



**ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

'Be the Good Soil' Mark 4: 1-20

'In Jesus we learn, love and grow together'

ATTENDANCE POLICY



St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

Introduction:

At St. Peter's Church of England Primary School, we strive to achieve excellent attendance for all our pupils. We work closely with children and parents in connection with attendance so that each child can reach their full potential. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how we can achieve this together.

"Improving attendance is everyone's business"
(Department for Education, 2024)

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will not only disrupt your child's learning, but also their friendships in school and their self esteem. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so also affects the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular school newsletter;
- Report to you when your child's attendance is causing concern;
- Celebrate good or improving attendance by displaying class achievements;
- Reward good attendance through class competitions, certificates and events.
- All children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special certificates for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole term and year.
- We have a weekly attendance and punctuality prize of an extra play time for the class with the best attendance and punctuality for the week. This is announced during 'Good News' assembly on a Friday to signify the importance to pupils and parents.

Our school day:

The school day starts promptly at **8.50am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked and sent to the office by **9.00am**.

The school day ends at **3:20pm**.

Children will receive 2 marks for a full school day – this is 9am across the whole school for the morning session and then the afternoon session is dependent on key stage.

- Nursery – 12:30pm
- Reception – 12:45pm
- Key Stage 1 (Y1 & Y2) – 1pm
- Key Stage 2 (Y3-Y6) – 1:30pm

Lateness:

If a child arrives after registration, they will be marked **late**. Any children who arrive in school beyond 9:30am will receive an **unauthorised absence**.

Parents must bring their child into the school office and sign them in, with reasons provided for why they are not in school on time.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they miss vital information that could be the initial input to the morning lesson or 1:1 work in line with IEP's or extended learning. Late arriving pupils also disrupt assemblies and lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

Regular monitoring is in place to manage the levels of poor punctuality across school. If your child has a persistent late record you will receive a letter informing you of this.

You may also be invited to meet with the Pastoral Officer and/or the Education Welfare Officer to help resolve the problem.

Continual lateness could also result in a Penalty Notice.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school is reportable by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. (See Appendix 1 for registration codes used to mark attendance)

This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

School attendance is monitored by the Local Authority.

Authorised absences are a morning or afternoon off school for a good reason such as;

Illness – this will be reviewed dependent on the reason for absence.

Medical appointments – Evidence of the appointment must be provided to authorise the absence. Parents would also be expected to bring the child before the appointment and after where this is possible.

Religious Observance – The head teacher will authorise 1 day where this falls in school time following guidance from the Local Authority or school community. In this instance, a letter will be sent out to parents to inform them of this.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider exceptional and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to support through Education Welfare or the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

The following are not acceptable reasons to be absent from school and will be unauthorised:

- Absences when a parent/carer is ill or a sibling is ill

- Day trips and holidays in term time (no holidays will be authorised in term time)
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Looking after family or siblings
- Having a haircut
- Visiting relatives
- Parents/carers keeping children off school because they said school was closed
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late
- Thought school was still closed following a half term holiday

Sometimes children can be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

As parent, you must discuss this with school and explore further support either provided by the school or formalized in conjunction with the Education Welfare Service.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent, parents must:

- Contact us by telephone before 9am on the first day of absence;
- Or, you can come into school and report the absence at the school office.

If your child is absent and we have had no reason provided, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence;
- If there is no reply from the initial text or phone call by 10.30am, a further phone call will be made to the phone numbers on the system;
- If there is still no response, this may trigger a home visit made by the Pastoral Officer, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

If your child's levels of absence are becoming a concern, we will:

- Write letters home to draw your attention to your child's attendance;
- Invite you into school to discuss recurring absences and how we could offer support;
- Have discussions with the Education Welfare Officer regarding additional support.

Persistent Absentees (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**, including authorised absences. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents full support and co-operation to tackle this.

Severe persistently absent pupils have missed more than 50% or more school sessions. This level of absence would immediately trigger discussions between school and the Education Welfare Officer and where required, provide support plans to encourage improvement.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority.

You may receive letters home to inform you where there is a decrease in attendance.

All cases of PA are also discussed with our Education Welfare Officer.

Children are placed into category bands according to their attendance and punctuality rates, to determine the action taken by school;

CATEGORY BAND	LEVELS	ACTION
GOLD BAND	Attendance/ Punctuality 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent attendance/punctuality will be celebrated.
GREEN BAND	Attendance/ Punctuality 100% to 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good attendance/punctuality will be celebrated.
YELLOW BAND 'BEGINNING TO CAUSE CONCERN'	Attendance/ Punctuality 96% to 93%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEGINNING TO CAUSE CONCERN • Parents may receive a letter highlighting their child's low attendance/punctuality and asking for improvement to bring their child's attendance/punctuality to above 95%. • Parents may be called in for a meeting about their child's low attendance/ punctuality.
ORANGE BAND 'SERIOUS CONCERNS OVER ATTENDANCE'	Attendance/ Punctuality 93% to 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SERIOUS CONCERNS OVER ATTENDANCE • Parents may receive a letter or be called in for a meeting about their child's low attendance/ punctuality to identify reasons and discuss the effect of the absence on their child's progress.
RED BAND 'PUPIL IDENTIFIED AS PERSISTENTLY ABSENT AND IS IN A HIGH RISK GROUP'	Attendance/ Punctuality BELOW 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PUPIL IDENTIFIED AS PERSISTENTLY ABSENT AND IS IN A HIGH-RISK GROUP • The child is classed as 'Persistently Absent'. A 'Early Help Assessment' (EHA) may be drawn up to include all relevant agencies required to improve attendance/punctuality e.g. Social Services, Educational Welfare, Family Support Service, Health Services, Police, etc. • A FIXED PENALTY NOTICE MAY BE ISSUED.

The Education Welfare Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at the earliest opportunity to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful.

The Education Welfare Officer will meet with the Pastoral Officer each half term to discuss any concerns with attendance and explore support they can offer to families to encourage improved attendance. This may be through advice, signposting to outside agencies, an Early Help Assessment or attendance support plan.

In some circumstances where this level of intervention is unsuccessful, these officers can use further sanctions such as legal panels, fixed penalty notices and prosecutions in court.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Service themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office, by contacting the Local Education Authority or alternatively you can use the 'Our Rochdale' website.

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the area.

Throughout the school year we regularly monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. We hold weekly assemblies as a whole school to celebrate good school attendance. There are rewards for pupils in termly attendance assemblies and a special 100% attendance assembly at the end of the academic year where rewards are presented.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter and we ask for parents' full support.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times.

To help us, help you and your child please make sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. We ask parents for at least, where possible, 3 contact numbers on record. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Holidays/Extended Leave During Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time has a detrimental affect on your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Holidays in term time will not be authorised by school.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Extended leave must be requested through the specific request form held at the school office at least 28 days prior to the first day of absence. Any additional documentation to support the request must also be provided. The request should be completed in full and state where the pupil will be located during the period of absence, in line with safeguarding procedures.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice or even loss of your child's school place.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mr D. Wood, Deputy Headteacher & Attendance Officer – Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance

Mr A. Whelan, Head Teacher – Whole School Oversight

Mrs M. Sutton, Attendance Governor – Monitoring attendance data

Mrs F. Dawson, Pastoral Officer – In-depth monitoring of whole school, individual

attendance support, home visits, parental and education welfare liaison.
Miss V Hasker & Mrs K Price, Office Administrator – Day to day attendance reporting

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures with the Department for Education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school regularly. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

“Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and should therefore be seen as everyone’s responsibility in school” (Department for Education, 2024)

(date)

Legal Framework:

Working Together to Improve School Attendance – Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (Updated in August 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

This guidance also provides schools and parents/carers with information about the national changes to penalty notices and the new framework which is in place from the academic year beginning in September 2024.

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

Contact information:

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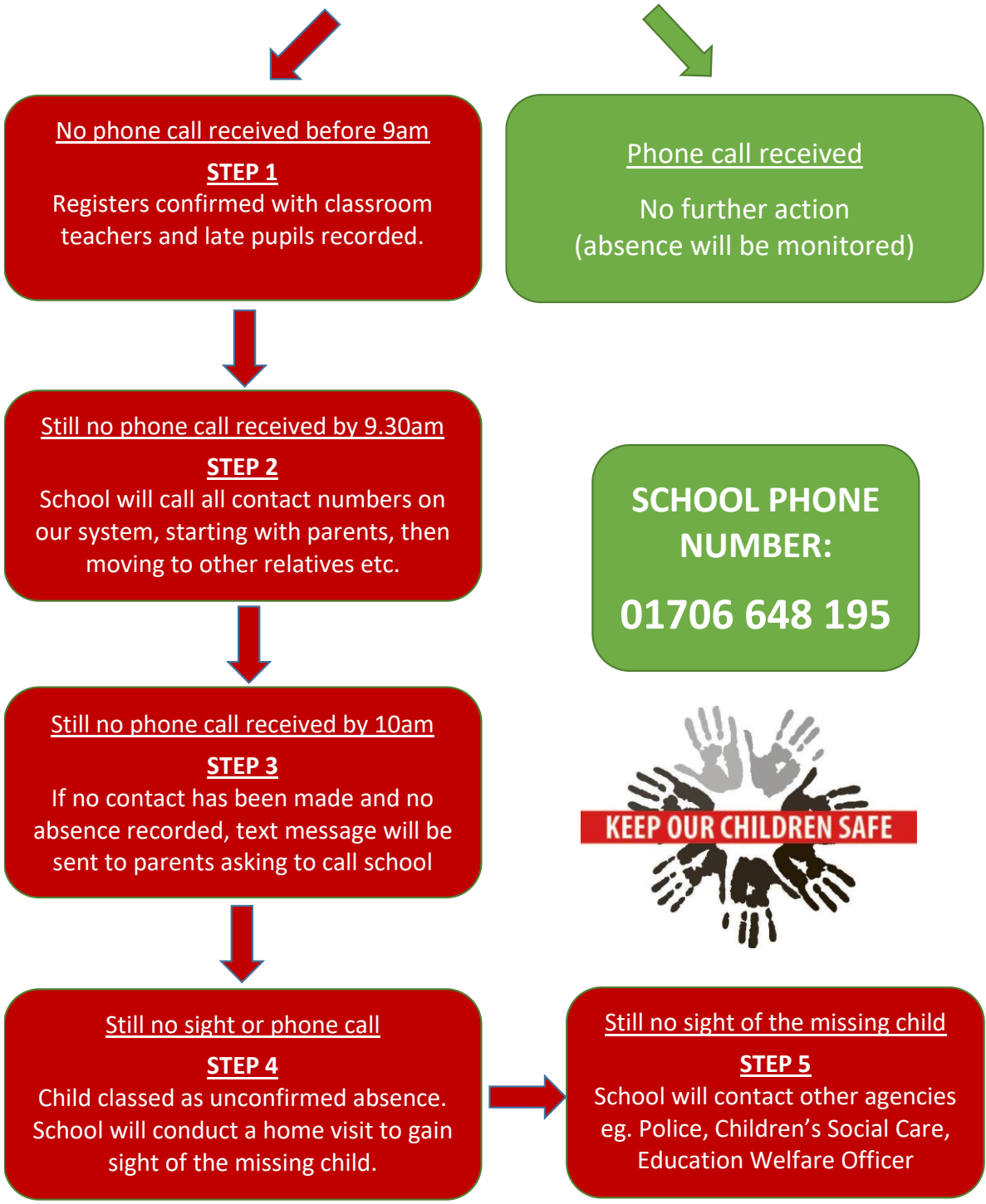
Appendix 1 – First Day Absence Procedures

ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



What procedure will be followed if my child is off sick?

Each day your child is poorly you must phone the school to let us know before 9am.



Appendix 2 – Attendance Coding for Registers

Code	Official description by Department for Education	Description
/	Present AM	Present AM
\	Present PM	Present PM
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Educated off site
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	Other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Leave of absence – regulated performance
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Leave of absence with temporary part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school	Dual registration
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Excluded
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Extended leave – holiday not agreed
I	Illness (not medical or dental)	Illness
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Interview
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Alternative provision provided by the LA
L	Late arrival before register is closed	Late before registration closed
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Medical/Dental Appointment
N	Reason for absence not yet established	No reason provided for absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances (unauthorised)	Unauthorised absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Approved sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend due to the LA lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance	Religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Study leave
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Traveller absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Late after registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Educational trip or visit
W	Attending work experience	Work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Non-compulsory school age absence
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Unable to attend – allocated transport not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption traffic	Unable to attend – widespread travel emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial school closure
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Unable to attend – unavoidable full school closure
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Unable to attend – detention sentence
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Unable to attend – public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Unable to attend – reason that is not covered by Y1-Y6
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil not on role
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure



Penalty Notice Fines for School Absence Have Changed

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes are now enforced for Penalty Notice fines issued for unauthorised absence.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child that is absent.

For example: **three siblings** absent for Term Time Leave will result in **each parent** receiving **three separate fines**.

5 Consecutive Days of Term Time Leave

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days and for fewer days where this has happened before.



10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 Week Period

Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10-week period.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

No option to pay at £80 level.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to the Magistrate's Court. Magistrate's fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrate's Court can show on the parent's future DBS Certificate due to '*failure to safeguard a child's education*' and may impact on job applications and travel abroad.

Court Prosecutions: Penalty notices will not be automatically be issued. Parents are advised where the Local Authority considers that a Penalty Notice is not appropriate due to the level of concern about a child's absence, prosecution action may be taken.

