



ALL SAINTS SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Links with other policies:	Behaviour Policy Whole School policy for Safeguarding incorporating Child Protection What to do if a child goes missing
Signed:	

All Saints School

Attendance Policy

Principles

- All Saints School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her potential.
- The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
- All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.
- The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping. We will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and their parents, who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- To meet these objectives All Saints School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Purpose

- To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school. National figures show that 75% of students with attendance rates of 94% and above achieve at least five or more A*-C grades at GCSE
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents and teachers.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Procedures

The school will deliver the attendance policy by ensuring that the various stakeholders' responsibilities are as outlined in the following areas of responsibilities.

Areas of Responsibilities

Pupils' Responsibilities

- To attend school unless their absence can be authorised.
- To remain in school at all times, unless they have permission from the Head Teacher to leave the site.
- To arrive at school punctually.
- If pupils are late, they should go to the office to be signed in. Pupils who have attended a medical appointment should hand in the appointment card or a note from parents, at the office.
- If students fail to sign in, a letter will be sent home to parents and the pupil will be expected to make up their 'lost time' in their own time.

Parents' Responsibilities

- Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school.
- Parents should ensure their child is in school by 8.50 each day. Any student who is not in school at registration at 9am is, by definition, late.
- Parents should telephone the school office from 8.15am on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Parents should provide the pupil with a letter explaining the reason for absence on the day they return to school. This is essential so that all absences can be proved to be genuine.
- Parents should provide the pupil with a note or a medical appointment card for authorised absence. The note must be seen and signed by the Secretary or Head Teacher. This will be kept in the pupil's school file.
- Parents should inform the school in advance, if they wish the school to authorise leave for their child. It is important to recognise that it is the Head Teacher who ultimately decides if an absence can or cannot be authorised.

The legal context

Under Section 444 of the Education Act, an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are a registered pupil, and the absence is not authorised by the school. Only Head Teachers can authorise absence and the only legal reasons for absence are:

- 1. That the absences are with leave (ie that they have been agreed by the Head Teacher)***
- 2. That the absences are because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Parents may be asked to provide evidence to support absences due to ill health, this can be through a copy of an appointment card or prescription or information from a medical practitioner***
- 3. That the absences fall on days of religious observance for the religion to which parents belong***
- 4. That the child is entitled to free transport to school and the County Council has failed to provide this***

If absences do not fall into any of these four categories or the school has not been informed of reasons for absence, absences will be marked as unauthorised. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced powers for issuing fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations came into force on 27 February 2004. These were updated with amendments in 2007, 2012 and 2013.

In Norfolk, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Norfolk Local Protocol (May 2014).

A school can refer a case to the County Council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for either:

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- 1. 15% or more unauthorised absence for reasons other than a term-time holiday within a six week period.**
- 2. Where in a 12 week period, there are unauthorised absences bringing attendance below 90% and some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time.**

Other legal interventions are available and your child's school can provide you with more information if it is required.

Failure to pay a fixed penalty notice reverts back to a Section 444 1 Education Act 1996 offence and you will face prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for term-time holidays and the Isle of Wight case

Following the recent press reports in response to the Isle of Wight case, the following information is intended to provide some clarity for schools and parents on the issue.

It is important to note that there has been no change to the law and Department for Education (DfE) guidance in respect of authorisation of family holiday during term time. Head Teachers should continue to comply with the 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (2006) Regulations 2013 which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the head teacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not.

The High Court ruling is not as a result of legislation, it is a single case which binds the lower courts "to follow it in subsequent cases". In light of the High Court Judgment and further advice from the Department of Education (DfE), we have taken legal advice and consulted with other Local Authorities to review our current practices. Norfolk County Council's current Penalty Notice Code of Conduct is robust and rigorous in that we do ensure our strict criteria are followed and individual case referrals are looked at to ensure consistency and fairness.

At All Saints School, we follow Department for Education regulations, we discourage all parents from requesting any leave in term time.

*"The Department for Education has made it very clear that a head teacher must only authorise such absences in **exceptional circumstances** based on the individual facts of the case.*

It is not an entitlement and is completely at the discretion of the school's head teacher. Schools should not authorise absences if they believe it will have a negative impact on a student's education or if the absences are during school exam periods. The decision made is final and there is no opportunity to appeal.

Before speaking to the school parents should consider how the absences will affect their child's education. National statistics show ten days of absence in any academic year have a

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negative effect on attainment. Schools are not obliged to provide work for students taking time off; however some schools may choose to do this”.

The School will:

- Take an accurate, legal, daily register
- Complete the unexplained absence report by Friday afternoon. This is a legal requirement
- Regularly contact the parents whose attendance is a cause of concern, eg under 85%
- Ask for medical evidence if necessary
- Deal with pupils who truant or arrive late to their lessons. There is a need also to look at pupils who are late to all lessons in one day.
- Attendance and punctuality will be discussed in staff meetings.
- Analyse the attendance data for all classes and intervene with other external agencies when necessary and where there are concerns
- Use a range of strategies to support pupils who have a poor attendance record. (eg. pupil care or multi agency meetings).
- Reward good / improving attendance
- Set attendance targets for all students
- Write to parents termly to inform them, using the traffic light system, of their child's attendance rate (see below).
- Reduce persistent absentees
- The school aims to meet our annual attendance targets.

The Form Tutor will:

- Check on notes and inform the School Office if they are not brought in on return to school
- Refer concerns to the Head Teacher.
- Look for patterns of absences (subject, days of week etc)
- Encourage improvement in the attendance of individuals

The form tutor plays a central role in co-ordinating information and building up an attendance profile on the pupils with their group.

The Teachers will:

- Monitor attendance in their class during the first ten minutes of the lesson
- Look for patterns in absence and report this to the Head Teacher. This will be discussed in a staff meeting.
- Take action in respect to lateness of lessons. For those pupils who are late to lessons, they will 'make up' the time at break times or lunch times.
- Provide appropriate support for those who have been absent

Every teacher is responsible for monitoring attendance and the impact it has on learning at All Saints School.

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The School Office will:

- On a daily basis, check phone messages for notification of absence, check the register for absence or late marks and phone parents on the first day of absence if the school have not been notified.
- Analyse and provide attendance data for Staff meetings.

Attendance Awards

- Termly certificates for outstanding 100% attendance.
- Outstanding attendance for the year will be celebrated in the annual prizegiving ceremony at the end of the summer term.

Attendance Letters

The school will send a letter home to parents termly to inform them of their child's attendance since September. The percentage will be recorded and it will also be coded as follows:

Green: represent 96% and above, which is excellent and means the student has the best possible chance of reaching their full potential.

Amber: signify attendance between 95.9 and 90% and we would expect an improvement over the following term.

Red: represent an attendance below 90% which is not acceptable unless there are genuine medical reasons.

Pink: those who have genuine long term medical issues.

Attendance/Punctuality Report

Pupils whose attendance or punctuality level is identified as being a cause for concern will be placed on our attendance report.

The report will be monitored by the Form Tutor and Head Teacher.

Truancy

Parents will be notified by letter or telephoned if their child has truanted from school. Pupils who truant from school will be reported to the Head Teacher. They will be given a detention to catch up on missed work and will be put onto attendance report.

Assemblies

The Head Teacher will give regular assemblies about the importance of good attendance.

Please note: Norovirus (NHS advice)

Norovirus can spread very easily, so you should **wash your hands** regularly while you're ill and **stay off school until at least 48 hours after the symptoms have cleared**, to reduce the risk of passing it on.