

All Saints Church of England Primary School, Bradford



# Attendance Policy

January 2020

This policy is based on the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

The Education Act 1996 says that:

“If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence”.

There are two offences relating to parental responsibility for ensuring regular attendance at school or alternative provision:

- 1) If a registered pupil is absent without authorisation then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. A conviction for this offence can result in a fine of up to £1,000.
- 2) If the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause them to do so, they are guilty of an offence under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. This is known as an aggravated offence. A conviction for this offence may result in a substantial fine up to a maximum of £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.

The school will follow the Local Authority's *Prosecution Advice for Schools Non-School Attendance Cases September 2019*.

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The school is required to

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are required to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and ensure their children are punctual to their lessons.

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

At All Saints, all staff work collaboratively to encourage every pupil to strive for excellence. Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils that are registered at our school on the school website.

All Saints encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that **“parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly” (DfE 1999)**.

### **Aims & Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% for all pupils, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception age children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the local authority so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

### **Responsibility of Parents/Carers**

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

### **Punctuality**

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

- To ensure that their children arrive to school on time. In the Kennion building the doors open at 8:40am until 8:50am. In the Powell building the doors open between 8.50 to 9.00am. This is sufficient time for all pupils to get to their classrooms.
- To ensure children who are late after 8:50am (Kennion building) and 9.00am (Powell building) report to the school office/ community room to sign in. Records are kept of the pupils that are late with an L code in the register. Any child that arrives after 9:20am (Kennion Building) and 9:30am (Powell Building) will be marked with a U code, equivalent to an unauthorised absence.
- To ensure children are collected promptly at the end of the school day and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this.
- If a child is collected from school by parents/carers before the end of a session, this will be recorded – parents should provide proof of a valid reason eg medical appointment card in order for children to be allowed to leave school early.

### Good attendance

At least once per term, the school will hold a 6 week 'attendance challenge'. At the end of this period, children with 100% attendance will be rewarded. In addition, from time to time, other incentives will be provided, including raffle prizes at the end of the academic year. Classes with the highest percentage attendance each week in each phase will be rewarded with 'attendance money' that can be put towards an end-of-year treat.

### Absences

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:30am or as soon as possible. Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office or by emailing [office@allsaints.bradford.sch.uk](mailto:office@allsaints.bradford.sch.uk)
- To provide medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.
- Parents/carers of children for whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted after 9:30am.

### Illness/Medical absences

In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc. The school will automatically request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday.

### Absence for Holidays and Other Reasons During Term Time

Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday during the school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education. If there are exceptional circumstances, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence request form in advance of the trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Head teacher, and he will use their discretion whilst applying government recommendations.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To obtain a leave of absence form from the school office and attend a meeting with the head teacher to discuss the absence
- To complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence (ideally 4 weeks prior).
- To inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that the appropriate code can be recorded in the register.
- If a child is absent without the Heads' authorisation, the child's absences will be marked as unauthorised. **Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued by the Local Education Authority for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. This fine is payable at £60 per child, per parent.**

### **Unexplained Absence**

When a child is repeatedly absent without authorisation, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority (see page 1 of this policy for full details). Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the school and may be invited in to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support.

If attendance continues to be unsatisfactory following an attendance meeting, parents will be invited to an attendance panel meeting.

At the commencement of the meeting, parent(s) will be made clearly aware that the meeting is part of a formal attendance procedure which could lead to legal intervention by the LA. A support plan will be formulated to address any problems the young person/family may be experiencing with attendance targets and timescales set. Where appropriate the actions agreed are signed by all parties in attendance.

If parents do not attend the Attendance Panel Meeting, and do not supply a reason why, then a support plan can be drawn up in their absence and delivered to the home address.

The school will refer any case to the local authority for prosecution where attendance continues to be a concern.

### **Children Missing in Education**

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least 5 consecutive days, the Local Authority will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a total of 10 days, the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority.

### **Persistent Latecomers**

Children who repeatedly attend school late will be brought to the attention of the head teacher. Warning letters will be issued to the parents/carers of children who repeatedly attend school late.

Parents/carers should note that children who arrive late after 9:20am (Kennion Building) and 9:30am (Powell Building) are given a 'U' code, which is the equivalent of an unauthorised absence and this will affect the child's attendance figures. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers whose children persistently arrive after this time.

John Davie  
November 2019

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or when legislation etc require changes to be made.

Agreed by Governors

January 2020