



St Peter's Bratton, Church of England Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date: September 2024

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'Enriching Lives Everyday'

*To enable our school community to learn, achieve
and flourish through living 'life in all its
fullness' (John 10,10)*

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Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

Introduction

For any pupil to meet their full potential academically, a consistently high level of attendance is crucial. At this school, we aim to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance for all, thereby enabling every pupil to take full advantage of the educational opportunities, both academic and social, which are available to them.

In line with our ethos, this school is committed to providing the best possible education for our pupils, ensuring equal opportunities for all. Our intention is that each individual feels valued and supported. Our emphasis is on building excellent working relationships with pupils and ensuring a calm, orderly, safe and stimulating learning environment where all pupils want to be and where they are keen and ready to learn.

This policy outlines the various strategies we employ to promote excellent attendance which include creating a pleasant working environment, engaging and motivating pupils, ensuring early intervention when attendance begins to raise concerns and instigating further intervention when attendance remains a concern, including working in partnership with parents, the Local Authority and other external agencies, where necessary.

We see improving attendance as everyone's responsibility; effective communication and a joint approach to working are vital. We understand that barriers to accessing education are often complex, both within and beyond the school, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. We will work to build a positive relationship between home and school which can be the foundation of good attendance. We will ensure that parents are kept well-informed about the link between attendance and attainment, challenging views where there are misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like and ensuring that when academic progress is at risk, this message is clearly reiterated, and support is put in place to help remove potential barriers from emerging.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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, and 2016 amendments)

- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- It also refers to:
 - [School census guidance](#)
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
 - [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Where this guidance uses the term 'parent' it refers to either one, or both, parents or the child's carer. *Section 576 of the Education Act 1996* defines parent to include:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person, who although not a natural parent, has responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has day to day care of a child or young person.

Key school information

8:35am	School site and wing doors open for all pupils. Supervision for pupils begins when the pupil has entered the school building. (Open from 8:35am) School expects parents/carers to escort pupils (Rec to Y5 pupils) to the wing doors. A teaching assistant will greet the pupils at the wing door. Parents/carers can then speak to the teaching assistant to pass on any concerns they may have.
8:45am	School morning session begins
9:15am	If a pupil arrives after 8:45 and before 9:15am they are marked as late (L)
8:50am	School site and wing doors locked
After 9:15am	If a pupil arrives after 9:15am they are marked as unauthorised (U).
Afternoon sessions	
12:45pm	Reception and Year 1 pupils afternoon session begins
1pm	Year 2 pupils afternoon session begins
1:15pm	Key stage 2(KS2-Y3,4,5,6) afternoon session begins
30 minutes after afternoon session begins	*If the pupils is 30 minutes late after the start of the afternoon session they will be marked as unauthorised (U)
3:15pm	End of the school day. Only parents with parental responsibility can pick up pupils from school. Parents can provide written permission allowing another adult to pick up their child. The permission must include the details of the adult (18 or over) and when they will be picking up their child. If you are providing written permission via email it must be from the email you have provided to school. Alternatively, a parent can tell the teaching assistant on the wing door in the morning. In an emergency, parents can telephone school, but this must be followed up with an email.
* This would mainly be for children who leave the premises for lunch.	

If a family has several children, in different year groups, parents can send them all through the youngest child's wing door. The time they come into school is recorded whether they are late or not. Again, the office staff are informed so that the correct times can be put on the register.

The end of the day is 3:15pm.

What does the % mean?

Each child's attendance can be summarised using the traffic light system outlined below:

Attendance	Rating	Action
98% +	Outstanding attendance	Fully able to access all learning opportunities This will help all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic. Your child's attendance is at, or above, the school target. Keep up the good work.
97-97.9%	Excellent attendance	Up to six learning days lost over the year- minimal learning opportunities lost.
96-96.9%	Good attendance	Up to eight learning days lost over the year Very few learning opportunities missed
95 - 95.9%	Increasing concern	Up to 10 learning days lost over the year. Missed learning opportunities are likely to have an impact on attainment and progress.
92 – 94.9%	Significant concern	Attendance levels require improvement. Up to 16 learning days lost over the year. Missed learning opportunities will now have a significant impact on attainment and progress.
Below 92%	Urgent concern	Attendance levels are now critical. Over 16 learning days lost over the year. Missed learning opportunities will now have a significant impact on attainment and progress
Below 90%	Urgent concern	Attendance levels now critical. Pupil is flagged as being a Persistent Absentee. Over 19 learning days lost over the year. Extreme risk of significant underachievement.
85%	Urgent concern	Attendance levels now critical. Pupil is flagged as being a Persistent Absentee. Over 28 learning days lost over the year. Extreme risk of significant underachievement. Potential increased safeguarding risk.
80%	Urgent concern	Attendance levels now critical. Pupil is flagged as being a Persistent Absentee. Over 38 learning days lost over the year. Extreme risk of significant underachievement. Potential increased safeguarding risk.
50% or below	Urgent concern	Education is at critical risk. Pupil is flagged as being a Severe Absentee. Over 97/195 learning days lost over the year. Extreme risk of significant underachievement. Potential increased safeguarding risk.

Impact of absence from school	
85 – 90% attendance	Equivalent of over 27 weeks ($\frac{2}{3}$ of a year) absent from primary school
80% attendance	Equivalent of 55 weeks (a full year and a term) absent from primary school
1 day a week absent	Equivalent of over three years missed over full school career
10 days holiday a year	Equivalent of two terms of education missed over full school career
15 minutes late a day	Equivalent of two terms of education missed over full school career

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Wraparound club

School has a before and after school club for St Peter's pupils. For detailed information please contact the school office on 01952 387980 or stpetersbratton@taw.org.uk

Before school club runs from 7:30am until 8:45am	Cost £4.60
After school club runs from 3:15pm until 6pm	Cost £9.20

Supervision for pupils at wraparound club begins when the pupil has entered the wraparound building. School expects parents/carers to escort pupils (Rec to Y5) to the wraparound door.

Punctuality

The school wants all pupils to appreciate the importance of punctuality. Parents will be reminded that lateness after registers have closed at 9:15am (and for which an acceptable reason is not forthcoming), will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and if ongoing, may result in prosecution.

Key Attendance Staff

The Attendance Team comprises:

- Mrs Amanda Martin (Vice Principal) (Attendance Champion)
- Mrs Nicky Hall (Administrator)

The Attendance Lead with responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance is Mrs Amanda Martin – Vice Principal, who can be contacted via stpetersbratton@taw.org.uk.

How to report an absence

Parents should report absences as soon as possible when known. The Academy phone lines are open from 8:15am. Ideally, absences should be reported no later than 9:15am on the morning of absence by calling the Academy's Main Office on 01952 387980. Please report the absence on each day your child is not in school.

If school have not received a call by 9:15am then school will call adults on the contact list in order of priority. We will then send a text message asking for the parent/carer to contact school. If by 10am the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school or Educational Welfare Office (EWO) may make a home visit for a safe and well check and if we still cannot ascertain where your child is we may contact police or Family Connect.

Children who are absent for two days or more we may call parents/carers for an update at 3pm if they are still at home. We will consider each case individually.

Where parents require further support to enable their child to attend school, they should contact their child's class teacher. If further support is required, alternatively call the school office to arrange a meeting with the pastoral team, Vice Principal or Principal and we will discuss what support we can put in place to improve pupil attendance. We may also work collaboratively with the School's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if attendance falls below 92%.

If we have not had sight of a child for three days school or the education welfare officer may call or visit the home as part of a safe and well check. If we have any safeguarding concerns, we may visit earlier than three days. At this point we may also contact any necessary outside agencies such as Family Connect, social workers, strengthening families, education welfare officer and any other relevant agencies.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Principal will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

Education regulations and DfE guidance stipulate the following:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.
- Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Principal to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.
- As Principals should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.
- Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in a protest activity during school hours.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with and by completing a Leave of Absence Request Form(Appendix 1); failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are refused will result in the absence being unauthorised. This may result in legal action being taken against the parent.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be mindful that often in these difficult family times it can also be beneficial to the child for them to remain in school. In these circumstances a proportionate, minimal time away from school is encouraged.

Religious Observance

As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to record the occasion. If in doubt, school will take advice from Telford and Wrekin Attendance Team.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school will only authorise one day using this code; the rest of the time parents will be required to complete a 'Leave in Term Time request' (Appendix 1) for absence during term time, and this is granted at the school's discretion. If the request for 'Leave in Term time request' is not completed it is registered as unauthorised.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery or repair
- Going for a family day out/going shopping
- Interpreting or supporting a parent at a meeting
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Term-time holiday
- Parent's illness (other than in an emergency)
- Where there is no explanation for absence, or the school considers the reason given for the absence unsatisfactory.
- Absence following or prior to a period of school closure or authorised leave unless satisfactory evidence to justify has been provided

Children Missing Education

The school recognises that children missing education can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation. As such, the school will respond rapidly at the first sign of a potential child missing education, making enquiries as to the whereabouts of the pupil as soon as concern is raised.

The school will only remove a pupil from the Admissions Register in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. We will follow the Local Authority's Children Missing Education (CME) procedures, making appropriate referrals in all circumstances where:

- a pupil of compulsory school age is absent for ten or more days without the school being able to ascertain the reason for that absence; or
- the whereabouts of the pupil is unknown and the school has been unable to locate them, despite making active enquiries; or
- the family has informed the school that they are leaving the area but there has been no request for the Common Transfer Form from a receiving school.
- Vulnerable pupils including those with medical conditions, or special educational needs and disabilities

We recognise that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils with a social worker, those in receipt of Pupil Premium and those who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. These students have the same right to an education as any other pupil and as such our attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil.

Nevertheless, we remain sensitive to and mindful of the barriers these pupils may face and we will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

This includes:

- developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions e.g. by making reasonable adjustments or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed;
- considering whether additional support from external partners would be appropriate;
- where a pupil has a social worker, informing them when the pupil is absent without good reason;
- making referrals in a timely manner and working together with external services to deliver any subsequent support;
- working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed;
- establishing strategies for removing in-school barriers pupils may face;

- ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance;
- issuing positive letters to parents and recognising, celebrating and rewarding pupils who work hard to attend whenever possible in the light of adversity or other barriers beyond their control.

In all cases, the school will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents, instead working with them to understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance. The aim will be to develop individual approaches that meet pupils' specific needs.

Data for the above groups will be proactively and regularly monitored to ensure they remain a key focus and that attendance is maximised.

Part time timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable will be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. However, where students have been absent through sickness for any extended period of time, the school will discuss with parents/carers the most appropriate way to re-integrate their child back into school. For some students it may be appropriate to have work sent home to them to work on, with the understanding that appropriate support will be given by the school upon their return. In these circumstances, upon returning to school, teachers may choose to focus on work in the core subjects, identifying the priority needs of the student so as not to hinder future learning. Inclusion support will also be available, as appropriate.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a reduced timetable is considered appropriate by the school, as part of a re-integration package.

A reduced timetable will never be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. A reduced timetable will only be used for the shortest time necessary and will never be initiated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement will have a time limit at which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. Formal regular reviews will be held with the pupil and their parents.

In agreeing to a reduced timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat those absences as authorised.

Sickness returns

School provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend

because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

Support and Interventions

St Peter's Bratton, Church of England Academy will always prioritise providing support over legal action. However, we recognise that it is our duty to ensure every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. As such, it is our policy to make a referral to the local authority where we feel parents have not engaged with the advice and support offered and their child has continued to acquire unauthorised absence marks, despite interventions having been put into place by the school.

Promoting and incentivising good attendance

School staff work hard to create a positive working environment for our pupils in which they feel safe and supported. The school believes that pupils have the best opportunity to achieve if they feel happy and valued. This approach is at the heart of our school ethos.

We recognise that good attendance is a learned behaviour and that securing this is not a discrete piece of work but rather an integral part of the school's ethos and culture. We also understand the intrinsic connection between excellent attendance and high attainment. We are fully aware that children with low attendance can be at increased risk in terms of safeguarding and well-being. Developing good attendance habits and setting high attendance and punctuality expectations is a key part of our school's vision, values and ethos; as such, the school aims to promote and incentivise high levels of attendance through a range of strategies including the following:

- Prioritising effective primary to secondary transition so that pupils who need additional support at this point receive it to help ensure a smooth and successful start to their secondary education;
- Providing a varied and flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, challenging the most able and supporting the pupils who struggle with their learning;
- Ensuring, in partnership with the LA, that, where appropriate, regular review meetings are held to support parents and pupils in raising their attendance levels in order to avoid prosecution;
- Setting personal targets and providing both parental and pupil support for pupils who are struggling to attend regularly;
- Regularly providing parents with information regarding attendance via our newsletters and our website;
- Reporting to parents regularly on their child's attendance, avoiding headline percentages and instead making this understandable for parents (e.g. the amount of time missed and the impact on learning);
- Informing parents rapidly where we notice attendance is starting to cause concern;
- Continuing to liaise with parents, agreeing action plans and providing targeted support where a pupil's attendance continues to decline;
- Providing individually tailored re-integration programmes, when appropriate, for pupils who have been absent for an extended period;
- Rewarding good and improving attendance, using the school's reward system;
- Taking every opportunity to celebrate excellent and improved attendance, for example, at St Peter's Bratton, Church of England Academy, each week in collective worship we look at attendance and punctuality. Three classes with the highest weekly attendance percentage will receive a whole class reward as an incentive. One class with the best punctuality will receive a whole class reward.

Persistent and Severe Absence

The DfE defines a persistent absentee as a pupil whose attendance is at 90% or lower. This is the equivalent to having one day off every fortnight. A pupil is placed on Attendance Risk Register if their attendance falls below 92%, thereby ensuring they receive immediate intervention from this point onwards to help avoid becoming a persistent absentee.

On an individual case basis, school may consider meeting with parents when a child's attendance falls below 92%. There are a variety of letters that will be sent to parents called school attendance letters (SAL). These are called SAL 1, SAL 1 W, SAL 2, SAL L (Late) or it can be a bespoke letter. At any point additional evidence may be requested. This can be in the form of a prescription, a note from the doctor, a note from the pharmacist to show evidence of the illness.

School will consider referrals to any outside agencies such as SEND support, mental health support, Educational Psychologists, BSAT teams, strengthening families and individual meetings to try and improve attendance. Where ill health is a factor, the school will seek to confirm the medical problems identified by the child/parent (particularly if there have been several referrals and the explanation has been ill health). If it is felt that the parent/carers have not sought appropriate medical help where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, medical evidence may be requested to support the absence. If attendance still does not improve appropriate warning or penalty notices will be issued by the Attendance Support Team and this could eventually lead to legal action being taken against the parent.

Where a pupil's attendance is at 50% or lower, the DfE define this to be 'severe absence' and in these circumstances, where the pupil is missing over half of all learning opportunities, they should receive a more intensive level of support and where appropriate a more urgent level of challenge, including the possible use of legal intervention through the local authority to help secure improvement.

For both persistent and severe absentees, school-led intervention will have taken place and parental meetings will have been initiated with targets for improvement having been set as part of the process. Where agreed strategies have proved unsuccessful, further consultation will take place with the Local Authority Attendance Support team/Academy Attendance Team to agree a way forward. This may include putting formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract, intensifying multi-disciplinary support for families via an Early Help Assessment or through statutory social care involvement, where there are safeguarding concerns or by initiating legal intervention to formalise support and/or enforce attendance where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.

While the intention will always be to work with pupils and their families to successfully secure improved attendance so that pupils are no longer persistent or severe absentees, where all attempts to engage with parents have proved unsuccessful and all strategies to secure compliance have been exhausted, the school will have no option but to consider legal action.

Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

If a pupil moves schools then school and the Local Authority will share any sanctions between other schools and between other local authorities.

Penalty notices

The principal (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The days do not need to be consecutive days. The Local Authority has the discretion to issue a penalty notice with less than 10 days if, for example, there are only 4 days in the school week. This discretion is detailed in the Local Authority Code of Conduct).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far

- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Education Supervision Orders (ESO)

- Where a voluntary early help plan, or formal attendance contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education.
- Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000.

Prosecution

- If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.
- Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case.
- The local authority has the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with the school attendance order under section 443 of The Education Act 1996 or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school under section 444 of The Education Act 1996. The fines available to the courts if the parents are found guilty could be between £1000 and £2500. The courts can also sentence parents to a community order or imprisonment for up to three months.

Parenting orders

- Parenting orders can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.
- The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive up to three months of help and support to enable them to improve their child's attendance.

Legal requirements

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. There is a legal requirement placed on all parents to ensure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where a parent has decided to register their child at school, there are additional legal duties placed upon them to ensure that their child attends that school regularly. This means that their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances, such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This policy conforms to the aforementioned legal requirements, as detailed in section 7 of *The Education Act 1996*, and to the requirements outlined in the latest guidance document entitled *Working together to improve school attendance, (August 2024)*. This includes adherence to the requirement that all pupils, regardless of age, are placed on the admission register and must have their attendance recorded in the attendance register.

This policy also has due regard to all relevant legislation and other statutory guidance including, but not limited to that listed above in section 1, in addition to the following legislation:

- *Equality Act 2010*
- [*School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024*](#).

Roles and responsibilities

The trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory guidance and legislation. The trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to the headteachers of each trust school.

The **Attendance Team** in each school have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting these colleagues in ensuring success.

The trustees of St Chad's Academies Trust ensure that attendance remains a constant focus across all trust schools by:

- recognising the importance of attendance and actively promoting it through trust ethos and policies;
- ensuring the trust and each school meet their statutory responsibilities in relation to attendance and continue to have high aspirations for each pupil;
- reviewing attendance data at trust and individual school level, providing support and challenge as required;
- ensuring staff receive adequate attendance training and that best practice is shared between trust schools.

The trust will:

- devise and regularly review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy which St Peter's Bratton will personalise and tailor to our own local context;
- agree and review attendance and punctuality targets with schools at least annually;
- provide advice and support to schools on attendance matters, as required;
- ensure admissions and attendance registers are kept electronically in line with the new School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- ensure pupil level attendance data is shared daily with the DfE, in line with latest regulations.

The Attendance Team will:

- ensure appropriate strategies are in place to promote and implement the Attendance and Punctuality Policy throughout the school;
- ensure the policy is well-publicised and that attendance expectations and procedures are understood by parents and pupils;
- review the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy in response to the data regularly provided via the Ensuring Excellence Summary.

The Principal will:

- ensure the school's vision, values and ethos promote and celebrate good attendance and punctuality;
- ensure a member of the Attendance Team is appointed with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school, as per DfE guidance;
- ensure strategies are in place to promote and implement the Attendance and Punctuality Policy throughout the school;
- ensure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable, through effective use of Pupil Premium funding;
- monitor the school's curriculum offer to ensure delivery of a curriculum which is engaging and personalised to the needs of the pupils, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- regularly monitor attendance and punctuality data;
- make decisions regarding the authorisation of absences in exceptional circumstances;
- set attendance targets with the Attendance Team and/or other relevant members of staff directly responsible for attendance.

The Attendance Lead will:

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families comply with the DfE's statutory guidance on *Children Missing Education (CME)* by informing the Local Authority of the details of children who are regularly absent or missing from school following a leave of absence, and prior to removing a child from the school roll;
- ensure the school's electronic information management system remains fit for purpose and that staff accessing it are appropriately trained to meet all legal and statutory recording requirements and so they can make best use of the system to support effective data analysis and intervention.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Amanda Martin and can be contacted via telephone on 01952 387980 Or via email at stpetersbratton@taw.org.uk

Others responsible for attendance, as directed by the Principal will:

- monitor attendance on a daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and annual basis, as necessary, contacting parents of pupils who have been identified as 'at-risk of persistent absenteeism' to challenge absences and to encourage an early return to school;

- ensure data on attendance and punctuality is displayed in school in prominent places, visible to pupils and staff;
- implement the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance including, where appropriate, carrying out home visits and/or making a referral to the local authority's education welfare service or equivalent contracted service where concern is ongoing and/or where initial interventions are not proving effective;
- where necessary, and in line with school policy, issue appropriate sanctions to pupils for whom attendance and punctuality is a cause for concern;
- in line with school policy, issue appropriate rewards to pupils for whom attendance and/or punctuality has improved;
- with oversight from the strategic leader responsible for attendance, maintain an up-to-date Attendance Risk Register for 'high-risk' pupils, which tracks interventions and their impact;
- where punctuality is a concern, maintain a Punctuality Risk Register.
- lead attendance interventions, including initiating Attendance Review Meetings and developing Attendance Action Plans involving the child, parent and, where appropriate, other agencies such as the Education Welfare office (EWO) for pupils whose attendance and/or, if applicable, punctuality, falls below the expected level;
- coordinate the support plans for pupils returning to school after a prolonged absence;
- if appropriate, co-ordinate other staff members in agreed intervention activities, including mentoring and/or target setting of individuals or groups;
- where necessary, make referrals to appropriate external agencies;
- authorise appointments, as appropriate;
- co-ordinate the collation of all the documentary evidence required by the local authority for pursuing legal intervention;
- ensure that the procedures for making additions to, and removals from, the admissions register follow statutory guidance and that no pupil is removed without the school having full details of their destination and providing this information to the local authority, using agreed local procedures.

Class teachers responsible for morning and afternoon registration will:

- actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents;
- ensure that the statutory attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of the school day and once during the afternoon session;
- provide regular encouragement and support to the class as a whole and to individual pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality;
- ensure their own register is completed accurately and in a timely manner;
- ensure absence notes or verbal messages relating to attendance and punctuality are provided to the attendance administrator;
- be proactive in noticing and addressing any signs of disaffection or any well-being concern which may result in poor attendance and punctuality, thereby impacting on learning and potentially safety;
- contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, by providing stimulating teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- support pupils to catch up on essential work missed following absence, thereby removing a potential barrier to re-engagement;
- regularly review class registers and report any absence trends or concerns that they identify.

Attendance administrators will:

- monitor whole school attendance on a daily basis, ensuring all registers are completed accurately and on time and that any missing marks are quickly resolved in order to keep pupils safe;
- be the first point of contact for parents and relevant school staff regarding pupil absence and appointments;
- ensure that reasons for absences are provided by parents after each period of absence;

- collate and issue all attendance and punctuality data on a daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and annual basis to attendance leaders and strategic leaders, as requested;
- maintain a record of all applications for leave of absence during term time and requests to the LA to issue penalty notices;
- maintain a record of all mid-year arrivals and leavers, including reasons for their moves;
- maintain a log of all pupils whose parents have instructed the school to remove them from roll in order to electively home educate;
- support leaders, where requested, in making attendance referrals to external agencies;
- following approval from the relevant strategic leader, inform the local authority of any pupil who is to be deleted from the admissions and attendance registers.

All staff members will:

- lead by example, modelling excellent attendance and punctuality, thereby conveying a message about the importance we attach to this matter;
- Aim to create a positive atmosphere, developing excellent working relationships with pupils which are supportive and encouraging.

Parents/carers:

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/Carers will:

- ensure their child attends school every day when the school is open;
- ensure their child arrives to school on time, ready and equipped to learn;
- be aware that it is an offence for their child to be absent from school without a valid reason;
- be aware that only the school can determine if an absence from school is 'authorised';
- notify the school as soon as possible and ideally before 9:15am and on each subsequent day of absence if their child is unable to attend, including the reason for absence and the expected date of return;
- ensure that all appointments, wherever possible, are arranged out of school hours;
- ensure that where an appointment during school time is unavoidable, their child attends for as long as possible prior to and/or returns immediately after the appointment;
- ensure that their child returns to school as soon as possible after any period of illness;
- support their child's attendance by avoiding requesting leave during term time except in exceptional circumstances;
- understand that the school is not in a position to authorise a holiday in term time;
- ensure that all requests for leave during term time are made by completing the "Leave of Absence during Term Time Request Form" (Appendix 1), where possible at least one month in advance;
- work with the school and other agencies when barriers to their child's attendance are identified;
- be aware that for unauthorised absences the School reserves the right to apply to the local authority to issue a fixed penalty notice (a fine);
- provide the school with a minimum of two emergency contact numbers and ensure they are kept up to date with any changes.

Pupils, at the appropriate developmental level, will:

- strive to achieve an excellent level of attendance and punctuality;

- understand the correlation between high levels of attendance and academic achievement;
- be proud of achieving excellent attendance and punctuality;
- ensure all absence notes/appointment cards are passed to the relevant member of staff;
- speak with the appropriate member of staff if there are any problems which may affect attendance, punctuality and/or learning;
- take responsibility for catching up on all work missed due to absence.

Day to Day Process for Registration and Responding to Absences

Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Reporting to parents:

The Academy uses 'My Child at School' and parents can see daily, weekly and yearly attendance levels and absence levels. The Academy will also attach an annual report of Attendance and absence to parents.

Absence coding

The school records attendance and absence, using national codes which comply with the regulations detailed in *Working together to improve school attendance - Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities*, August 2024.

CODES WHICH COUNT AS PRESENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Attending the school:

/\ Present at the school - / = am session \ = pm session

L Late arrival before registration is closed

Attending a setting other than the school:

K Attending education provision arranged by the LA

V Attending and educational visit or trip

P Participating in a sporting activity

W Attending work experience

B Attending any other approved educational activity

D Dual registered at another school

CODES WHICH ALSO COUNT AS ABSENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Authorised absence - leave of absence:

C1 Leave for participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad

M Leave for attending a medical or dental appointment

J1 Leave for attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment

S Leave for studying for a public examination

C2 Leave for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

C Leave for exceptional circumstance

Authorised absence - for other authorised reasons:

T parent travelling for occupational purposes

R Religious observance

I Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

E Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

CODES WHICH COUNT AS NEITHER ABSENT NOR PRESENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

X non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend

Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause:

Q Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

Y1 Unable to attend – transport normally provided is unavailable

Y2 Unable to attend – widespread travel disruption

Y3 Unable to attend – part of school premises closed

Y4 Unable to attend – whole school site unexpectedly closed

Y5 Unable to attend – Pupil in criminal justice detention

Y6 Unable to attend – In accordance with public health guidance or law

Y7 Unable to attend – Other unavoidable cause

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES CODES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Absent - due to unauthorised circumstances:

G Holiday taken without leave granted by school

N Reason for absence not yet established

O Absent in other or unknown circumstances

U Arrived in school after registration closed

ADMINISTRATIVE CODES - COUNT AS NEITHER ABSENT NOR PRESENT

Z Prospective pupil not on admission register

Planned whole or partial school closure

Tracking and monitoring attendance

School staff with responsibility for attendance will monitor weekly attendance data so as to rapidly identify pupils and cohorts whose attendance is in decline and respond accordingly. We will routinely monitor key cohorts and pupil groups based on our context and school population. Possible groups might include:

- Whole school
- Individual year groups
- Boys/ girls

- Those eligible for free school meals
- Those with special educational needs or disabilities
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Children who are looked after or who have been looked after previously
- Those with a social worker
- Those who are persistently or severely absent
- Any other groups of pupils or cohorts who have historically had lower attendance than their peers or about whom there is an emerging concern.

All school attendance data is routinely benchmarked against available local, regional and national data. Relevant data is routinely shared with pupils, parents, staff teams, governors, the trust, including trustees and the local authority, all with the intention of continuing to improve attendance levels.

Daily monitoring and attendance improvement strategies should include:

- analysing data to identify attendance and punctuality concerns and successes within specific cohorts and pupil groups;
- displaying weekly attendance and punctuality data in prominent locations in school to engender a sense of friendly competition amongst staff and pupils;
- intervene with pupils who are regularly late without a good reason, informing parents;
- contacting parents to raise attendance and/or punctuality concerns with them, particularly where issues are repeated;
- contacting parents where attendance for the year to date falls below the school's minimum target for the first time;
- strategic leaders maintaining an overview of weekly attendance across the school.

Fortnightly monitoring and attendance improvement strategies should include:

- the strategic attendance lead agreeing appropriate intervention strategies with other colleagues who share an attendance remit
- the provision of up-to-date relevant cohort attendance data to class teachers and the provision of current whole school data to SLT.

The strategic leader responsible for attendance will:

- keep an overview of the Attendance Risk Register across the school;
- agree appropriate intervention strategies with the Principal, if applicable;
- identify pupils requiring attendance review meetings;
- provide the Local Academy Committee, via the Principal's Report, with half termly data on attendance and punctuality, including data about pupils who are persistent/severe absentees and about leave of absence requests and their outcomes.

Termly monitoring and attendance improvement strategies may include:

- school may issue letters of concern to parents of pupils with attendance below 92%
- School may issue positive letters to parents of pupils who achieve above minimum expectation for attendance and punctuality or who have significantly improved attendance/attendance above the school target;
- recognising, celebrating and rewarding the above-mentioned pupils in celebration assemblies.

The school has granted the DFE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

Escalation of procedures and legal intervention

The school will endeavour to always take a 'support first' approach to managing and improving attendance, working proactively with parents and pupils to remove barriers and improve a pupil's attendance through the range of strategies detailed in this policy. However, if a pupil's attendance continues to decline or if engagement strategies have not had the desired effect, the school will liaise with the Local Authority and other local partners to help support families with ongoing barriers. This could include Pastoral Support Plans, attendance contracts or involvement with early help or social care.

Removal from Admissions Register and Elective Home Education

Schools are only permitted to remove compulsory school aged children from roll under certain circumstances, detailed in regulation 9 of the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*.

In accordance with regulation 13(4) to (6) of the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*, schools must make a return to the local authority as soon as a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register under any of the reasons set out in regulation 9 (1) or 9 (3). This does not apply where the pupil's name is deleted after they have completed the school's most senior year.

This school will only delete a pupil's name from the admission register where the specified grounds detailed in the aforementioned regulations are met. Where a pupil's name is deleted from the admissions register, they must be deleted from the attendance register at the same time.

Schools may not retrospectively delete a pupil's name from the admission register or attendance register as these registers must be an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. A pupil's attendance must be recorded up until the date that the pupil's name is deleted from the admission register.

A name of a pupil transferring to another school must be deleted from the admission register as soon as they are entered on the admission register of the new school. The new school must enter the pupil's name on the admission register on the first day that it has agreed the pupil will start attending.

Elective Home Education

In line with best practice and DfE guidance, the school does not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because of poor attendance. However, the school does understand that home education is a parental choice and that there is no requirement for parents to obtain the school's or the Local Authority's agreement to educate their child at home. As such, on receipt of written notification from a parent of their intention to educate their child other than at school, the school will follow its EHE procedure, which includes informing the LA that the pupil is likely to be deleted from the admission register and providing a cooling off period where parents are aware their child may return to school during that period, should they change their mind.

Concluding points

All of our attendance procedures are intended to ensure that:

- we have a consistent recording system of student attendance which enables us to meet legal requirements;
- the security and safety of our students is a priority;
- trends of lateness and absenteeism are identified and addressed.

Our *Attendance and Punctuality Policy* is part of a wider set of policies and documents all aimed at ensuring that all our students receive a broad, balanced education in a safe, caring environment. This ethos is reflected in the following related documents:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Policy

This policy will be reviewed biennially or earlier if required.

Appendix I - Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents wishing the school to consider granting leave in term time should read these notes carefully and then complete and send the request form below to the Principal. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **before** the desired period of absence. (Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any planned absence before receiving the school's decision regarding their request). In any event the request form must be received by the school at least four weeks before the leave in term time requested dates to allow sufficient time for appropriate consideration.
2. The granting of leave of absence in term time is, by law, a matter for consideration and decision by the Principal. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time. The Department for Education (DfE) Guidance '*Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Feb 2024)*' states that: *Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.* Telford & Wrekin Local Authority (LA) policy supports that view. Where such requests are made, the Principal should decide if there are **exceptional circumstances** before the leave is granted, if the leave is granted the Principal has the discretion to agree the duration of that leave.
3. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents therefore, need to consider very carefully before making any request for leave in term time, the demands of the National and wider School Curriculum especially at the Key Stage assessment stage. In considering a request, the school may also take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
 - whether the child is compulsory school age;
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
 - whether the same trip could be taken during the 13 weeks school is closed to pupils?
 - students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
4. Where parents have children in more than one school, a separate request must be made to each school. The Principal of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, there is an expectation that all schools involved will communicate and all agree a decision whether to authorise or not. It is hoped that if this situation arises parents will be persuaded to accept the reasons for refusal given and, thereby, withdraw any leave requests.
5. Where requests for a grant of leave in term time are received from only one parent the response letter – agreeing or refusing – will be either addressed to both/all parents where they live at the same address or to each where they do not. This is to ensure, particularly in the case of a refusal, that both or all parents are fully aware of the consequences of ignoring a refusal as the refusal letter clearly states that each parent may receive a penalty notice.
6. Should the school decide to grant the leave. but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave in term time period) and, no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence or, make known the whereabouts of the child, **his/her place at the school could be lost.**

7. Should the School decide **not to grant the leave** and parents still take their child out of school the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £160 per parent per child. This Penalty Notice fine will be reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Failure to pay the £160 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings, which could ultimately result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or imprisonment of up to three months.

Request for Leave during Term Time

Date of request

To: The Principal of St Peter’s Bratton, Church of England School

I request permission for leave in term time from school for my child:

Full Name		Class	
From (date)		How many school days?	
To (date)			

My child will be accompanied during the leave by:

Parent/carer name	
Parent/carer name	

The **exceptional circumstances** and reason for this request are: -

(If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet and attach it to this form)

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows:

Child’s name:	School:

Name of 1 st Parent/Carer(s)	
Signature	
Current Address	
Mobile Number	
Name of 2 nd Parent/Carer(s)	
Signature	
Current Address	
Mobile Number	

Please return the completed form to the school office. The school will contact you and inform you of the decision on whether your request is authorised or not. Please do not confirm any holiday booking until you have confirmation of permission for the leave in term time from the Principal.

For Office Use Only

Date request for leave in term time received by school	%
Current Attendance	%
Last Year's Attendance	%
Number of unauthorised absence sessions during previous 10 school weeks	
Re: Siblings: other schools confirmed?	
What action are other schools taking?	

Leave in term time	Agreed		Not Agreed	
Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above pupil to take leave during term time between the above dates.				
Signed				
Job Title	Principal			
Print Name	Mrs R Welsh			
Date				
Notification of decision:				
Date letter sent to parent				
Any note				

