



St Peter's
Catholic School



Faith is our Foundation

Pupil Attendance Policy

Details

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Approved by:

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Next review due by: Summer 2024



St Peter's Catholic School

Attendance policy

Ethos and Expectations

“At St Peter’s Catholic School, we believe that Faith is our Foundation and we live out our mission through the virtues and values of the Catholic Pupil Profile.” The success and achievement of all Pupils is central to the purpose of St Peter’s and as a Catholic School, we have high expectations of attendance and punctuality which are crucial to pupils achieving well and being happy.

The aims of this policy are to encourage pupils to attend school every day and promote the importance of good attendance to all pupils, parents and staff. The policy sets out clearly responsibilities, procedures and strategies to support all members of the school community.

Legal Requirements

This policy is reflective of government guidance, namely ‘School Attendance, Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, July 2019’ and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2020 and 2021’

Legal requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at schools is, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a legal requirement, parents/carers being responsible for ensuring that any child of compulsory school age receives full-time education. The Education Act 1996 states ‘If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence.’

At St. Peter's we work within the guidelines on attendance laid down by Solihull Local Authority, supporting a range of strategies used by the Education Welfare Service that include penalty notices where appropriate. (See Appendix A).

This policy works alongside the Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Safeguarding policy.

Role and Responsibilities

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for making sure that their attendance and punctuality is maintained at the highest level.

- They should attend school and all their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.
- Pupils must ensure they make their way directly to school each morning and avoid congregating with others or visiting the town centre without good reason.
- Pupils must follow the correct procedures when arriving late to school.
- Any problems which affect attendance should be discussed with their form tutor or Lead Tutor in the first instance.

Parents

As set out in law, parents are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. They should ensure Pupils attend school each day and inform the school by 8.30am if there is a reason why they cannot attend.

- Parents must ensure their child attends school every day possible and only be absent when necessary.
- Parents would need to provide medical evidence for any absence taken by a child whose attendance is a concern after receiving a letter explaining this from the school.
- They must ensure that children are able to get to school by 8.40 each day.
- They should be aware that Persistent Absenteeism can result in legal action being taken against each parent responsible for the child.
- Parents can check their child's attendance and punctuality on the Parent Portal and are encouraged to use this to monitor this regularly.

Staff

All members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that pupils in their care are in school. All staff establish an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Form Tutors and Subject Teachers

- To take the register during morning registration using PARS.
- To use a paper registration sheet to communicate all absences if PARS is not available – this should be returned to the Attendance Officer.
- To ensure all Pupils are aware of school policies pertaining to attendance and punctuality.
- Keep the Lead Tutor informed of any signs of suspected truancy or of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.
- To positively encourage all pupils and the tutor group to be aware of and engage with the reward systems related to excellent and improved attendance.

Lead Tutors

- To encourage an ethos of excellent attendance with all pupils.
- To oversee the attendance of all Pupils within the year group.
- To analyse patterns of non-attendance and address these appropriately.
- Ensure that all suspected truancy, failing to attend school without good reason, is followed up and dealt with. As a rule, any pupils who truant school, would be required to make up the day/hours after school.
- To monitor individual student's attendance, completion of Attendance Profiles for pupils who have 19 days absence or more in a year and so are a Persistent Absentee.
- To meet with the Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher to discuss the attendance of pupils in their year group and specific issues relating to this.
- To identify pupils in need of further support and to use appropriate referral systems.
- To place attendance and punctuality on the agenda for Year Group meetings.

Assistant Headteacher

- Have an overview of Attendance and Punctuality across the whole school.
- Manage the interventions of the Lead Tutors and form tutors regarding attendance and punctuality. Meet with Attendance Officer and Lead Tutors regularly.
- Ensure that good attendance and punctuality are promoting and celebrated throughout the year.
- To ensure that PARS and the systems pertaining to attendance and punctuality are working effectively.
- To liaise with the Attendance Officer and ensure that attendance data is updated regularly and feedback is provided to pupils, parents, staff and governors on a regular basis.

- Manage the interventions of external support such as Education Welfare and the Early Help System.
- Ensure procedures are followed to sanction non-attendance and unauthorised absence.
- Discuss attendance in the context of Safeguarding at regular meetings of the DSL team.
- Report on attendance to the Pupil Support and Safeguarding committee of the Governing body.

Headteacher

- Determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested and ensure correspondence pertaining to leave of absence requests are completed in a timely fashion.

Attendance Officer

- Responsibility for producing attendance data.
- Daily administration for absences and first day contact. To operate the electronic attendance software daily.
- To ensure any 'paper' registers are transferred to the electronic system after registration and by 9.30am at the latest.
- To print off a list of absentees in case of emergency evacuation.
- Contact parents where there is unexplained absence.
- Manage the whole school detention system for punctuality and behaviour by assigning detentions for pupils who are late etc.
- To provide Lead Tutors with weekly updates of attendance and punctuality.
- To manage the telephone line for attendance and transfer information onto PARS.
- Amend registers accordingly, updating details from emails for staff, contact with parents and checking Pupil Support, the St Francis Suite and Duty Pupils etc.
- Generate certificates for Pupils who achieve 100% attendance, excellent attendance (98%-99%) and good attendance (95%-97%) (half-termly, termly, annually) as well as certificates for improved attendance.
- Work with the Assistant Headteacher and Lead Tutors and Education Welfare Officers where there are concerns about student attendance/punctuality.

Education Welfare Service

- Complete 'Duty of Care visits' to the home if attendance continues to be of concern, or where staff are unable to make timely contact with parents in cases of pupil absence.

- Liaise directly with the Local Authority Enforcement team, where a pupil's attendance becomes of significant concern including where an offence is being committed under education legislation.
- Assisting the school in discharging its safeguarding responsibilities.
- Act as a link between home and school where issues may be impacting on a pupil's attendance and general wellbeing.

Procedures

The school has an electronic registration system, Pars Connect which links with Insight to provide live and interactive information for all stakeholders. Registers are taken by staff at the start of each period/registration/assembly. Registers taken at registration and Period 5 are the legal requirements for AM/PM registrations. Lateness is also recorded for each period. The school has a full-time Attendance Officer who is responsible for the administration of the school's attendance system. The Lead Tutor for each Year Group works closely with the Attendance Officer to ensure that any attendance concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively, and the Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance oversees this process.

The parents of pupils who have been marked absent for form time and Period 1 and for whom no reason has been given will be notified by text message that their child has not been marked present for school and will be asked to inform us immediately. The attendance officer has a list of pupils who are high profile and therefore need to be contacted more urgently where there is non-attendance. This is compiled in conjunction with the Lead Tutors and includes any child who is a Persistent Absentee (PA), disadvantaged, LAC or a Child in Need, known to Children's services.

Lead Tutors have a regular meeting within the Pastoral Team whereby children requiring further action are identified. The Assistant Headteacher will work with outside support including the Early Help Service and Education Welfare to arrange external support when all attendance below 90% is investigated and other areas of concern are discussed. Children who have had more than 19 days absence and so will have an annual attendance percentage of below 90% (PAs) have intervention strategies put in place, these are detailed in the 'Attendance Profile' which is completed for each PA. This might lead to requests for home visits and/or meetings with parents in school and the support of external agencies.

Interventions

In order to maintain standards of attendance, St Peter's will implement the following interventions at each stage to improve attendance. This table provides an approximate guide to when levels of intervention would be appropriate but

appreciates that each pupil, family and circumstance is different and therefore interventions would always be made considering what is in the best interest of the child while following the law.

	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
3 Days	Trigger					
6 Days	↓	Trigger				
9 Days		↓	Trigger			
12 Days				Trigger		
15 Days			↓	Trigger	↓	
18 Days						Trigger
21 Days	Persistent Absentee					
24 Days						
27 Days						
30 Days						

Pupils are on projection of becoming a Persistent Absentee if they have the following amount of time off within each half term;

- 3 days by the end of the first half-term (October)
- 6 days by the end of the second half-term (December)
- 9 Days by the end of the third half-term (February)
- 12 days by the end of the fourth half-term (April)
- 15 days by the end of the fifth half-term (May)
- 19 days by the end of the sixth half-term (July)

The school works through a series of procedures to ensure consistency and fairness across year groups but Lead Tutors will work to ensure a personalised approach for each child.

Letters	Meetings
Letter 1 – This letter is to raise awareness where there is a concern or potential concern.	Meeting with Lead Tutor and Education Welfare Officer with pupil in school
↓	
Letter inviting parents to a meeting at an attendance clinic meeting.	Meeting with Lead Tutor and Education Welfare Officer with parents in school
↓	
Letter explaining absence will no longer be authorised without medical evidence	Meeting with Assistant Headteacher and parents in school
↓	

Penalty Warning Notice – informing of the schools intention to prosecute	
	
Penalty Warning Notice	

Where reasons for absence have not been given by parents, the Attendance Officer will make every effort to contact by telephone, text or email. This may be followed up by a letter at key trigger points. Lead Tutors may contact parents/carers where appropriate.

Attendance Profiles are completed for all children at 19 Days Absence with details of actions to date and planned in line with the above table, generally in the cells written in red.

The school will always defer to medical professionals whose advice will be paramount within the system. School may contact medical professionals for clarification.

Mental Health

School appreciates that not all illness is physical and mental health issues can also present in children. The school's Safeguarding policy should be used alongside this policy.

The school's opinion is that for the majority of children who have mental concerns, the best place is to be in school and absence will exacerbate mental health concerns. Parent engagement will always be a priority and dignity and calmness will be the focus of the structure of solutions.

Children Missing Education

Leave of Absence Request

- All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. A parent should complete an absence request form and submit this to the school at least four weeks prior to the date required. School will respond to the request within two weeks. If school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed, appropriate support will be offered to the parent.
- DFE guidelines make clear that leave of absence during term-time should be regarded as exceptional. An example that can be given is that during 2012 London Olympics all police leave was cancelled. As a result for that specific timeframe it was agreed that requests for leave for the children of Police officers affected by the cancellation of their leave would be treated as exceptional.

- If a parent considers they require their child to have a leave of absences for exceptional circumstances they should complete the absence request form which can be obtained from the school office. There is a requirement that parent provide evidence of the exceptional circumstance and may be required to meet with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance.
- Where the Head teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant the request of the leave of absence but has additional concerns such as the timing of the absence or the pupil's attendance record, they may use the absence leave calculator.
- If the Headteacher deems that the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absences, a letter confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent.
- If the Headteacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional, the leave of absence will not be authorised. A letter informing parents of this decision and warning of the legal implications of the absence being taken will be sent to each parent for each child.
- If, once notified in writing of the decision to unauthorise the leave of absence, the absence is taken, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's register. If the trigger of 10 unauthorised absences (sessions) is met then the absences should be referred immediately to the Education Welfare Service for consideration and could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.
- When making a request for Leave of Absence to be granted in advance, parents are advised to give sufficient information to allow the Headteacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify parents of their decision. It is advised that if the parent/carer has not received notification of a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave will be authorised prior to the start of the leave.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 state that where a pupil has been granted extended leave of absence and subsequently fails to return to school within 10 school days of the expiry of the agreed period of absence, and the failure is not due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause, his/her name may, following consultation with the Local Authority, be deleted from the admission register. The School's expectations are clearly communicated to pupils and parents via the School Liaison Journal and additional guidelines and expectations are communicated to parents by letter regularly.

School Refusal, Unexplained non-attendance and concerns

Where a pupil is persistently missing school for any reasons, St Peter's will uphold a duty of care to ensure that the child is well and is safe as much as is possible.

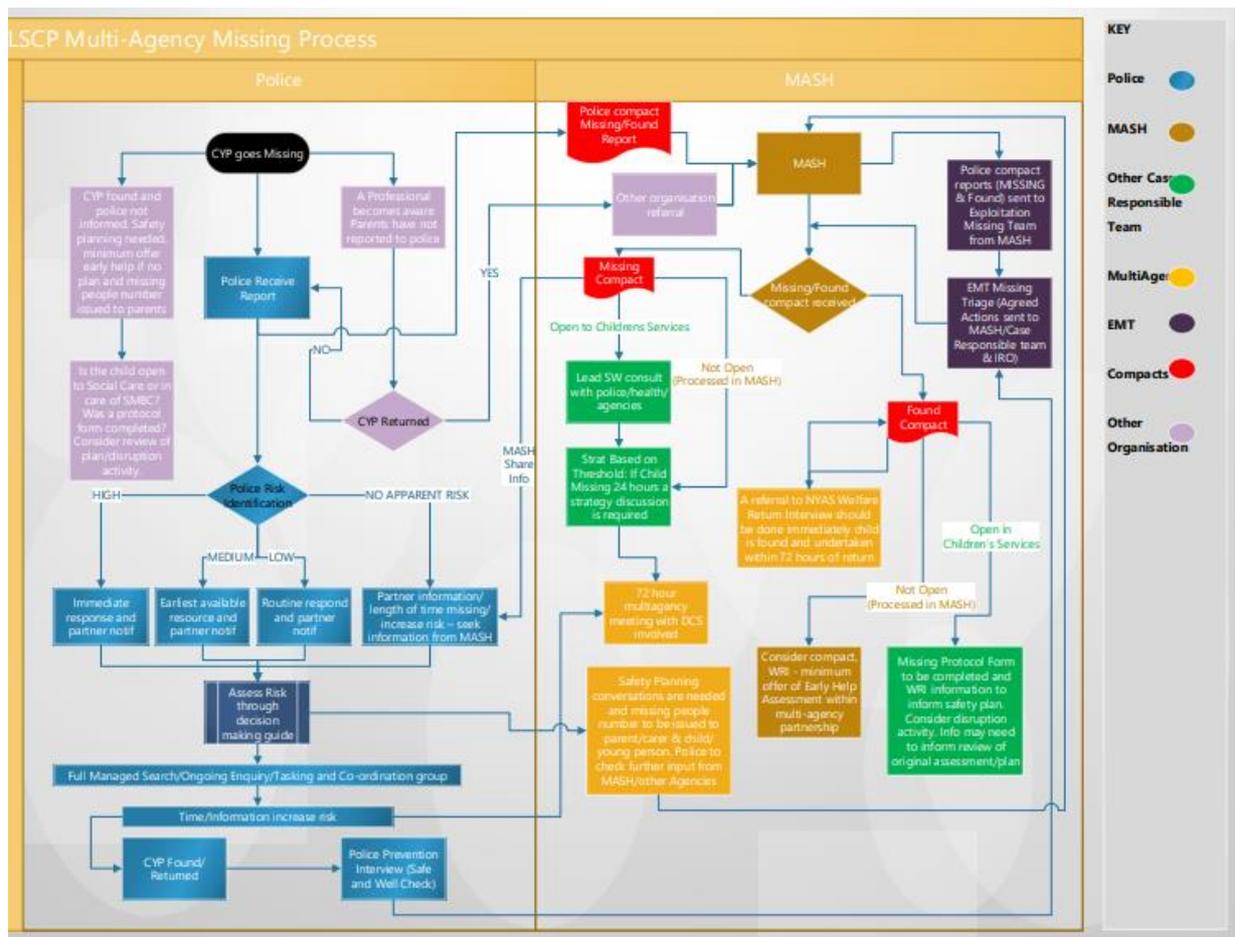
Where continuous absence has been unexplained, school will intervene with the following staged responses.

Continuous Non-attendance	Unexplained	Explained but concerns -e.g A Persistent Absentee or explanation is a concern.
First Day	Text Message, email and phone call made by attendance officer	Logged on PARS
Second Day	Second text message, email and phone call made by attendance officer Assistant Headteacher informed. Education Welfare Officer attempts contact and/or visit.	Logged on PARS Lead Tutor informed.
Third Day	Third text message, phone call made by attendance officer. EWO to make reasonable enquiries EWO to make reasonable enquiries	Logged on PARS. Assistant Headteacher and Education Welfare Officer informed.
One Week	Children's Services Informed Police informed to make another 'Safe and Well Visit'	Education Welfare Officer or appropriate member of staff complete a 'Duty of Care Visit'
Second Week	Referral made to CME team	Education Welfare Officer or appropriate member of staff complete a second 'Duty of Care Visit'
Third Week		Weekly 'Duty of care' visits
Forth Week	Pupil removal from roll requested.	Children's Services informed if appropriate. Attendance procedures followed in terms of legal action where appropriate.

Where a pupil is LAC, has an assigned Social Worker or Family Support Worker, school would inform via the linked DSL, immediately where there are concerns. Some pupils may have a safety plan which supersedes school policies due to personal circumstances.

Children Missing from Home, Care or Other settings.

Separate to the CME statutory duty to attend school, St Peter's Catholic School would follow the procedures set out by LSCP in March 2022 as per the flow diagram.



Punctuality

Pupils should be punctual to registration and lessons. Pupils should be outside their form room, or in the canteen on Assembly day at 8.40am ready to begin at 8.45. Pupils arriving after 8.45am but before 9.05am should report to their form tutor immediately who will record them as late and in most cases, they will receive a same day detention at break time. A member of staff on duty at the front gate will record the names of pupils arriving after 8.45.

Anyone arriving to school after registration must report directly to the Main School Office to sign in. Failure to do so will result in an unauthorised absence. Pupils who arrive after 9.05 and therefore miss registration completely will receive an afterschool detention the next day for 20 minutes. The pupil will then be given a late but present

mark. Pupils arriving after 9.30 a.m. will require a parent to provide a reason for the lateness and parents should contact the school by telephone, for example, an unplanned appointment at the doctors. Where a pupil is late without an authorised reason, they would be coded as 'U' - an authorised absence for the morning session. A medical appointment would be coded appropriately but evidence of the appointment would need to be provided. Failure to provide appropriate evidence will result in an unauthorised absence mark.

Pupils who are persistently arriving late can expect to receive an afterschool detention for up to one hour. In liaison with parents, some pupils will be placed on a daily monitoring list until punctuality improved.

It is the responsibility of the student who is late to get to registration as soon as possible and to attend detentions as designated. Lead Tutors and Senior Leaders will supervise these detentions, but all members of staff will support the school policy through being diligent in taking registers, recording lateness and escorting Pupils to detentions. Whole school detentions at break time take place in a designated room depending on the year group and break time.

Lead Tutors monitor punctuality to lessons and set sanctions to those who are persistently arriving after the 'time to learn' bell has sounded. Typically, those who are late to three lessons or more in one week will need to attend a detention after school.

Strategies to maintain and improve Attendance

Communication

Parents of pupils with poor attendance records are invited to meet with the appropriate Lead Tutor and form tutor where appropriate, to discuss the possible reasons behind low attendance, e.g. days or times when the data indicates frequent absences. A plan of action is discussed to bring about an improvement and a date is set to review the situation.

Re-integration

Pupil Support Room is used to aid a pupil's re-integration into school following long-term absence and can be used to support children with a variety of medical complaints and issues. This service is only available for short-term and time limited interventions due to capacity and all pupils who are in school are expected to attend lessons where directed by staff who feel this is appropriate.

Rewards

Good attendance is acknowledged through a reward system including termly and annual attendance certificates.

Lead Tutors operate competitions and rewards for attendance and punctuality within their year group in conjunction with rewards for behaviour and progress.

Strategies to maintain and improve punctuality

Detentions will be given on the same day for lateness up to 9.05.

After school detentions will be given for lateness where registration is missed or if lateness is persistent.

BAP reports are issued each week to ensure each pupils attendance and punctuality are highlighted.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Assistant Headteacher works in close collaboration with the Lead Tutors, Attendance Officer, Education Welfare Officer and the rest of the Leadership Team.

- The overall policy will be reviewed at least every three years or when there is significant changes in Government guidance.
- Attendance and Punctuality is discussed at the regular meetings of the Governors Pupil Support Committee meeting.
- Attendance and Punctuality are reported three times a year in the 'Headteacher's Report' to the Governing Body.

Please note an Pupil Attendance Policy addendum was created in 2020 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic which required significant adaptations. Staff responsibilities within this policy, had to be very reactive to government guidance and the changing circumstances.