

# **St Paul's**

C of E Primary School



**A place to belong**

## **Attendance Policy**

**Chair of Governors Approval:** Martyn Long & Tom Keef

**Acting Headteacher Approval:** Christie Waite

**Member of Staff Responsible:** Christie Waite

**Reviewing Committee:** FGB

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Jan 2020

# St Paul's C of E Primary School

## *A Place to Belong*

### Our Christian Vision

Our school is a family where everyone feels safe, happy and valued, and is supported to achieve their full potential.

We will develop compassionate and caring individuals who depend on one another, are highly motivated, and have a life-long love of learning in preparation for the future.

### Our Core Values

All that we do is underpinned by the core Christian values of *Family (Koinonia), Compassion, Perseverance and Forgiveness*

*“Though we are many, we form one body, all joined together as members of the whole. We each have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. We must use them wisely.”*

*Romans 12:5-8*

## Statement of intent

St Paul's C of E Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

(a) to age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

## **1. Legal framework**

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2018) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Lost Child Policy

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

2.1. The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of St Paul's C of E Primary School.
- Ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Lost Child Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

2.2. The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of the school, and distributing these to parents.

- 2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:
- Following the Primary Attendance Policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
  - Modelling good attendance behaviour.
  - Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- 2.4. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.5. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.
- 2.6. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:
- **“Absence”** as:
    - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
    - Not attending school for any reason.
  - An **“authorised absence”** as:
    - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
    - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
    - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
    - An absence due to a family emergency/event authorised by the headteacher.
  - An **“unauthorised absence”** as:
    - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
    - Truancy before or during the school day.
    - Absences which have never been properly explained.
    - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
    - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
    - Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
    - Leaving school for no reason during the day.

- **“Persistent absenteeism”** as:
  - Missing a significant amount of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

#### **4. Training of staff**

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

#### **5. Absence procedures**

- 5.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child’s absence.
- 5.2. Parents are required to explain why they were absent; this is required via telephone and will be recorded on Integris by the school office.
- 5.3. A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their child’s absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 5.4. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the headteacher who will then inform the LA.
- 5.5. The school will inform the LA, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- 5.6. The headteacher monitors attendance and if a pupil’s attendance drops below 85 percent, the LA will be informed if appropriate, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents.
- 5.7. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school can remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

#### **6. Contact information**

- 6.1. Parents are responsible for:
  - Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
  - Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.

- Updating the school if their details change.

## **7. Attendance register**

The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \* = Not yet marked
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Education visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

## **8. Attendance officer**

8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the headteacher who will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement.

- 8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the headteacher will contact the LA Attendance Officer who has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

## **9. Lateness**

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school gate opens at **8.40am**. Teachers will meet children and parents on the school yard.
- 9.3. The school day starts at **8.45am**. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.
- 9.4. Registers are marked in class by **9:00am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.5. The register closes at **9:00am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time. The office will then register any children who are late after this time recording the reason. Office staff will also record lateness on CPOMS.
- 9.6. After lunch, registers are marked by **13:15** in EYFS and KS1.
- 9.7. After lunch, registers are marked by **13:20** in KS2.
- 9.8. The register closes at **13:25**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

## **10. Term-time leave**

- 10.1. At St Paul's Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 10.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 10.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.
- 10.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher.
- 10.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. staff will also record requests on CPOMS.
- 10.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

10.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

## **11. Leave during the School day**

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during the school day with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents are required to submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher.

The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent in to the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises if appropriate.

The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the office will ensure a LA absence pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the register at the school office.

A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff has given their permission.

If a pupil is expected to be leaving the school premises, they are required to do so – pupils will go home as soon as they leave the site and will not loiter outside the premises.

If a pupil expected to leave no longer has reason to do so, e.g. a medical appointment is cancelled, the parents should inform a member of staff at the school office immediately.

Medical appointments still need to be submitted as a request. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **12. Missing children**

12.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher and would only be granted leave if collected by a parent i.e. for a medical appointment.

12.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - The library
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will complete CPOMS.

12.3. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

- 12.4. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 12.5. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 12.6. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 12.7. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 12.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 12.9. Prolonged periods of unauthorised absence without contact will be handled in accordance with clauses [6.6-6.8](#) of this policy.
- 12.10. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

### **13. Religious observances**

- 13.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.
- 13.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

### **14. Young carers**

- 14.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 14.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 14.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

### **15. Monitoring and review**

- 15.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 15.2. St Paul's C of E Primary School attendance target is 96 percent.
- 15.3. This policy is reviewed every year by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is January 2020.
- 15.4. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.