

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

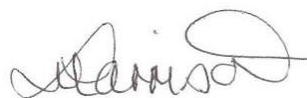


**'Learning for life,
building a firm foundation'**

Reviewed: September 2025

Headteacher: Lisa Harrison

Signed:



Aims of our Attendance and Punctuality Policy

At All Saints, we believe that our vision, *Learning for life, building a firm foundation*, is vitally important in terms of attendance and punctuality. This is because children need firm foundations on which to build in all aspects of their lives. In the case of this policy, this means that by attending school regularly and punctually, children will be able to take full advantage of the educational and social and emotional opportunities available to them. High attainment is directly linked to good attendance.

Attendance is part of safeguarding and is the responsibility of everyone.

The whole school community (pupils, parents/carers, teaching staff, support staff and school governors) have the responsibility of ensuring that attendance and punctuality at All Saints are good. Everybody has a role to play in this aim. The purpose of this policy is to set out everyone's roles and responsibilities. It is vital that the school and families work in partnership to identify and find supportive routes to improving attendance.

This policy has been produced after consultation with the school's governing body and representatives from the school community. It follows the guidance in the Department of Education's publication *Working together to improve school attendance* -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Who to Contact

All Saints' senior attendance champion is Lisa Harrison, Headteacher. Lisa Harrison may be contacted on 024 76382123.

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

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 school¹.

Support

Improving school attendance is everyone's responsibility. Class teachers and teaching assistants will work with children and families to encourage good attendance. The Pastoral Team will work alongside families to offer and signpost them to wider support service to provide 'The right support at the right time'. Where appropriate, Early Support & Family Help support plans will be used to structure support.

Where barriers to attendance exist, the school will need to: meet with parents/carers; work together to get the correct support; listen to the child & family; make reasonable adjustments; review plans together; identify and plan next steps.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/109967/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Attendance and safeguarding are linked to each other. Where a child's attendance leads to the school having concerns that the child may be at risk of harm, including neglecting their right to an education, they may refer the child to the Front Door of Warwickshire's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

The prime responsibility of ensuring that children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with the parents/carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of the child).

All Saints CE Primary School and Nursery expects that parents/carers will:

- Ensure that their children attend school every day on time
- Call the school (or use the text/App messaging service) to report their child's absence before 8:55am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise us when they are expected to return. If school does not receive a reason for absence, school will contact the pupil's parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence. If contact cannot be made by telephone/text, school staff may visit the family home to check that the pupil is safe and well and ascertain a reason for the absence (see unplanned absence below). If school is not provided with a valid reason, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Provide the school with at least 2, and preferably 3 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Notify the school about any change in circumstances that they believe may be affecting their ability to ensure that their children attend school. This is to enable the pastoral team to support the parents to access wider support services to support their child's attendance and access their right to education

Responsibilities of Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time, ready to learn

Attendance and punctuality are given a high profile within school. Good attendance and punctuality are celebrated through assemblies and the school's newsletter. Children with good attendance receive recognition and rewards.

If children are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school, they should share these using any of the various in-school methods for sharing worries or concerns (Worry Wall, Time to Talk, Pastoral email, speak to a trusted adult).

Responsibilities of the School

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

The pastoral team are responsible for:

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues (including home visits where contact by telephone is unsuccessful)
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The attendance co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher and pastoral team
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

School office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Contacting parents/carers of absent pupils where parents have not informed school of the reason for absence
- Transferring calls from parents to the pastoral team in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Classroom staff (teachers and teaching assistants) are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis
- Providing an environment in which all of our pupils are eager to learn and feel valued
- Setting a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality

- Discussing absence and punctuality with parents/carers so that they can work together to make improvements.

Persistent & Severe Absence

- A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% of their possible attendance (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year) and as a 'severe absentee' when they miss 50% of their possible attendance or more schooling throughout the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence.
- Where absence escalates pupils, schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.
- Particular focus should be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

Our Strategy to improve attendance and punctuality

Every week, the attendance coordinator will identify all of the classes that have achieved at least 96% attendance during the previous week. For those classes, **ALL** of the children (including children who were absent) will have 10 mins extra playtime at some time during the week at a time to be decided by the class adults. Classes that have earned extra playtime will be announced in assembly each week. If this is every class, we will be delighted!

Recording Attendance

Attendance register:

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at 8:55am on each school day and at the start of the afternoon session following the lunch break. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- (For pupils of compulsory school age) Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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.

Pupils must arrive in school between 8:45am and 8:55am. Pupils who arrive after 8:55am without a valid authorised reason will be marked as late ('L') on the attendance register. Pupils who arrive after the register has closed without valid reason will be marked with the unauthorised absence code 'U'.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:25am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12:45pm in KS1 and 1pm in KS2.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:55am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 02476 382123 or by using the school's text/App messaging service.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

If a pupil is not attending as required, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the school's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see & speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

If the school is not notified of the reason for a pupil's absence by 9:25am, they will try to make contact with the parents/carers by telephone or text message. If this is unsuccessful, they may visit the family home to ensure that the pupil is safe and well.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. A leave of absence request form must be completed.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- before the register has closed at 9:25am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the home address. If the school has any reason to believe that an absent or late pupil may be at risk of harm, they will inform the police and the Warwickshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Refer to the local authority if a pupil is absent for more than 10 days and school is unable to make contact with the parent/carer (via telephone call, text message, home visit) and the whereabouts of the child is unknown. The child will be considered "Missing in Education". This will not apply if the child has been hospitalised for medical reasons.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent without authorisation for twenty consecutive days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and local authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

Children who go missing during the school day

Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed. Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the

urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupil's whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timeliness should be on a case by case basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability. School staff will try to locate the pupil and try to establish the whereabouts of them. School staff will contact home and try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if known.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels at termly parent/teacher consultations.

Formalising Support

The Warwickshire Attendance Service: Formalising support & Legal Interventions

- School is responsible for liaising closely with the Local Authority's Warwickshire Attendance Service and will follow their standard approaches in managing attendance issues.
- Where all voluntary support options have not been successful, or have not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.
- Warwickshire Attendance Service can use the following legal interventions/formalised support; Attendance Contracts, Notice to Improve, issue of Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders, Attendance Prosecution, consideration of application of Parenting Orders.
- Warwickshire Attendance Service will decide which intervention will be most appropriate, however only after considering the individual circumstances of a family.
- The above voluntary support options are not appropriate for an unauthorised Leave of Absence in term time.
- Prosecutions for non-school attendance must be conducted in line with the Warwickshire County Council Non-school attendance and Penalty Notice code of conduct and the Code for Crown Prosecutors and must pass the evidential and public interest tests.

Leave of absence

The DfE 'Working together to Improve School Attendance' 2024 attendance guidance states: "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".

- The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Expectations

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).
- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.
- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e., the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.
- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence taken from September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Non-compulsory age pupils

Although there is no legal requirement for a pupil to attend nursery, it is widely acknowledged establishing routines including good attendance in early years reaps benefits when children become of compulsory age.

At All Saints, we have the same expectations of attendance for non-compulsory age pupils as for all pupils. Absence coding will therefore be in line with the DfE guidance and absences must be notified to school by parents/carers in accordance with the 'authorised and unauthorised' section earlier in this policy.

Legal responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude; to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Parents/carers and guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their children receive efficient, fulltime education by regular attendance at school or otherwise under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

Section 576 Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not;
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person; Page 8 of 9

- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- present;
- absent;
- attending an approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will record absences in line with the DfE Attendance coding guidance.

Types of Absence

Only the Head Teacher or designated member of staff have the authority to **authorise** absences or record absences as **unauthorised**.

There are two types of absence:

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for an acceptable reason, such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable causes.

Where possible we ask that medical appointments be made outside of school time, during school holidays or at a time to minimise absence from school. However, we understand some medical appointments cannot be changed, please liaise with the school office if this is the case.

Unauthorised absences are when a pupil is absent without prior authorisation from the school and/or when no justifiable reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer or guardian (including when parents have failed to provide a reason despite attempts to establish a reason by the school).

This type of absence could lead to the school referring to the Local Authority and/or increasing the level of support offered to improve attendance

Child Missing Education

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) leaders have ensured that:

- Staff understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions) are in place.

- Staff know that travelling to conflict zones could be an indicator of FGM and forced marriage.
- Procedures are in place to ensure that the local authority is always informed if pupils':
 - o leave the school to be home educated
 - o move away from the school location
 - o remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - o are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards);
 - o are permanently excluded
- Schools will ensure that students who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.
- When a student leaves, schools will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Deletions from the register

The school will only delete a pupil from their register in accordance with The School Attendance (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the local Authority will be notified of this removal.

Our school will inform Children's Services when a child with safeguarding concerns is due to be removed from the school register.

Data & Monitoring

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance.

Text messages will be sent at the end of each week to all parents/carers where no reason for absence has been provided.

Text messages will be sent at the end of each week to all parents/carers of pupils who were late arriving to school during that week.

We will send attendance monitoring letters at the end of each half term to the parents/carers of pupils where their attendance is below what is expected and/or where we have concerns that there may be barriers to attendance.

- **Stage 1 Letter** Inform parents/carers that their child's attendance is being monitored and an improvement is expected. Monitor over the next half term
- **Stage 2 Letter** No improvement in attendance – monitor for the next 4 weeks
- **Stage 3 Letter** No improvement – Meet with headteacher to discuss reasons for absence and offer help and support. Attendance target set
- **Stage 4 Letter** No improvement and attendance target not achieved – referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service.

Monitoring and analysing attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data fortnightly by year group and reasons for absence. It will identify pupils whose absence is a cause for concern.

- Attendance data is reported to staff and governors on a termly and annual basis. This includes analysis by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, Looked after Children and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Schools are required to make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.
- Report the absence of a pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised.

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board. Attendance data for the whole school, groups and, where appropriate, individual pupils, will be shared with Warwickshire County Council periodically to monitor, analyse and improve attendance.

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, pastoral team members and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services, including the Early Support & Family Help process, to remove the barriers to attendance.

Policy monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the head teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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