

## Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. The whole staff at St Paul's Peel C.E. Primary School take seriously their responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts the continuity of learning and undermines educational progress, not only for the child who is absent but also for the rest of the class. It can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. It is vital that children feel their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters. It describes our schools commitment to improving the attendance of all children. Everyone has a responsibility to support this process and to encourage high levels of attendance at all times.

- St Paul's Peel C.E. Primary School expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.
- We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

### **Overall Aims:**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

### **Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.



Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means 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.

DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'

### **The Legal Framework:**

There are legal obligations on:

- The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

### **Headteacher:**

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Salford Local Authority policies and procedures.

### **Children's and Families Officer or Learning Mentor:**

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquires.
- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To liaise with/report to external agencies such as the Attendance Officers (previously known as Education Welfare Officers) and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, with the Office staff, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To monitor weekly attendance data for classes/year groups.
- To promptly inform the HT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To support HT with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents/carers of school procedures, when parents/carers have failed to inform the school.
- Inform parents/carers on a half termly basis (using the R.A.G. rated attendance letter) of their child's attendance



## **Staff:**

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's SIMS system.
- To regularly remind children, parents/carers about the importance of good attendance.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the Children and Families Officer, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

## **Parents/Carers:**

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If pupils have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils should be brought back to school after appointments. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.



**The Local Authority, through The School Attendance Support Team, is expected to:**

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.
- Review school attendance strategies, leadership processes and procedures on a termly basis
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Align with Early Help
- Ensure that parents/carers are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

### **Lateness**

- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed at 9.05 am are considered late.
- Pupils who arrive after this time must report to the School Office with their parent/carer, parents/carers should electronically sign their child in school stating the reason for the lateness.
- If a child is repeatedly late for school their parents will be contacted to remind them of their responsibilities and a letter may be sent. If the lateness continues the matter will be referred to the Attendance Officer for further action.

### **Term Time Holidays**

All holiday requests during term time will not be granted in line with the Government's legislation. If you are planning to take your child out of school for a holiday it is important that a letter is sent into school explaining the dates that your child will be absent and the destination to avoid them being classed as missing in education. School needs to know the reason for any absence from school for our records, it is very important we are aware of the real reason for the absence. These letters will not be replied to, however please remember any holidays taken which exceed 5 school days, will be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Officer to issue the fines set in place by the Government. The school does not financially benefit from any fines.

### **Medical Appointments**

- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments outside of school hours
- Absence to attend a medical appointment will always be an authorised absence.
- Where possible parents/carers should present the medical appointment card when they collect the child to take them out of school.



## **Religious Observance**

If a religious festival occurs during the school term we understand that members of that faith group will be absent from school. Children will be given an authorised absence for the actual central day of the celebration. Any additional days that the children are not in school around the time of the celebration will not be authorised. Additional days will be classed as unauthorised absence.

## **Weekly Praising Assemblies**

Praising Assemblies are held every week on a Friday. Classes with the highest attendance/punctuality receive the attendance and punctuality trophies and prizes.

## **Termly 'Miss Barker Thinks I'm a Star' Draw**

Every pupil with a 100% attendance, each term is awarded with a certificate from the Headteacher and entered into a prize draw.

## **100% Attendance During the Whole Academic Year**

All pupils with 100% attendance during the whole school year are invited to the Headteacher's 'Tea Party'.

## **Half Termly School Newsletter**

Each half term, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

## **Staff Promoting Good Attendance**

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

## **Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality**

### **Class Registers**

Class registers are recorded using SIMS. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been



directed to take the register for that session. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times.

### **Morning Register**

Class registers remain open until 9:05 am. At that point, the teacher may submit their final register and close down SIMS. From 9.00 am the school playground gates are closed.

### **Afternoon Register**

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence.

### **School Attendance Letters**

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents/carers about their child's attendance and punctuality on a half termly basis.

### **IMPORTANT:**

Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Monitoring First Day Absence**

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made.

The Children's and Families Officer/Office Staff follow this system:

- Phone parents' contact number(s).
- Send out text messages to main parental contact number
- Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.
- Phone emergency contact number(s) to ensure school has the latest contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly if necessary. Speak to the parents/carers face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded on SiMS. The Children's and Families Officer/Office Staff must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the Children and Families Officer/Office Staff have not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as unauthorised and other agencies informed as appropriate.



### Attendance Research

Attending school every day = 100% attendance.

- Attending 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year
- Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year or 2 full years missed over the course of their school career.
- Attending 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  days each week = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.
- An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

### Punctuality Research

Being late for school reduces learning time.

- If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss three days of learning each year.
- If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss 2 weeks of learning each year.

