Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Together We Believe, Aspire and Achieve

Equality Statement

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations.

We review all policies and procedures we operate to ensure there are no negative equality impacts based on age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. If you feel, on reading this policy that there may be a negative equality impact, please tell us about this. Please also let us know if you need to access this policy in a different format. You can do this by contacting the school office.

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance, through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and through its ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfill 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

Our link governor for attendance is Fr Jeremy Sheehy. He will monitor pupil attendance with our Attendance Lead, Mrs P Harris.

Our Governing Board Buildings, Health and Safety Sub-committee is responsible for attendance.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing 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.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

Leading attendance across the school

Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

Having an oversight of data analysis

Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Wright, who oversees the work of our Attendance Lead, Mrs Harris. She is supported by Mrs Royle, the school's Pastoral Lead. These staff may be contacted by the following:

- School phone number – 0161 794 2616

- School email – stpeters.ceprimaryschool@salford.gov.uk

3.4 The attendance lead

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Liaising with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. This must be completed at morning registration by 8.50am (EYFS and KS1) and 9.00am (KS2), and at afternoon registration by 12.40 (EYFS and Y1), 1.10 (Y2-4) and 1.40pm (Y5-6).

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:
Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

Transfer calls from parents to the attendance lead/pastoral lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

Make sure their child attends every day on time

Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return

Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. Please see

- Appendix 2: Absence Request Form
- Appendix 3: Attendance Agreement

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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 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:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not. (Holidays taken by Nursery school age children will not be authorised but no fine will be issued).
- 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am/9.00am on each school day.

The EYFS and KS1 (children from Nursery to Y2) morning register will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.05am.

The KS2 (children from Y3 to Y6) morning register will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15am.

4.2 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 8.45am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff. The office should be updated with long-term illness – over 3 days. (see also section 7).

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.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorized,as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should complete an Absence Request Form to request leave of absence from school.

Appendix 2: Absence Request Form
Appendix 3: Attendance Agreement

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:
Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code – L.

After the register has closed will be marked as absent using the appropriate code – U.

- Parents should sign their child in school on arrival at the office stating the reason they are late.
- Parents will receive a letter and report if their child is persistently late and if this continues, they may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss this with the Attendance Lead and EWO.

4.5 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 contact police.

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

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This information is provided to parents at the Autumn Term Parents' Evening and then with their child's written school report at the end of the academic year. Between these occasions, parents can request an attendance report at any time.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

- We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance to a religious festivals or services such as the wedding or funeral of an immediate family member, respite care of a looked after child, Other compassionate circumstances e.g family illness or crisis. Where there are other factors which the Head teacher may consider exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 1 week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website and as an appendix to this policy. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:
Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Holidays taken during term time

At St Peter's, we strongly discourage parents/carers from booking holidays during term time. We feel that there are many other opportunities outside the school year when holidays may be taken. However, under exceptional circumstances, school may authorise up to five days' absence over a school year, for the purposes of a holiday. We expect parents to follow a set procedure for this:

A letter must be sent into school giving details of why this holiday could not be taken out of term time, and asking the permission of the headteacher to keep the child away from school for this period.

The headteacher will consider the request and the clerk will, on his behalf, return a form with the decision written on it. Additional comments may be added.
Our policy is that holiday absence will only be granted if a child's attendance during the previous school year was at or greater than 96%.

Parents/carers are informed of the procedures for authorising holidays in several ways – via this policy on the website, in the school prospectus, in regular newsletters and through discussion with the headteacher.
Parents/carers need to be aware that:

- The school will only authorise a **maximum** of five days for a holiday
- The school will **not** authorise any holidays for children during the key assessment periods of – Y1 Phonic Screening, Y2 SATs, Y6 2 SATs
- The school will **not** authorise any holidays during the first week of the Autumn Term.

Parents/carers will be given the dates that their children will be taking the assessments named above at the beginning of that school year and advised that no absence will be granted during this period.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.
The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We reward good and improving attendance in a variety of ways, including:

- weekly presentations in assembly regarding whole-class attendance
- extra playtime for each class with 96%+ attendance per week
- class 'party' with the headteacher for any class with 100% attendance in a week
- certificates presented twice yearly for individuals with 96%+ and 100% attendance
- pencils for those who achieve 96%+ by the end of the year
- a cinema trip for those who achieve 100% by the end of the year

We also promote good attendance with the support from our Attendance Ambassadors (young leaders with significantly high attendance).

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.

Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

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.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, 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.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

-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 to remove the barriers to attendance

-Provide an Attendance Agreement contract

-Closely monitor the persistent and severe absences.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and/or annually by Mrs Sabatino the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Policy reviewed – Autumn 2022

Signed - _____ (Chair of Governing Board)

Signed - _____ (Headteacher)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Code	**Definition**	**Scenario**
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Code	**Definition**	**Scenario**
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. For an 'exceptional circumstances' absence request you must have parental responsibility and be the parent with whom the child normally lives. Permission must be sought in advance. If you do not have parental responsibility and/or normally live with the child you must seek the consent of the parent who does and that person should complete this form. Schools will only consider requests from that parent.

When deciding whether to allow term time leave, for any reason, the school will only consider exceptional circumstances.

WARNING: If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence,** reported to the LA and may make you liable to a fine.

TO THE HEADTEACHER OF ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

I wish to apply for:
NAME[S] OF CHILD [REN] _____, YEAR _____;

_____, YEAR _____; _____, YEAR _____

to be authorised as being absent from school from_____ to _____ inclusive.

REASON FOR REQUEST FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME:

THESE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MEAN THAT THE ABSENCE CANNOT BE TAKEN DURING A SCHOOL HOLIDAY.

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

☐**AUTHORISED** The school consents to your child being absent on the specified dates.
☐**UNAUTHORISED** The school does not consent to your child's absence on these dates.

SIGNED..... Headteacher

Date.....

Absence Request Form side 2: **HOLIDAYS IN TERM-TIME**

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

WARNING: If you take your child on holiday in term time without the prior approval of the school, you may be liable for a minimum of £60 Penalty Notice per child.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by, whenever possible, taking your holidays during school holidays.

If your child's attendance falls below 95%, a meeting may be arranged with the school nurse and the education welfare officer in order to discuss your child's health etc.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
We recognise that it is often expensive to take a holiday during school breaks and that is why some parents may ask for term-time leave for their child. However, it is important that parents carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term time. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the course work they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations. Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates. If the school refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as **unauthorised absence** and you may receive a fine per parent for each child.	The law does not say that parents have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term-time. However, in exceptional circumstances school may authorise, in advance, requests for periods of leave of no more than ten days in total in any year. If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance. **If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have to take the child off roll unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.** In these circumstances it is up to the parent to inform the school as once removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.

Other absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:	**Other absence from school will not be authorised:**
Genuine illness Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but make these after school if at all possible) Days of religious observance Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces External examinations When Traveller children go on the road with their parents.	For any type of shopping Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents Minding the house Birthdays Resting after a late night Relatives visiting or visiting relatives Cheap holidays

We hope that when you have read this information you will consider that your child's education is too important to take holidays during term time.

Appendix 3: Attendance Agreement

Attendance Agreement

As a parent or carer, it is your responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time.

I think it is important to make you also aware of the following:

- Your child gets **two** register marks per day, therefore 5 days absent from school results in 10 sessions recorded as unauthorised.
- Arrival after 8.50am (EYFS & Y1-2) or 9.00am (Y3-6) means your child will be marked as late.
- Arrival after 9:05am (EYFS & Y1-2) or 9.15am (Y3-6) means your child will be marked down as an **unauthorised** late.
- Arriving late can affect your child's attendance. 5 minutes late each day is the same as missing 3 days over the school year. 10 minutes equals 6.5 days lost and 15 minutes late each day is the equivalent of 10 days, that's two weeks of school lost.
- You should report your child being absent to the school office before 8.55am and keep them updated with long-term illness (over 3 days).
- Medical appointments need to be made outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please provide medical evidence such as an appointment card or letter.

Persistence Absences below 96%

School attendance should be above 96%, therefore if this figure continues to decrease below this percentage, school will have no option but to comply with Local Authority policy and the following will be put into place with immediate effect:

- If your child is absent from school or has not arrived by 9:15am you will be contacted by telephone.
- The school will require medical evidence for any persistent absence; appointment letter or cards and prescriptions will be accepted. Without this evidence, your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- **Failure to attach the medical evidence will result in an unauthorised absence mark.**
- Please note – your child's attendance mark will not be affected by any time off they have had due to isolating or being affected by COVID-19. These marks are authorised by schools.

Pupil Name: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

DATE: _____