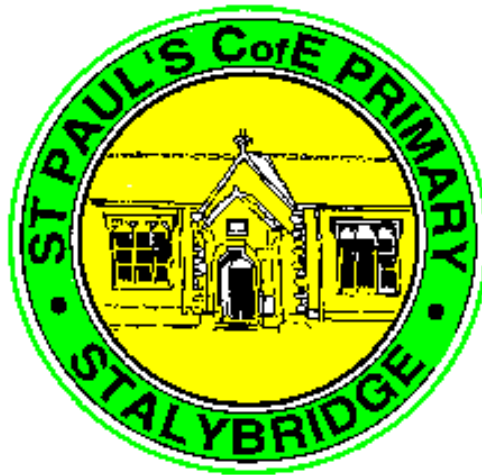


Attendance policy

St Paul's CE Primary School



Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: 14 th January 2026
Last reviewed on:	January 26	
Next review due by:	January 27	

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Recording attendance	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
9. Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1: attendance codes	9

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 promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

We adopt a whole school culture to improving attendance where every member of the school and trust have high expectations for all our pupils and ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for identifying and addressing barriers to attendance.

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
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- 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/prosecution, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Wright Headteacher with overall responsibility for improving and championing attendance and can be contacted via 0161 338 2060 /admin@cdatstpaulsprimary.co.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- The point of contact for staff pupils and parents to discuss attendance matter
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Ensuring that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance processes.
- Recording and monitoring attendance twice daily (a.m. and p.m.) using the correct codes.
- Contributing to strategy meetings and interventions.
- Working with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.
- Engaging with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend school.

The attendance officer is Miss Seddon and can be contacted via 0161 338 2060 / admin@cdatstpaulsprimary.co.uk

3.5 The class teacher

Class teacher are responsible for recording attendance accurately on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Registers are taken twice a day morning and afternoon session.

Point of initial contact for parents and pupils

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensuring that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance processes.

3.7 Parents & Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment.
- Call / email the school to report their child's absence before 9.30 am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
admin@cdatstpaulsprimary.co.uk 0161 3382060
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day (4.3)
- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time, ready for learning
- Speak to their teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- 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 am on each school day. The end of the school day is 3.15pm.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45 am and will be kept open until 8.50 am. After 8.50 pupils will need to be signed in at the school office, and will be recorded as Late (L Code). After 9.10am pupils will be recorded as U code (unauthorised absence). The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45 pm reception / Year 1 & 2 13:00 Year 3& 4 13.15 Year 5/6 13.30

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 9.30am by contacting the school office by telephone or email. (see also section 7).

0161 338 2060

admin@cdatstpaulsprimary.co.uk

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

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.

Any absences just before or straight after any school holiday will be seen as an extension of the holidays unless medical evidence is provided to authorise these days.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending emergency medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school and medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card is provided. 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, attending school either side of appointments.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils who arrive late should go straight to the school office and be signed in by an adult and provide a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for lateness, if after morning registration has closed, will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed it will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code, and the session will be marked as unauthorised.
- Pupils who are identified as persistently late will be receive formal letters.
- 5 Lates Letter 1
- 10 Lates Letter 2
- 15 Lates Letter 3 – parents will be invited into school to discuss ways in which we can work with families to offer support and advice.
- If all strategies to bring about an improvement has failed a referral subject to criteria being met may be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer requesting formal legal action, ultimately this may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice fine or prosecution in Magistrates Court.

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 email and school spider messages will be sent on the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit.
- 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

- 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
- Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.
- Where school staff have been unsuccessful at locating a family and after a period of no less than 10 school days, a Child Missing Education (CME) referral form will be submitted.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels within the child's end of year report. We may inform parents more regularly if there are concerns over increasing patterns of absence.

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. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Request for absence due to holidays are rarely approved.

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

5.2 Family Holidays and Extended absences

- Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the head teacher in advance of the leave being taken.
- It is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

- If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to further action or prosecution by the local authority. If criteria is met a Penalty Notice will be issued on the first instance and subsequent absences the Local Authority may consider prosecution.

5.3 Legal Sanctions

The local authority can fine/prosecute parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in a 10-week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents may receive a Penalty Notice. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 states that:

For the first offence committed, the rate of a Penalty Notice is £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

For the second offence committed, the rate of a Penalty Notice is £160 with no option for the second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

There is a limit of 2 Penalty Notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period. If there is a third offence committed within this timeframe, another tool will be considered such as prosecution to answer an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996: failure to ensure regular attendance. Conviction of an offence under section 444(1) may result in a fine of £1000. Under section 444(1A), convictions may result in a fine of £2,500, a community order, electronic tagging or a custodial sentence and a criminal conviction recorded.

The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the Notice being served. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution as detailed above. Please note the issuing of a Penalty Notice is an alternative to issuing proceedings at court.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Their child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- Where the absence is recorded as an unauthorised leave of absence for a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) in a 10-week period

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued for such an offence.

Parents/carers of pupils registered at this school are reminded that they hold legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Please note that a separate Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent/carer for each child as each parent/carer holds responsibility to ensure regular school attendance.

St Pauls CE Primary shares the Government's determination to raise levels of pupil attendance and achievement in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Attendance Newsletters sent to parents at the start of the year
- Communication with parents celebrating good attendance
- EYFS Induction talk
- Analysing attendance data
- Establish a positive yet firm whole-school approach to attendance
- Monitor pupils from the persistently and severely absent groups and those who are emerging PA
- Tailored strategies to meet the needs of persistent and severe absentees
- Weekly attendance certificates in celebration assembly
- Half-termly attendance prize box is given to the class with the highest attendance for that period.
- End of year rewards for 99% and above
- Staff to talk about attendance to pupils and emphasise the importance of good attendance and provide praise to students who meet individual and school targets.
- Bespoke reward system for individual children who require more support

7. Attendance monitoring

Gathering attendance data from our management information system (MIS), create separate reports for different cohorts of pupils and identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern. Reports are gathered weekly for each cohort and the breakdown helps to build a bigger picture. Once a cohort has been identified, patterns of absence can be clearly identified and potential interventions can be put in place to remove barriers to nonattendance.

Different groups may include:

- Pupil Premium
- FSM
- Persistently absent
- Break down of individual attendance codes
- SEN

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 weekly

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 class teachers, and other 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
- Use staged letters to inform parent of attendance and the impact

- Implement Early intervention Strategies
- Letter 1 at 95%
- Letter 2 93%
- Letter 3 90%
- If all strategies to bring about an improvement has failed a referral subject to criteria being met may be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer requesting formal legal action, ultimately this may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice fine or prosecution in Magistrates Court.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents 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, creating Attendance Improvement plans where necessary. Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance The attendance officer holds regular meeting with (EWO) Educational Welfare Officer.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Attendance Officer and 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
---	------------------------	---