

All Saints CE (VC) First School

Policy on Attendance

Date: September 2013

Updated: September 2014

Updated: March 2015

Updated: October 2015

Reviewed: October 2016

Updated: October 2017

Reviewed: October 2018

Reviewed: October 2019

Covid-19 Update: June 2020

Reviewed October 2021 (Covid amendment removed)

Updated: February 2022 (following register inspection)

Reviewed: October 2022

Reviewed: October 2023

Updated: October 2024

Reviewed: February 2025

To be reviewed: October 2026

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance provided by the Department for Education and Employment. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets that reflect both national and Staffordshire attendance targets.

In order for a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards full attendance for all children and continuously convey the importance of regular and punctual attendance to parents and carers.

Aims of Policy

- a. To provide a full and efficient education to all pupils and ensure equal opportunities for all.
- b. To provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.
- c. To ensure that attendance of all pupils is monitored and that the importance of regular and punctual attendance is communicated to parents and carers.
- d. To promote high levels of attendance so that each pupil can achieve maximum benefits from the educational, personal and social opportunities available at All Saints First School.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence.

Registration

The register is open from 8:55am until 9:05am

a) Register is taken 8:55am to 9:05am

b) Any child arriving late - after 8:55am but before 9:10am will be marked late (L on the register)

c) If a child arrives after 9:10am they will be marked as 'U' - Late -Registration closed. This is regarded as an unauthorised absence unless an explanation is given and accepted as grounds for authorising the late arrival, in which case the appropriate code will then be used.

Any children arriving after 8.55am should enter school through the main school doors in order for their late arrival to be recorded.

Afternoon registration will take place at **1.00pm** and the registers will close at **1.10pm**.

First day Absence

Parents and carers are asked to notify the school office by telephone (or other means) before 9:15am on the first day of absence. If the length of absence is known then the parent/carer doesn't need to ring daily. If the length of absence is unknown, then the parent/carer needs to ring on each day of absence.

The school office staff pass messages to the child's class teacher and enter the absence in the register if contact is made via the school office. Teachers should inform the office if the message has been passed directly to them from the parent/carer.

Class teachers should ensure that parents/carers receive any letters or information that has been given out during the child's period of absence.

Completing registers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes. Teachers should seek the advice of the Headteacher if they are unsure of the code they should enter. At the end of the week the school office staff enter the attendance figures on to the SIMs computer system.

Registers are completed online by **9.10am** and dinner lists taken to the kitchen.

Students on teaching practice should only complete registers under the direct supervision of their class teacher. Teachers are responsible for checking the register to ensure that it has been completed accurately. When a supply teacher or HLTA is covering a class they are responsible for the register and must report any messages or concerns to the class teacher.

The school will notify the Local Authority of any child who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Poor Attendance and Frequent Absence

Class teachers should bring any concerns they have over attendance directly to the Headteacher. Children's attendance is monitored daily and analysed half termly. Any absence raising concern will be discussed with the LA Attendance Officer. Letters will be sent to Parents/Carers termly informing them of their child's attendance percentage. However, letters will be sent half-termly for any children with attendance below 94% (See Appendix 1)

The Parents/Carers of children who have persistent absence (below 90%) will be written to and will be referred to the LA Attendance Officer. Parents/Carers will be invited to attend an Attendance meeting with the Headteacher and LA Attendance Officer.

Leave of Absence / Holidays during term time

Please refer to the Staffordshire Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices, July 2024 (Appendix 2) and the 'Letter to Parents - Changes to issuing penalty notices for term time leave' (Appendix 3). As per this code of conduct the Headteacher will only authorise term time absence in exceptional circumstances. The school's Governing Board and Headteacher do not consider family holidays taken in term time to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read the 'Parental Request for Leave Letter' (Appendix 4), complete the form and send it to the Headteacher. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. The Headteacher cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.

There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.

Penalty Notices

You may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct and the "Working Together to Improve School attendance" statutory guidance. The penalties for unauthorised leave of absence in term time will be:

For a **First** offence the Penalty Notice fine would be: -

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

For a **Second** offence within 3-years of the first penalty notice being issued, the penalty notice fine would be:

- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 28 days.

Following the second offence **every new offence within the 3-year period, will be prosecuted** under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. If the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is **£1,000 per parent, per child**. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Attendance Awards

Attendance Awards will be presented at the end of each year.

Children who have 100% attendance for the year will receive a special 100% Certificate and a choice of attendance awards e.g. an extra playtimes; a DVD afternoon etc.

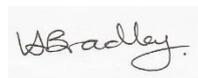
Children who have 97% to 99.9% attendance for the term will receive a special Good Attendance Certificate.

Monitoring and review of the policy

The Headteacher is responsible for this policy.

The policy will be updated annually and reviewed every three years or sooner as required due to any changes in the law etc.

Signed:



Date:

17/10/2017

Agreed by: Full Governing Board

Appendix 1

Please find below details of the colour code system used at All Saints and example copies of the attendance letters that will be sent to Parents/Carers on a termly basis.

Attendance Colour Codes

<p>97% - 100% WELL DONE! THIS IS EXCELLENT No intervention</p>
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<p>>94% - <97%</p>
<p>BE CAREFUL</p>
<p>Attendance clinic invites. Start of EHA/PN1a requested.</p>

<p>90% - 94%</p>
<p>IMPROVEMENT NEEDED!</p>
<p>School monitoring/intervention</p>

<p>Less than 90%</p>
<p>PERSISTENT ABSENCE PUPIL</p>

Sample text from attendance letters follows:

Green Letter

Dear Parents/Carers of

We are writing to congratulate you and your child. Since September your child's attendance percentage is %. This is excellent! Such good attendance is ensuring that your child is missing as little teaching and learning as possible.

We have introduced a colour code system in an attempt to improve the attendance of all children in our school as evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. Our aim is for all children to have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

We are delighted that your code for this term is **GREEN!**

If you would like to see a copy of our current policy on Attendance, please visit the school website.

Thank you for your continuing support,
Warm regards,
Headteacher

Yellow Letter

Dear Parents/Carers of

Since September your child's attendance percentage is %. This is very good and we recommend that your child is not absent unnecessarily for the rest of the year so that they may achieve an attendance percentage of over 97%.

We have introduced a colour code system in an attempt to improve the attendance of all children in our school as evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

We are delighted that your code for this term is **YELLOW!**

If you would like to see a copy of our current policy on Attendance, please visit the school website.

Thank you for your continuing support,
Warm regards,
Headteacher

Grey Letter

Dear Parents/Carers of

Since September your child's attendance percentage is %.

We have a colour code system in an attempt to improve the attendance of all children in our school as evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

Your child is currently in the **grey** group which means that it is very important your child's attendance improves. Please ensure that your child is not absent unnecessarily. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all children should be in the yellow and green groups, which means that their attendance is above 94%.

If you would like to see a copy of our current policy on Attendance, please visit the school website.

Thank you for your continuing support,
Regards,
Headteacher

Red Letter

Dear Parents/Carers of

Since September your child's attendance percentage is %. This significantly low attendance rate requires your urgent attention.

We have introduced a colour code system in an attempt to improve the attendance of all children in our school as evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups, which means that their attendance is above 94%.

Your child is currently in the **red** group and is now categorised as a "Persistent Absence Pupil" by the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) monitors each child's attendance on a regular basis and you could face court proceedings. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all children should be in the yellow and green groups. Please be aware that your child's significantly low attendance has been notified to the EWO.

If you would like to see a copy of our current policy on Attendance, please visit the school website.

Regards,
Headteacher

Half Termly Letter for Pupils Attendance causing concern

Dear Parents/Carers of

This half term your child's attendance percentage is %.

We have a colour code system in an attempt to improve the attendance of all children in our school as evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

Your child is currently in the group causing concern which means that it is very important your child's attendance improves. Please ensure that your child is not absent unnecessarily. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all children should be in the yellow and green group, which means that their attendance is above 94%.

If you would like to see a copy of our current policy on Attendance, please visit the school website.

Thank you for your continuing support,
Regards,
Headteacher

Appendix 3 - Staffordshire Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices, July 2024

[Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct-July-24-FINAL.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 3 - Letter to inform parents of changes to issuing penalty notices for term time leave

Dear Parents

Changes to issuing Penalty Notices for Term Time Leave

In February 2024, the Department for Education published Working together to improve School Attendance. Within this document, in Chapter 6, it lays out the changes to issuing penalty notices. The changes to the law are introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and will come into effect from 19 August 2024. This means that any unauthorised leave taken after this date will be dealt with under the new Regulations. The changes to the regulations are significant so it is important that you understand them, so that you can consider the consequences for yourselves before taking leave in term time.

We have received the following information regarding the new regulations from Staffordshire County Council:

New two penalty notice limit in a three-year period

The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 19th August 2024.

The first Penalty Notices for leave in term time will increase to £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000.

Please note

If a parent books a holiday now to take place after the 19th August 2024, they will be dealt with in line with when the actual unauthorised leave from school occurs, not the date of the booking. If the penalty notice is not paid within the given period, the county council will prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies.

To clarify in terms of the three-year period, Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised absences taken before the 19th August 2024 will not be included in the three year period. However, all penalty notices issued for any reason connected to unauthorised absences after the 19th August 2024 will be counted in the three-year period, even if they are not paid by the parents. The only penalty notices not counted in the three-year period will be those withdrawn by the county council due to an error related to them been issued.

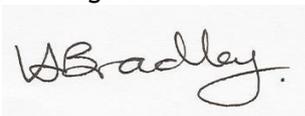
National threshold for issuing penalty notices.

Parents may have heard about the new national threshold for issuing penalty notices which has been set at 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. However, if in an individual case the local authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example - where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

It is important for parents to know that in the new regulations when a school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected in every case to consider whether to request the county council issue a penalty notice. Therefore, we will continue to ask schools to notify us of all unauthorised leave in term time that meets the threshold of 5 school days, and any below this threshold if it falls within our discretionary powers to issue one.

Please do contact me if you have any questions and I will do my best to answer them.

Kind regards



Vicki Bradley
Headteacher

Appendix 4

Request for leave during term time (TEMPLATE LETTER)

To: The head teacher of:..... (School) Date.....

I request a leave of absence from school during term time for:

my child (full name)

for the period from (date) to (date)

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are: -

.....
.....
.....

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows

Child(ren) (full name(s))School(s) attended

.....
.....

(Signature of 1st parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

(Signature of 2nd parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance.....%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time(this academic year)

Agreed/Not Agreed

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request :

SignedHead teacher . Date

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent/carer.....