



St. Paulinus Catholic Primary Academy

Part of the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust

Inspiring all to live, learn and love in the light of Jesus.

(cf John 8:12)



Attendance Policy

Version control

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1	3.1.23	Updated with new guidance from Kirklees	SHayes	24.1.23
2	15.9.23	Updated with changes to KCSIE	SHayes	19.9.23
3	09/10/23	Updated with Kirklees Legal framework	E McHale	

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School Mission

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Introduction

St. Paulinus Catholic Primary Academy is committed to providing an excellent educational experience for all its students/pupils enabling them to maximise opportunities and to reach their full potential. Research shows that there is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment, alongside social and academic achievement. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork and friendship groups resulting in a positive learning experience and a successful transition between life stages.

St. Paulinus is committed to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching their full potential and to get the best out of the educational opportunities provided. This is achieved by ensuring that parents/carers and pupils understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance; and by having clear and robust strategies in place for all pupils. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

There will, inevitably, be occasional issues that impede full attendance, and these will be identified and addressed promptly. We will strive to work in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Safeguarding

St. Paulinus is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. We recognise that some pupils may be especially vulnerable. Your child may be at risk of harm and/or exploitation if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each pupil is everyone's responsibility and within the context of St. Paulinus Catholic Primary Academy, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety and access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Responsibilities

At St. Paulinus we will:

- Expect pupils to attend school regularly, on time, properly equipped and ready to learn.
- Encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents/carers as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.

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- Promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Work in partnership with parents / carers and pupils to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Enforce the requirement to attend school punctually and reserve the right not to authorise absence for persistent absentees or where there is no reasonable explanation provided.
- Involve appropriate outside agencies and/or the local authority to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Follow the DfE and Government guidance in relation to school attendance and illnesses, including infectious diseases and COVID
- Follow Public Health guidance where appropriate.
- Follow first day calling protocols when the pupil is absent and no contact has been made with the school.

St. Paulinus pupils will:

- Attend school regularly and on time arriving between 8.30am and 8.45am in the morning.
- Attend all lessons punctually.

Parents / Carers of St. Paulinus pupils will:

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
- Understand their responsibility to keep St. Paulinus up-to-date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2023.
- Establish effective communication with St. Paulinus and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school, so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.
- Telephone St. Paulinus before 09:00 am on the first day and every subsequent day of absence, informing the school of the reasons for absence and stating an expected day of return.
- Provide St. Paulinus with any medical appointment cards and where possible make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible parents should ensure that children attend prior to or following their appointment.
- Attend any meetings called by St. Paulinus and partner agencies to discuss attendance.
- Work actively with St. Paulinus / staff and relevant multi-agency staff, to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.

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Registration Procedures

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 determine the admissions and attendance registers that all schools must keep. They also regulate the power schools have to grant leave of absence.

By law, schools are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the student is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

AM registration is at **08:45** am.

PM registration is at **12:45** pm.

Students arriving after **08:55** am must register at the Office but will be recorded as late (L). Students arriving after **9.15am** must register at the Office but will be recorded as unauthorised absence (U).

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Registration Symbols

The following symbols are used in registers in line with the Department for Education guidance:

Code	Description	Student / Pupil counted as if present in school for that session?
/	Present	Yes
L	Late	Yes
U	Late (after 9.15am)	No
B	Educated off-site	Yes
D	Dual Registration	Yes
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	No
E	Excluded	No
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	No
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	No
I	Illness	No
M	Medical / Dental Appointment	No
N	No reason yet provided for absence	No
O	Unauthorised absence	No
J	Interview	Yes
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Yes
V	Educational Visit or Trip	Yes
W	Work Experience	Yes
R	Religious Observance	No
S	Study Leave	No
T	Traveller Absence	No
X	Non-Compulsory School Age absence	No
X	Period of self-isolating until receipt of Covid Test	No
Y	Enforced Closure	Yes
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	No
#	School closed to pupils	No

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Absence Reporting and Intervention

First Day Absence

Parents / carers should ring the school before 09:00 am to report a student absence, giving the reason and likely duration of the absence. Where parents/carers have not contacted school, the school will contact the parents/carers.

Continued Unreported Absence

If contact has not been made by the 10.30am, the school will conduct a home visit to ensure that the child and family are safe. If contact cannot be made through this method, in some cases (as per our safeguarding duty) the police may be called and a child reported as missing.

Intervention in Cases of Absence

The school monitors the attendance of all pupil on a daily basis. If parents do not inform the School of their child's absence by 9.30am on the first day and by 2.30pm on subsequent day, they will be contacted by a member of staff:

- Step 1: phone call to the main emergency contact
- Step 2: phone call to other emergency members on the list
- Step 3: text message to the main emergency contact outlining that we will conduct a home visit if we do not hear from you
- Step 4: Home visit with 2 members of staff
- Step 5: police referral
- Step 6: child missing in education/ absent from education referral to Kirklees.

In some cases, staff may choose to conduct home visits even when contact has been made in order to assure themselves of the welfare of the family.

In cases of persistent Absenteeism or cases of concern, the school also employs a number of other interventions including:

1. A phone call home by the attendance officer, discussing attendance.
2. A letter home outlining that your child's attendance has dipped below expectations.
3. A meeting with Designated Safeguarding Lead, attendance officer and child's parent.
4. A meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, attendance officer and the LA attendance and pupil support officer.
5. A parent agreement to be put in place for attendance.
6. Legal action will be considered. (See appendix 1)

We also encourage good attendance though:

- Attendance parties or rewards
- Attendance certificates and/ or badges
- Weekly class/ year group winners

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- Rewarding improvements in attendance
- Staff praising attendance
- Weekly Trophy display for winning year group every term
- Attendance Ted and extra breaks

Continued Persistent Unauthorised Absence

This is likely to lead to legal action requested by the school and managed by the local authority.

Leave of Absence

St. Paulinus has adopted the local authority Code of Conduct in respect of leave of absence in term time. Parents who wish to remove their child from school for any reason other than medical should write to the head teacher requesting a leave of absence before booking the leave. If the leave of absence is refused and the period is for more than 10 consecutive school sessions (5 days), St. Paulinus may request the local authority to issue a penalty notice. In cases of repeated leaves of absence, direct prosecution proceedings may be instigated under s444(1) Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

The circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but must be exceptional (i.e., unusual and uncommon). Full details of the reason for the leave of absence and why it is exceptional should be submitted so that the Head Teacher may make a measured decision. Please note that there are very few cases that will be considered exceptional. St Paulinus is only in session for 190 days in the year, this leaves many other days that can be used for leave of absences.

Authorising Absence

Parents / carers do not have the legal right to authorise absence, as this is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

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Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices may be issued:

- If parents have not sought permission from the school before taking their child out of school for a leave of absence in term-time.
- If the school has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway.
- If a pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation.

AND

- Where the individual absence has been recorded by school as an unauthorised leave of absence in the attendance register for at least 10 consecutive sessions (5 school days).
- If a pupil has been suspended or excluded and is seen in public without reasonable cause.

If a penalty notice is requested, the local authority will issue a penalty notice for £60 to each parent of each child. If this remains unpaid after 21 days, each outstanding fine will double to £120, allowing 7 days to pay this. If the penalty notice is not paid, the matter is forwarded to the Magistrates' Court for prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996 (failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance). If found guilty, you may be liable for a fine of up to £1,000 and you will receive a criminal record.

A parent is defined under s576 Education Act 1996 as birth parents and/or a person who has day to day care of the child.

Absence to Participate in a Performance

Parents must apply to the Headteacher for permission to be absent to perform. St. Paulinus will follow the local authority's guidance and by-laws and work in partnership with the Child Employment and Entertainment Team to ensure that any performance absence complies with legislation.

Religious Observance

St. Paulinus is committed to equality and diversity. Where a day has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs, the pupil's absence will be authorised. No more than three religious observance days in an academic year may be authorised.

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Enforcement to Improve Attendance

When a parent has failed in their duty as defined in section 7 of The Education Act 1996 to ensure the regular school attendance of their child they may be referred to the Attendance and Pupil Support Safeguarding Service.

Evidence should be available to demonstrate that:

- The student has had more than 10% unauthorised absence within a continuous 6-week period.
- All avenues of support have been explored and offered by the school.
- All reasonable attempts have been made to engage the parent and to provide opportunities for the parent to address the poor attendance.
- Parenting or similar contracts have been offered which were clear in the expectations of the parent and of the support that would be offered.
- DfE guidance on the use of parenting contracts has been followed.
- Parents have been made aware that they can be referred to the Kirklees Legal Intervention Panel.

Where direct prosecution is considered appropriate, the case may be heard by the Magistrates' Court under s444(1)(a) Education Act 1996 (knowingly failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance). If found guilty, you may be liable for a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months in custody, and you will receive a criminal record. In addition, you may be subject to a Parenting Order which usually lasts for 12 months and requires you to comply with court direction. The panel will consider if it is appropriate to commence legal proceedings (in this case, each parents or carer will be liable for legal penalties)

Long Term Absence, Support and Reintegration Programme

Long term absence may occur due to injury, planned hospitalisation, close family bereavement etc.

- Wherever possible, the school will arrange for appropriate work to be collected for any student who is likely to be absent for a long period. This may also include on-line units of work.
- A relevant member of staff will liaise with subject / class teachers to arrange additional time and support for pupils to catch up missing work.
- The arrangements will be monitored and reviewed at appropriate times.

Punctuality

St. Paulinus encourages its students to demonstrate excellent punctuality. If a student attends school after the registers close, it is classed as an unauthorised absence. Persistent lateness impacts a student's learning and can affect their confidence and mental wellbeing.

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Further Information

Useful resources and external organisations

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education Act 2002
- Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999
- Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Education Act 2005
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- Magistrate's Courts (Parenting Orders) Rules 2004
- Magistrate's Courts (Parenting Orders) (Amendment) Rules 2007
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Attorney General's Guidelines for Crown Prosecutors
- Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984
- Equality Act 2010 Religious Observance
- Education Supervision Orders
- Keeping children safe in education – KCSiE (latest version – updated annually in September)

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed following the 3-year Policy Review Cycle of the school or when there are significant changes to the curriculum that warrant it. It may also be reviewed earlier should it no longer comply with school practice or the legal requirements of schools.

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APPENDIX 1

Flowchart for Parents

