptional circumstances completing the emergency leave request form.

- Arranging family holidays during the school holidays and not during term time.
- Supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.
- Following this policy.

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Link Governor : Safeguarding Governor Amy Tiltman

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Responding to all term time leave requests.
- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Approving welfare home visits where parents have not provided a reason for absence.
- Supporting staff with any attendance issues that may arise with individual pupils.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices where necessary

Inclusion leader/Deputy Headteacher

- Monitors attendance and punctuality data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Contacts parents regarding their child's attendance
- Organises meetings with parents and carers.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher, SC (Social Care), EWO (Education Welfare Officer) School Police Officer and Early Help Service.
- Sets targets and completes Parenting Contracts.
- Works with the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence.
- Signposts parents to outside supportive organisations
- Completes referrals to Early Help, EWO, Local Authority (LA), MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), School Nurse.
- Completes welfare check following the first day of absence if a parent has not been in contact with the school.
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. CTs only mark if in/out and reasons for absence/lates are entered only by the office. If CTs are given messages on the gate they must send these to the office asap.

Welcoming children back to school when they have been absent.

School office staff /Attendance Officer

- Receive and documents daily absence data.
- Makes calls, send text messages, letters, and emails to parents/carers.
- Provides attendance data to HT, DHT,
- Compile attendance data reports for HT, DHT Governing Body and EWO.
- Are the first point of contact for all parents to provide reasons for absence.

The Attendance and Monitoring Process

Registers

At St Paul's C of E Primary School, we use DFE (Department for Education) codes to complete the registers. Attendance is marked with either an authorised or unauthorised code. It is at the Headteachers discretion as to whether attendance is authorised or not.

The school day starts at 8:45am and the school day ends at 3:15pm.

Teachers are expected to complete their registers by 8:55am using the Arbor system. Registers close at 9;45 am for the morning session and children are marked as unauthorized late from this point. and 1.10pm for the afternoon session. Any child who arrives after this time is marked as being unauthorised late, unless information has been received prior to arrival or has been authorised, i.e. If the child has a medical appointment.

Fire registers are printed daily.

Registers are checked weekly for errors which are corrected, and any N codes are then investigated by the Attendance Officer via letter.

Lateness and punctuality

Children who arrive late to school after 8:55am enter via the school reception area. The Receptionist/Attendance Officer then ensures the child is registered and the reason for lateness is recorded in the late record. This is inspected fortnightly by the Attendance Officer and discussed with the EWO. The reason for lateness and time of arrival is recorded on Arbor.

Where a child is persistently late, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent /carer to arrange a meeting to establish the reasons for the lateness and set a plan for improvement.

SLT/EWO will arrange a termly Late Gate to encourage good punctuality and awareness of attendance.

Unplanned absence

If a child is unable to attend school on any given day due to illness or an emergency, parents / carers are required to inform the office by 9:00am of the reasons for absence by calling 020 7703 4896 or emailing office@stpauls.southwark.sch.uk

It is at the Headteachers discretion to authorise absence, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the reported absence then an authorised code will be applied to the register however, once a child's attendance falls below 90% an unauthorised code may be applied. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the reason for absence, the absence will also be recorded as unauthorised.

The school may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate document.

Planned absence.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised absence if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.
However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Following up on unexplained absence

On the first day of absence, if the school have not received notification of a child's reason for absence, the Receptionist/ Attendance Officer will call by 10am to try an obtain reasons for the absence. If this contact is successful, the reason for absence will be noted on Arbor and a suitable code entered in the register.

If no contact is made by the parent following a phone call then a text message will be attempted. If parents / carers have not been in contact by 10.30am then we will start to call all the emergency contact numbers on a child's file to gain an explanation for the absence.

If it has not been possible to ascertain the whereabouts of a child, then a Welfare Check will be considered and completed. If we are unable to get a response once a welfare check has been completed the child will be viewed as missing and the Police and our Education Welfare Service will be notified.

Persistent Absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate 90% or below, the pupil will be classified as a Persistent Absentee (PA).

Pupils are tracked and monitored carefully, and we combine academic monitoring where absence affects attainment using our three-tier framework noted below:

Stage 1: The School monitors attendance on a regular basis and identifies any pupil(s) whose attendance causes concern. The school will formally write to advise parents/carers as part of our commitment to improving the attainment of pupils.

Stage 2: If concerns persist and attendance falls below 95%, the school will contact the parent / carer and offer a school meeting to discuss ways to improve attendance. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss the reasons for the absence and supportive measures will be offered by the school with the aim of improving attendance. At this stage, the parent will be advised that if future absence is unauthorised then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service (Visions for Schools and Educations - VSE).

Stage 3: If the concerns persist and attendance reaches 90% the school will make a formal referral to the Education Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues. The Education Welfare Officer will complete an Attendance Improvement Plan with families and advise parents /carers of their legal responsibility regarding regular school attendance. If attendance continues to deteriorate or this plan is not adhered to, then the case will be considered for referral to the LA, for legal assessment and planning. This could result in the issue of a penalty notice. Please see Appendix 2

Term Time Leave and Exceptional Circumstances

In line with DFE guidance, at St Paul's C of E Primary School the Headteacher will **not** authorise term time leave for family holidays or for other reasons, unless there is an exceptional circumstance.

Application for any term-time leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances must be made two weeks in advance (where possible) by the parent with whom the child normally resides, on the form headed 'Exceptional Circumstance Pupil Term Time Leave Request.' These may be obtained from the School Office or downloaded from the school website and emailed into the school office: office@stpauls.southwark.sch.uk Each application must be supported with documented evidence. Parents will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

See Appendix 1

Children Missing Education (CME)

A child of compulsory school age who is either not registered at a school or not receiving a suitable education in place of a school setting, is deemed as a Child Missing Education (CME).

A CME may be at a significant risk of not meeting their academic potential and underachieving, so all reported cases are referred to the LA for full investigation.

Elective Home Education

Elective Home Education (EHE) is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they wish, instead of sending them to school full-time.

Educating children at home, works well when it is a positive choice and carried out with a proper regard for the needs of the child.

If you wish to opt for this method of education, please inform St Paul's C of E School in writing. It is important that you get all the necessary support, as under this arrangement you will assume all financial responsibly for your child's education and examinations.

We recommend contact is made with the Southwark Elective Home Education Advisor on 020 7525 0528 / 020 7525 0428 or email; electivehomeeducation@southwark.gov.uk.

Promoting good attendance

At St Paul's C of E Primary School, we celebrate good attendance by:

- Encouraging children to think about healthy routines that promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Termly newsletter presenting attendance league table and most improved class attendance.
- Team points for attendance daily (students receive one team point for attendance daily and two team points if all the class is present daily).
- Praising and encouraging good attendance at school.
- Awarding a joint Certificate of Achievement to parent/carer and child for 100% attendance each term.
- Arranging a termly prize draw for an Amazon voucher for children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole academic year/ or children who have the most improved attendance in each year group – September to July.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Ali Silke. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Our School's Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Department for Education 2020
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – Department for Education
- The Prevent Duty – Department for Education June 2015

Approved by:	[Name]	**Date:** [Date]
Last reviewed on:	[Date]	
Next review due by:	[Date]	

Appendix 1 EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST

Pupil's Name …… D.O.B …….. Class ……

Pupil's Name …… D.O.B …….. Class ……

I request permission for the above-named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request (please provide as much detail as possible and any supporting evidence):
……
.....

Dates of Absence From …… To …… No of school days ……..

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling with in the UK or abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, I / we could then be required to attend Court; this could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and having a criminal record.
- in exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.
- he/she may be removed from the school register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Parent/Carer Name ……

DOB…… Address……..

……

Signature…… Date……

Parent/Carer Name ……
DOB…… Address……
…… Signature……
Date……

To be completed by the office:

Attendance of children in rolling year:……..

To be completed by Headteacher

Request agreed / denied

Signed …… Head Teacher Dated ……

Appendix 2

Southwark Penalty Notice Guidance

a. ***"Unauthorised term-time leave (including leave for family holiday) (G)****: Any parent who takes a child out of school for term-time leave of 10 or more morning and afternoon sessions during any 100 possible school sessions or 50 school days, not authorised by the school under exceptional circumstances, may receive a penalty notice. The unauthorised term-time leave does not have to be consecutive for a parent to receive a penalty notice. In deciding whether to refer a case for the sanction of a penalty notice, the headteacher should consider whether there is known evidence of previous unauthorised term time leave taken in the last 3 years and evidence of parents having been warned previously about a potential penalty notice*

b. ***Exclusion****: Where a child is found in a public place during school hours of day one to five of any fixed term or permanent exclusion*

c. ***Lateness****: In cases were the (U) code is given for lateness after the register is closed if there are 20 (U) codes or more in a half term*

d. ***Persistent absence in the Spring Term for year 11 pupils****: Where at least 40 sessions (20 school days) have been lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during one school term or consecutively across two terms and/or unauthorised absence for any public examination of which dates have been published beforehand*

e. ***Non-Engagement****: In cases where all attempts have been made to engage the family and they have failed all meetings offered and attendance remains a*

Penalty Notice and Term Time Leave Guidance

Southwark Councils Penalty Notice Code of Conduct confirms that Penalty Notices can be considered to supplement existing sanctions for poor school attendance. The Council has set the maximum of one penalty notice per parent in any given 12-month period when there is: