



Saint Peter's Catholic Primary School

'Christ in the centre, excellence at the heart'

Mission Statement

To provide a	Catholic Education, embracing world faiths,
Nurturing	Happy and motivated children
Who want to	Reach to achieve high expectations
	In partnership with parents
	Supported by a committed staff and Governing Body
Who help children	To feel self-worth and know success

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved / Adopted Date: Autumn 2023

Name: Liz Franklin (Chair of approving/adopting committee)

Next Review Date: Autumn 2026

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality through monitoring of pupil's arrival time.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement (see section 7)
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The attendance officer is Mrs. Lisa Geary and she can be contacted via office@stpetershinckley.net (attn: L Geary)

3.5 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis using Arbor and submitting this information to the school office.
- Registers will be called twice daily (at 9.00 and at 1.00 for infants and 1.15 for juniors and the whole school on a Friday).

3.6 School Office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Make phone calls to parents of pupils who have not given a reason for their child's absence

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence/ advise when they are expected to return)
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45(FS)/ 8:50 (Y1-Y6) on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00 and will be kept open until 9:10. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00/1:15.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:30 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7). Absence may also be notified by email or in person.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers should inform the school by either phone call, email or in person.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained - this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence level by:

- Yearly attendance certificates as part of their school report

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The following strategies will be used for promoting attendance:

- 'Attendance cup' awarded monthly for the class with the highest attendance
- 100% attendance certificates presented at the end of the year
- Percentages as part of the weekly school bulletin

7. Attendance monitoring

Attendance of persistent absentees below 90% will be monitored and analysed half-termly by the attendance officer. This analysis will take into account pupil groups/ cohorts as well as individual pupils that require support with their attendance.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Those with explained reasons (e.g., illness/ medical) will be recorded and monitored.

Those with no explained reason:

- Inform class teachers of pupils with attendance below 90%. Parents will be spoken to informally to find out if there are any issues that are causing the absence.

If attendance does not improve:

- Parents receive 1st formal letter
- If attendance does not improve, 2nd formal letter.
- If no marked improvement, a formal meeting is set up with parents and SLT
 - At this meeting a way forward is agreed with targets set and support, if necessary, put in place

- Follow up meeting 6 weeks later/ or letter whichever is appropriate
- Pupil continues to be monitored
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 1: Letter templates

Letter 1

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re:

St Peter's School and its Governing Body is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all its pupils. We closely monitor all pupil's attendance to ensure we are putting all necessary support in place to help your child.

Any pupil whose attendance falls below 90 per cent is viewed as a persistent absentee by the school and the government and will be monitored. As a parent/carers I am sure you will agree that your child must attend school regularly to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained from the education provided.

This letter is for information only to keep you informed of your child's attendance levels. Enclosed is a copy of your child's school attendance record.

You will see that the attendance is now per cent.

We will always consider individual pupil circumstances and needs, and recognise that on occasions, absence is unavoidable.

There are a number of things that you can also do to help:

- Where possible, make all appointments after school hours.
- Do not take your child out for holidays in term time, in line with Government legislation.
- In the case of mild illness, send your child to school.
- Prescribed medication can be kept in the office.

We will continue to monitor your child's school attendance, and, with your co-operation, I anticipate a gradual improvement.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Geary
Deputy Headteacher

Letter 2

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re:

St Peter's School and its Governing Body is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all its pupils. We are also legally required to keep parents and families informed of their child's attendance record.

St Peter's school aims to maintain all pupil's attendance at the highest levels possible, considering individual pupil circumstances and needs. Any pupil whose attendance falls below 90 per cent is viewed as a persistent absentee by school and the government and will be monitored.

You will see that the attendance is still below 90% at %

We recognise that on occasion, absence is unavoidable or there has been genuine illness. We are keen to work with you to help and support your child. As always, we appreciate your continued support. If there is anything you wish to discuss further, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

There are a number of things that you can also do to help:

- Where possible, make all appointments after school hours.
- Do not take your child out for holidays in term time, in line with Government legislation.
- In the case of mild illness, send your child to school.
- Prescribed medication can be kept in the office.

Unless there is an improvement, I will have to request that you attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, so that we can discuss how we can support you in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Geary
Deputy Headteacher

Letter 3

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re:

St Peter's School and its Governing Body is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all its pupils. We are also legally required to keep parents and families informed of their child's attendance record.

St Peter's school aims to maintain all pupil's attendance at the highest levels possible, considering individual pupil circumstances and needs. Any pupil whose attendance falls below 90 per cent is viewed as a persistent absentee by the school and the government and will be monitored.

You will see that the attendance is still below 90% at %

We recognise that on occasion, absence is unavoidable or there has been genuine illness, but without medical evidence, if illnesses continue, we are required to mark this as unauthorised.

When a pupil has significant absence, we explore if there are any additional support systems we can put in place. We seek your help to continue to improve ____'s attendance by asking that you contact the office to arrange a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss strategies for urgent improvement in attendance.

As always, we appreciate your support and co-operation, working together to ensure the best possible future for your child.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Oxley
Headteacher

Letter 4

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re:

St Peter's School and its Governing Body is committed to improving achievement through attendance and monitors the attendance of all its pupils. We are also legally required to keep parents and families informed of their child's attendance record.

St Peter's school aims to maintain all pupil's attendance at the highest levels possible, considering individual pupil circumstances and needs. Any pupil whose attendance falls below 90 per cent is viewed as a persistent absentee by school and the government and will be monitored.

You will see that the attendance is still below 90% at %

We recognise that on occasion, absence is unavoidable or there has been genuine illness, but without medical evidence if illnesses continue, we are required to mark this as unauthorised.

Duty of Parents and Carers

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 lays duty on parents to ensure that their child receives an efficient, full-time education, which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude, and any special needs that they may have. Parents may be prosecuted if they fail to ensure their child receives an education.

_____’s attendance continues to be a cause for concern despite previous correspondence, support and strategies.

At this stage, a referral to Leicestershire County Council Inclusion Services has been submitted. They oversee referrals and make decisions as to whether further actions are required. The Court Team can action penalty notices under the Education Act, 1996.

Please contact the office on 01455 634087 to make an appointment to discuss ways in which we can offer support to prevent further action from Leicestershire County Council.

We look forward to hearing from you so that we can work together on next steps.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Oxley
Headteacher