



ALL SAINTS' CE FEDERATION

'Building the bridge to success together'



Attendance Policy

Introduction

In order for all children to achieve their full potential they must be in school every day, on time and ready to learn. All Saints' CE Federation places a high value on punctual and regular attendance. Every child and family will be made aware of the importance of this through regular updates, the positive promotion of good attendance, rewards for good attendance and, where necessary, discussions with families about the need to improve attendance and punctuality. We wish to foster good attendance and punctuality habits from the early years and throughout the child's school career and into adult life.

Responsibilities

Improving the attendance and therefore life chances of the children at All Saints' CE Federation, is the responsibility of parents or carers, the schools and the child. Working together in partnership will ensure each child is most likely to achieve their full potential by ensuring their frequent and punctual attendance.

This policy reflects the expected practice at All Saints' CE Federation. The fair and consistent application of the policy is the responsibility of all staff.

Staff at All Saints' CE Federation will take the attendance register twice a day: at the start of each morning and again after lunch. The Academies will also notify the local authority if a pupil has irregular attendance or is absent continuously without authorisation.

Aims of the policy to promote good attendance

Explicit in the overall aim of the school is the principle that children should feel secure and happy in a well ordered environment and that they should be enthusiastic about coming to school. Children have a right to experience a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum; non attendance deprives them of this opportunity.

It is the aim of this policy that unauthorised absence should be 0% on a year by year basis and that authorised absences should be kept to a minimum. Whole school and individual monitoring will be in line with targets set by All Saints' CE Federation on an annual basis.

In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in the schools we will:

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the schools
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- Implement a common systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data

- Implement a common system of rewards for attendance
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and carers
- Ensure we have positive and consistent methods of communication about attendance matters with families
- Work in partnership with supporting services and agencies and the Local Authority
- Recognise and meet the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

Persistent Absence

Guidance from the Department for Education (2011) advises that if a child's attendance is below 90% he/she will be referred to as 'Persistent Absence'. All Saints' CE Federation will work closely with parents and carers, the local authority and other external agencies to improve persistent absenteeism. This may include the use of parenting contracts and Attendance Panels.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

There are a series of codes defined by the Department of Education which are used to denote authorised and unauthorised absence. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that the correct codes are recorded and that patterns in children's attendance are analysed.

Parents and carers should be made aware that it is for the Executive Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, in their absence, to decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. All reasons given for a child's absence are considered by the school. As examples, absence from school **may** be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- genuine illness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

Absence from school **will not** be authorised for:

- shopping
- birthdays
- minding the house
- caring for brothers/sisters/relatives
- parent/carer illness
- sibling illness
- arrivals after a specific time in the morning – please see the guidance below for each academy

The Executive Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in their absence, will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Each application will be treated on an individual basis. Advice on what constitutes exceptional circumstances suggests situations such as children of service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside the term time, or families who need to spend time together following a crisis. Parents and carers are asked to ensure that they make any medical appointments for their child outside of the school day.

If the Executive Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in their absence, grants a leave request, it will be for him or her to determine the length of time that any child can be away from school. As a norm, leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Parents and carers should put in writing all requests for a child's absence from school for any purpose. This should be sent to the school marked well in advance of any request for leave of absence during term time. Circumstances such as previous attendance, academic achievement, family circumstances and the time of year, will be taken into account. If your child has an older sibling, contact will also be made with local secondary schools so that a joint decision can be made. Should a leave of absence request not be authorised and your child is still taken out of school, a 'Fixed Penalty Notice' could be issued.

Fixed Penalty Notice

In certain circumstances parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the Executive Headteacher. A Fixed Penalty Notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

Support and guidance available to those with poor attendance and punctuality

Where persistent absence occurs, or where persistent lateness or poor attendance is identified through the monitoring processes, the appropriate member of staff in school will contact the family. They will offer support and assistance to families who are experiencing difficulties in getting their children to school. This will be via, appointments in school, guidance and advice on attendance or contact with other agencies. In some cases, families will be offered a Parenting Contract for attendance. In more severe cases, such as 'Persistent Absence', staff will contact the Local Authority. Together they will work with the family to offer further support and guidance. If attendance continues to be poor at this point steps may be taken, as dictated by law, which may result in prosecution for non-attendance.

All Saints' CE Federation has a duty to refer regular absence, authorised and unauthorised, to the local authority. This may include any evidence to show how the school has supported the pupil and parent to improve attendance. It is for each local authority to judge each referral on its own merits and make a decision on the next probable course of action.

Further information for parents and carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to read the guidance on authorised and unauthorised absence and information on Fixed Penalty Notices in the document '**Statutory guidance: School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures Jan 2017**'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>