



For the children to realise their God-given gifts and talents, and grow following the example of Jesus

Matthew 19:26- But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible but with God all things are possible”

Attendance Policy St Peter’s CE Primary School May 2021

Aim and Purpose of Policy

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that the pupils attend school for the maximum amount of days possible in their time at our school so that they can reach their full potential. There is a direct link between poor attainment and poor attendance. The Policy is adopted in line with our Christian vision and ethos and is compatible with other policies such as those for Behaviour and Safeguarding.

In order to deliver this Policy we:

- make sure we meet statutory requirements and paying due regard to legislation
- meet the OFSTED Outstanding requirements:
 - (i) “Pupils, consistently punctual”.
 - (ii) “Attendance is above average for all groups”
- make sure that there are no school based disincentives such as poor teaching, bullying, loneliness
- work with parents to reduce and remove disincentives outside school

School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil’s absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carers, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which would then be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 have removed all references to family holidays and leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application had been made in advance and the headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Whilst the headteacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused.

Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be coded as unauthorised (G code) and a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent for each child (where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded as a result).

If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, in accordance with the Essex Code of Conduct (£120 per parent, per child / £60 if paid within 21 days), where there have been 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence recorded. If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will instigate legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

Roles Responsibilities and Procedures

School

- The school uses an electronic register system
- The register opens at 8.45am and closes at 9.00am in the morning. Any child arriving after this time will be marked as late. If a child arrives after 9.20 they will be marked as an unauthorised absence. The afternoon register opens at 1.10pm and closes at 1.15pm. Any child arriving after this time will be marked as late. If a child arrives after 1.25pm they will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Any child who is brought into school after the register closes must be added to the electronic entry system so a record is made of them being on site.
- The school will consider all leave requests, looking at the reason and the child's attendance this year and in previous years.
- The school will challenge families where attendance is below expectations
- The teaching staff will report any unusual patterns in attendance to the Safeguarding Lead person.
- The school will send information of unauthorised absence to Essex County Council who may issue penalties.
- The school will write to the parents of any child who has an attendance of 95% or below each term.
- Parents of any child who has an attendance of below 90% (persistent absence) will be contacted.
- The pupil's attendance will be reported on formally twice a year in the half yearly and end of year report.
- The school will report details of any child with an attendance of below 90% to children missing in education as this constitutes persistent absence. The details will also be reported to Essex County Council.

Governors

- The Governors will set an annual attendance target.
- The Governors will monitor the school attendance figures on a termly basis.
- The Governors will receive a written report on the school's attendance as part of the Head Teachers written termly report.

Parents/carers

- It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their child attends school and is punctual.
- If a child is absent the parents will ring the school and leave a message on the answering machine. This should happen each day that the child is absent, unless they have a long term illness and the school has been informed of this.
- On the first day that a child returns to school the parents will provide a written account of their absence. The class teacher will send out one reminder after a week if a letter has not been received. If no absence letter is received after this then the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Parents **must** avoid taking their children out during term times. However, in exceptional circumstances, permission can be requested by filling out a Green Form from the office and submitting this with an accompanying letter.
- If a child is brought into school after 9.00am then they must be brought into school via the main office. This is so they can be signed in and their lunch order taken.

Pupils

- The pupils will ensure that they get to registration promptly in the mornings and make every effort to come into school.

MECES- Missing education and child employment service

There are three referral pathways to MECES

- To request an investigation officer chairs a school attendance meeting
- To request penalty notices for irregular school attendance.
- Investigation as to whether a prosecution or education supervision order is appropriate.

Attendance Targets

St Peter's School has an annual attendance target set by governors. The school's target is 97% or better. It is expected that the whole school community will work together to achieve this target. Attainment is strongly linked to attendance, and research has shown that if pupils are to achieve their full potential, they must attend school regularly.

- 90 % attendance means that your child will be absent from school to the equivalent of one half day every week
- In one year this is the equivalent of 4 weeks missed
- Over 5 years of education this is half a school academic year.
- 80% attendance is equivalent to a whole academic school year missed over 5 years.

Last Review: May 2021

Next Review: May 2022