

All Saints Catholic College



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved by:

Teaching and
Learning Committee

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance 2022](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2.1 Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

2.2 Pupils Not on Roll by the Expected Start Date

If pupils do not appear on the relevant school migration report by their expected start date, school admissions staff will request the reason from the school.

If a reason cannot be ascertained or an alternative agreed start date is not communicated to the parent /school admissions by the 16th day the following actions will be put in place:

- If the child is missing because school cannot contact the family, School Admissions will remind the school to notify the Children Missing in Education (CME) Officer.
- If the child is not missing, an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be assigned to investigate the matter. If the pupil is refusing to attend, the school will be expected to take steps to address the non-attendance in the usual manner. This can include legal action. Responsibility is deemed to have been passed to the new school once the start date has been notified to them (as stated in the offer letter).

If the school has not contacted the parent to explain how the admission will be organised the Education Welfare Officer will escalate the matter to a Senior EWO. If, following Senior EWO intervention the pupil is not in school by day 25, formal steps to direct the school to admit the pupil will be taken. For full documentation please see appendix 1.)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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. The Governor for attendance is Ann Marie Worrall.

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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Oversight of attendance is delegated to Assistant Headteacher Sara Scott

3.3 The Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance

The Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Managing the attendance officer and their work
- Liaising with the Education Welfare Officer from Tameside.

3.4 Subject Leaders/Form Tutors/Class Teachers

Subject Leaders /Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance during each lesson, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. This must be done within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

The Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance will communicate directly with Subject Leaders/ Class Teachers where this is not happening.

3.5 Heads of Year/ Form Tutors

Form Tutors are expected to take the daily morning registration each morning for their form, as part of the Form tutor expectations. They should report any concerns/ noted patterns directly to the Head of Year and the Assistant Head and record such concerns on CPOMs.

They must also collect in all communication related to attendance, absence, holiday requests (where relevant) and ensure that these are passed onto their Head of Year or the Assistant Head i/c attendance.

3.6 Pastoral Staff

Pastoral staff (Attendance officer, Pastoral Support officers, Pastoral Administrator) are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. They are expected to support the Assistant Head and make phone calls in the absence of the Attendance Officer. They should also note any concerns / patterns relating to attendance and report these to the relevant Head of Year and Assistant head in charge of attendance. These should also be noted on CPOMs. Where necessary, they are expected to support in home visits.

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 and information relating to recording absence.

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 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:15 am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence by 9:15 and provide the school with an expected date of return. The school contact number is (0161) 338 2120 (Option 1).

This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer sent in with your child when they are next in school. If your child is absent without any notification from home you will be contacted by phone or text to ascertain the reason for absence as legally required.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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 about 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 are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils must attend school for part of the day. Parents and/or pupils must show the appointment card to school. If a pupil is absent for a full day to attend a medical appointment then the pupil will incur half a day unauthorised absence unless the need for this has been clearly stated in a medical appointment letter.

However, we strongly 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 and should return to school after the appointment, where possible.

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.

Registration begins at 9:00; pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late (L). The register will close at 9:30 pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late (U), this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of the school gate, pupils must sign in at reception and proceed straight to registration or their lesson.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Issues with punctuality will be addressed via the Behaviour Policy. Where there is regular lateness to school parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the relevant staff to address the persistent punctuality issue.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason.
- Members of staff from All Saints Catholic College may carry out a home visit if a child is absent regardless of whether a reason for absence has been received. Members of staff will contact Greater Manchester Police if they are concerned for a pupil's welfare. The school may carry out a home visit where absence has exceeded three days. If required, staff will request to see the pupil during this home visit. If a parent/carer reports a pupil has moved out of the area, college staff may seek advice and share relevant information with our partner agencies to support in ensuring the pupil is safe. This may include Children's Social care and Greater Manchester Police.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Every week parents / carers will receive a text message to inform them of their child's current attendance.

Form tutors will be informed weekly of each pupil's attendance and will inform them about their attendance colour. We ask that parents / carers discuss their attendance colour and if necessary how this can impact on their attainment. Every pupil will be colour coded as indicated below in appendix 2. An arrow next to the pupil's name will indicate if their attendance has improved, stayed the same or deteriorated.

This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (Appendix 3).

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Up-to-date attendance figures will be available on the SIMS Application daily for parents to monitor.

MEA Central will share attendance data with the Department for Education and the local authority as required.

All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

See appendix 3 for a summary chart of attendance reporting and monitoring.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion - this will not include family holidays.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as being sudden and unforeseen circumstances which may temporarily and significantly impact upon a pupil, such as a family bereavement (not a planned visit abroad).

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

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' 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 (see Appendix One for more information)
- Study Leave may be granted for year 11 pupils approaching GCSE examinations. School will offer in school study programmes during this period to reduce absence levels.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Weekly text messages about pupils' attendance percentages
- Home visits
- Governor Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies like CARITAS
- Pupil Support Officer Mentoring
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Early help referral options

- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion resources
- Reintegration support packages

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents 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 must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

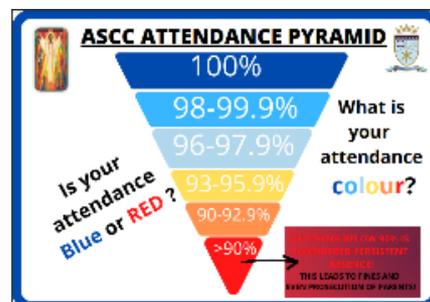
Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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

Every week the Assistant Headteacher will provide all form tutors with attendance data for the previous week for each form group. The list will be presented in numerical descending order with the highest attenders at the top; every pupil will be colour coded as indicated below:



Every Monday the form with the highest attendance in each year group is celebrated with a certificate and a reward.

Throughout the year Gold, Silver and Bronze attendance challenges take place.

Each half term rewards assemblies take place where pupils' attendance is celebrated including pupils whose attendance has improved.

Weekly text messages go to parents to help support their child to improve attendance where needed, or to encourage their child to maintain their exceptional attendance.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school each day that their child is ill.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

Pupils with 10 days absence that is not authorised will be reported to the Local Authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at a 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.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly, by Sara Scott, Assistant Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. 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

Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness Parents must ensure a telephone call is made on the first day of absence informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable in the first instance as evidence of illness. This should be followed by a note from parent/carer on the first day of returning to school. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness or where absence falls below 95%. Absence notes can be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. However, if their child's absence is affected severely by absence then medical evidence provided by a doctor will be needed to prevent prosecution.

Medical/Dental Appointments Parents are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils must attend school for part of the day. Parents and or pupils must show the appointment card to school. If a pupil is absent for a full day to attend a medical appointment then the pupil will incur half a day unauthorised absence unless clearly stated in a medical appointment letter.

Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's PSO/Head of Year will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Family Holidays Headteachers cannot authorise holidays during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right, in law, to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that Penalty Notice Fines will be applied for.

The DFE Attendance guidelines state that Head teachers cannot grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances (see above point 5.1)

If the pupil still goes on holiday, the absence will be **unauthorised**. In such cases the school will issue a Penalty Notice.

Religious Observance All Saints Catholic College acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. Only one day of absence will be authorised in relation to religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Failure to do so may lead to the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Study Leave Study leave may be granted for Year 11 pupils approaching GCSE examinations. School will offer in school study programmes during this period to reduce absence levels.

Traveller Absence The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When in or around Greater Manchester, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

All Saints Catholic College will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at All Saints Catholic College will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

All Saints Catholic College can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- inform the school regarding proposed return dates

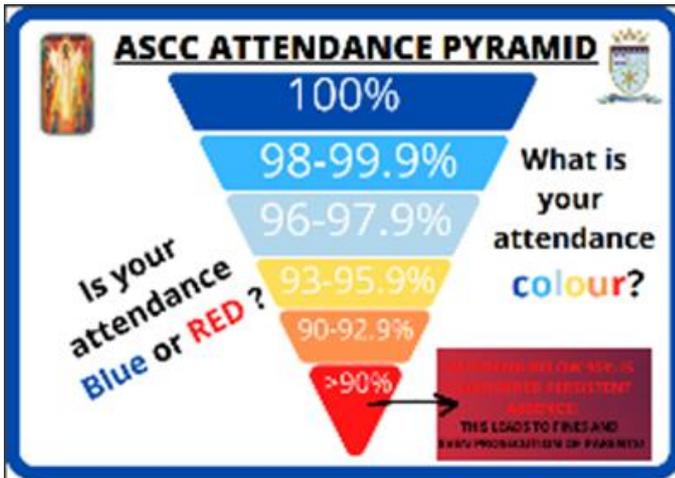
All Saints Catholic College will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Appendix two



Appendix three

