St. Andrew's School

Attendance and Absence Policy

Maintenance

Policy Written By	**Emma Steinmann-Gilbert**
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Approved by The Director of Schools, Deborah Leek-Bailey – 01/09/2026

Attendance and Absence Policy

Aims:

To raise the profile of attendance by encouraging and promoting a positive attitude in order that all children can achieve a good rate of attendance throughout their time at school.

To follow the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)'

This policy will be available on the school website and will be sent to all parents of new pupils as they start at St. Andrew's School. As an annual reminder, all parents will also be sent the policy at the start of each academic year.

Objectives:

- To foster a high expectation of pupils' attendance in school on a regular basis.
- To raise family awareness of the importance of a child's regular attendance at school.
- To inform parents/guardians/carers as to the legitimate reasons for absence.
- To maintain an accurate attendance/registering system and a mechanism for monitoring and controlling attendance.
- To maintain a clear policy on attendance which is known to all staff, pupils and parents/guardians/carers.
- To maintain clear communication both within the school and between school and parents.

Attendance

Under section 44 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of that child at the school where he or she is a registered pupil.

The statutory recording of attendance and absence at the start of each session is known as Registration. This is undertaken within the first 10 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Registration is taken electronically by register using the School's management information system, or by paper when not possible electronically.

Parents/Carers and children should be aware of the School times to ensure punctuality. If not using Breakfast Club, arrival is between 8.30am and 8.50am. Infant pupils are collected at 3.20pm and Junior pupils at 3.25pm.

Registration takes place between 8.50am and 9am in the morning session and between 1.30pm and 1.40pm in the afternoon session.

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. Should a pupil arrive late and has missed registration, he or she will need to be "signed in" at the School Office for purposes of emergency evacuation and recording lateness. The register is open for 30 minutes (from 8.50am), during which time the pupils is registered as late, and after which, even if they arrive, they are counted as absent for statistical purposes.

Office Staff will input the information onto the School's Computerised Administration System, which calculates pupil's attendance marks.

Absences

Parents/carers should report all absences via the Daybook on Engage. This should be reported for any reason that the child is absent and must be requested for a pre-planned absence. This will automatically show next to the child's name on the register so that staff are aware and can mark the register accordingly. Any absence being requested will need to be authorised/unauthorised. Any medical appointments can be actioned by front office staff, but any other absence requests will need to be signed off by the Principal. Should an explanation not have been received at the beginning of the absence, a routine call to the child's parents will be made.

Absences are considered either to be:

- **Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a **good reason** and that the school has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be away or that the explanation given afterwards is accepted as satisfactory justification.

- **Unauthorised absences** are those, which the school **does not consider reasonable** and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy, absences, which have not been properly explained and children who arrive at school too late to receive a mark in the register.

The Principal has responsibility for deciding if an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absences should be reported to the School Office before 8.50am on the first day of absence via the Engage Portal. Otherwise, the School will phone to confirm the absence.

If a child is reluctant to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence; it gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make the situation worse. The class teacher would normally be able to help if this is the case. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage of the absence and to work with the staff in resolving problems together.

10% absence means the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year. The expected attendance is at least 92.9% (national average). Where attendance is as low as 90%, the school is to put additional targeted support in place, working with the local authority.

Procedures:

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- **Illness.** If a child has experienced vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they should stay at home for 48 hours after the last episode to lessen the risk of infecting others.

- **Holiday.** Schools may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, and not for a period longer than ten school days.

The Principal should consider each request individually, taking into account the circumstance, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the requests; whether the parent gave advance notice and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling. The Principal should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Monitoring and Support

The School's Senior Attendance Champion, is Mrs Lakanu, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. She can be contacted on 01634 843479 or using the info@st-andrews.rochester.sch.uk email address.

A data analysis will be undertaken and kept weekly, focusing on individuals and cohorts with attendance problems, in order to target improvement for those pupils who need it most. Meetings will then be held with relevant families.

The Local Authority have the right to examine and take extracts of attendance registers from the school.

The school will ensure that those missing school because of mental or physical ill health, or those with SEND, will be given extra support, by considering the individual needs of pupils. The School must alert the Local Authority about any pupil who misses 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness, as they may need additional support from the Local Authority, or 10 days consecutive unauthorised absence.

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, the attendance policy will take account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently but the school will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance, in line with the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 or considerations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Part-time timetables will only be in place for health reasons and never behaviour.

Attendance Awards

Termly attendance certificates are awarded to individual pupils and at the end of the year, 100% attendance badges are awarded.

Policy Review

As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, the school will seek the views of pupils and parents.

Admission and Attendance Registers

Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically, and all entries in these registers will be preserved for 6 years.

The School's official register is printed twice daily to be used in the event of evacuation.

A child's attendance record can be monitored and any absence or continuous late arrival in school can be checked quickly and immediate action can be taken.

National Codes for absence (as stated in School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England)(Regulations) 2024:

/ \ - present for morning and afternoon sessions.

The following are **classified as authorised absence**:
I – Illness.
M – Attending medical/dental appointment.
C – Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
R – Religious observance.
E – Suspended or permanently excluded.
T – Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
S – Study leave.
C1 – Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
J1 – Attending an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
C2 – Pupil is absent from school for part of the week (on a part-time timetable) – then also use the code for the reason why absent.

The following are **NOT classified as absences**:
B – An offsite educational activity.
K – Alternative provision arranged by the LA.
L – Late arrival before the register is closed (during the 30 mins 'grace' period).
P – Approved sporting activity.
V – Attending an educational visit or trip.
W – Work experience.

The following are **classified as unauthorised absence**:
G – Holiday not granted by the school.
N – Reason for absence not yet established.
O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances.
U – Arrived in school after the register closed (after 30 mins 'grace' period).

The following are **classified as 'not a possible attendance'**:
D – Dual registration, so attending another school where registered.
X – Pupils of non-compulsory school age absent when they are not timetabled to attend (e.g. EYFS).
Q – Lack of access arrangements by LA.
Y1 – Transport normally provided not being available.
Y2 – Widespread disruption to travel.
Y3 – Part of school premises being closed.
Y4 – Whole school site being unexpectedly closed.

Y5 – Pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Y6 – Public health guidance or law not to attend.
Y7 – Any other unavoidable cause.

The following codes are **not collected for statistical purposes**:
Z – Prospective pupil not on admission register.
- Planned whole school closure (holidays).

Relationship to other policies:
To be read in conjunction with the Attendance Register Procedure and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Mrs E. Steinmann-Gilbert
Principal
St. Andrew's School

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Review Date: September 2028