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St Antony's  
Roman Catholic School

Respect † Love † Integrity † Service † Resilience

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Mission Statement:

*Let the light and splendour of Christ shine from within us all.*

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy

### Aims

St Antony's Roman Catholic School aims to ensure that all students take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and thereby reach their full potential. We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting and maintaining a high profile for good attendance and punctuality across the school
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance and punctuality data
- To inform and involve parents/carers in attendance and punctuality procedures and issues
- To identify the causes of non-attendance and take appropriate action
- To ensure all stakeholders take full responsibility for improving attendance and punctuality

Students should be aiming for full attendance at school. In a school year this amounts to 190 (school) days. We adopt a partnership approach to attendance by working closely with students, parents/carers, the Local Authority and other relevant services to secure this aim.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending all lessons.

### Legislation and guidance

Under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, all students are required to attend the school where they are registered every day. The law also states that it is only the school which can authorise absence, and is not obliged to do so, even where parents have provided an explanation. The official school leaving date is the last Friday in June in the school year in which a student becomes 16. This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold

### Roles and responsibilities

#### **Pupils**

Every child of compulsory school age is entitled to receive full-time education that is suitable to their individual age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day unless they are too ill or have an absence approved in advance
- Arrive at school **by 8.45am** in full school uniform, with the correct equipment, ready for registration
- Attend every timetabled session on time

- Inform their form tutor of any known absence in advance
- Provide an appointment card or explanatory note for medical appointments
- Sign in and out at the main office when leaving or returning to school during the school day

### Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance. Parents/carers can be prosecuted and, or fined, up to £2,500 if they fail to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child leaves for school on time fully equipped and in full school uniform
- Make sure their child arrives to school on or before 8.45am every day
- Contact school using the Arbor app on the first day of any unplanned absence by 8.00am and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Supply medical evidence if their child is absent for more than three days. NOTE: If medical evidence is NOT provided after 3 days' absence, the absence may remain unauthorised. 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence could lead to Penalty Notice procedures
- Apply in writing to the Headteacher if they want to request an exceptional leave of absence in term time, at least two weeks before the absence
- Contact Form Tutors / HoY to discuss matters which may be affecting their child's attendance and punctuality
- Ask for advice and support from school in the event that their child is at risk of non-attendance and / or with poor punctuality
- Avoid making medical appointments during the school day. If this is unavoidable medical evidence of the appointment must be provided, preferably in advance
- Make holiday arrangements outside term time (no holidays will be authorised during the school term)
- Provide the school with at least 2 up to date emergency contact numbers for their child

### The Governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### The Emmaus CAT

The Emmaus CAT is responsible for:

- Devising and reviewing the Attendance Policy
- Set and review the level targets for Attendance and Punctuality as part of the school target setting process
- Devise and review whole trust attendance strategies
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Monitor attendance figures alongside the schools on a regular basis but no less than each half term. This will be weekly if attendance falls below the national average
- Provide training for local governors in the implementation of the policy
- Ensure that a lead governor for attendance is appointed

### The Leadership Team

An identified member of the Leadership Team, Mrs Emma Doherty, is the Attendance Lead for the school and oversees all issues relating to attendance and punctuality.

### The headteacher/ Senior Assistant Headteacher will:

- Implement this policy at school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors directly or via the Associate Assistant Headteacher Mrs E Doherty
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Setting attendance targets as part of the development plan and target setting processes
- Monitor progress
- Determining whether to authorise any absence which has taken place for which no request was made

**The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance will:**

- Implement this policy
- Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Monitor absence data and report to governors
- Promote high standards of attendance and punctuality across school
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Be a role model by setting a good example to students
- Give attendance and punctuality a high profile in assemblies, at parents' evenings and in school publications
- Set appropriate annual targets for the school
- Set aside time during staff inset days to allow for training on good attendance awareness, monitoring and administration
- Monitor the work of EWO and Heads of Year

**EWO will:**

- Send out first day of absence text alerts to parents /carers
  - Send out late texts on a daily basis to parents /carers
  - Call parents/carers on first day of absence on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts a home visit may take place or a police welfare check asked for
  - Carry out home visits
  - Meet with parents to explore avenues of support to help improve attendance of persistent absentees
  - Identify whether the absence is approved or not
  - Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
  - Monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality data throughout the school
  - Publish data on a daily/ weekly / termly / yearly basis for whole school to help identify areas for improvement
  - Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Heads of Years
  - Update the attendance notice board and oversee the attendance tracker
  - Inform the Local Authority of students with 10 missed sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in any one term
  - Monitor the attendance of students with long term illnesses and offer support and alternative provision where necessary
  - Carry out statutory duties in accordance with section 444 of the 1996 Education Act including issuing Penalty Notices and prosecution in line with Local Authority regulations
  - Meet regularly with the designated member of the Leadership Team Mrs Doherty
  - Monitor daily registers and offer training / support /advice for teachers when detected
  - Work with the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence
  - Advising when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The EWO is Mrs Pauline Kelly and can be contacted on 0161 911 8025 or [absence@st-antonys.com](mailto:absence@st-antonys.com)

**Heads of Year will:**

- Monitor year attendance on a daily basis, setting pupil targets for improvement
- Investigate patterns of absenteeism and communicate to all stakeholders to ensure issues are being effectively addressed
- Meet fortnightly with their line manager and make necessary referrals, plan a course of action and review the impact of this action
- Follow up external/internal truancy with appropriate intervention/sanctions
- Meet with parents to explore avenues of support to help improve attendance of persistent absentees
- Inform parents / carers when poor attendance or punctuality is adversely affecting progress
- Issue letters of concern and offer support / guidance as necessary
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, commendations and rewards
- Issue sanctions for poor punctuality to school and to lessons

**Form Tutors will:**

- Provide a good example by always being punctual to registration
- Ensure that pupils are registered accurately and on time
- Keep the Head of Year informed of suspected truancy
- Keep the Head of Year informed of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences or poor punctuality
- Use form time to discuss attendance and punctuality issues
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves
- Pro-actively support strategies in place to encourage good attendance
- Discuss attendance and punctuality issues with parents/carers and pupils at parents' evenings
- Monitor punctuality to form

**Teaching Staff will:**

- Keep an accurate register for every lesson
- Take the register within the first 5 minutes of the lesson with the P5 registration providing the afternoon mark
- Report any missing pupils who have been previously marked as present to On Call immediately
- Update register if a child arrives after first completing the register
- Mark how many minutes late the child is
- Provide a good example by always being punctual to lessons
- Highlight issues of poor punctuality to Form Tutor/ Head of Year
- Highlight issues of truancy to Form Tutor/ Head of Year
- Inform EWO or main office of identified register errors / discrepancies at the soonest opportunity

**Recording Attendance****School will:**

- Keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.
- Take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.
- Mark whether every pupil is present, attending an approved off-site educational activity, absent or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

### **School will:**

- Record [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not
- Record the nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- Record the nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.45am** each school day. The register for the first session will be taken by **8.50am** and register for the second session will be taken at **2.20pm**.

### **Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the absence line on 0161 911 8025 or emailing [absence@st-antonys.com](mailto:absence@st-antonys.com)

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provide evidence of the appointment. Requests should be made via email to [absence@st-antonys.com](mailto:absence@st-antonys.com) However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

All students must arrive on time and be ready for learning with the correct uniform and equipment. St Antony's Roman Catholic School is open from 8.00am for Breakfast Club in the school canteen where a range of breakfast options can be purchased. **All students must be on site by 8:45am**. Any student arriving to school after **8.50am** is late. Students who arrive late to school without a valid reason are issued with a same day 30-minute lunch time detention. Text messages are sent out informing parents/carers if their child is late. Poor punctuality can also have legal implications for parents/carers. Students who arrive after **9.15am** without a valid reason will be marked as unauthorised late (10 sessions of unauthorised late can result in a Penalty Notice being issued by Trafford Local Authority). When a student has arrived to school late on 5 occasions not counting incidents of instances beyond reasonable control, a letter will be sent home reminding parents / carers of their responsibility to see their child arrives to school on time and informing them school will be monitoring their child's punctuality closely. Further instances of poor punctuality could result in the school requesting a penalty notice being issued. Any student who is not present during AM registration will receive follow up contact from school should a parent/ carer not inform school to confirm their absence.

### **Following up absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Send a text message to parents/carers to inform them that their child has not arrived to school
- If no contact has been made after the text message school will call the pupil's parent/carer to ascertain the reason for non-attendance to school
- If no contact is made all emergency numbers will be called
- School will identify whether the absence is approved or not
- School will identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- If after calling all emergency contacts no contact is made a further text message explaining an unauthorised absence will be given for the day
- If no contact is made by day 2 of unexplained absence a home visit will be made to ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken

The law states that it is only the school which can authorise absence, and is not obliged to do so, even where parents have provided an explanation.

When a pupil has been absent from school for three consecutive days, the school may carry out a home visit to check on the child's well-being and safety, in line with best practice and KCSIE guidance. The attendance team will complete these visits in such circumstances. A home visit may also be undertaken if the school is not fully satisfied with the reason provided for a pupil's absence. If there is no answer at the home, visits will continue daily until either the child's well-being and safety have been confirmed or the pupil returns to school. During a home visit, staff must visibly see the pupil and be able to discuss their well-being directly. If staff are unable to confirm the pupil's safety, or if parents/carers refuse to cooperate, the matter will be reported to the school safeguarding team. In such cases, the school welfare team may need to make a referral to children's services if the child's well-being and safety cannot be confirmed.

### **Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

### **Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the Local Authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

### **Issuing Penalty Notices**

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. 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.

### **National threshold for issuing penalty notices.**

The national threshold for issuing penalty notices 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. 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.

### Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- Collect pupil-level absence data each term and
- Published data at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases
- Publish school-level absence data alongside the national statistics
- Compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board

### Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that require additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns making stakeholders aware

### Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, form tutors, head of years, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- The EWO will initiate/ escalate intervention procedures in consultation with Head of Years and SLT to support improvement of attendance

Stage	Action	Person involved
Stage 1	Letter sent to parent by the Head of Year informing them attendance is a cause for concern	EWO
Stage 2	Head of Year meets with parent and pupil and complete EBSNA form	Head of Year
Stage 3	Attendance Officer conducts a meeting with parent and pupil and issues a notice to improve.	EWO
Attendance Panel Meeting	SLT lead for attendance, EWO and representatives from other relevant agencies if appropriate.	SLT Lead for Attendance
Fast Track	Action with the Local Authority/Court action Parents to be given documentation at the	

	Attendance Panel of the Fast Track process/implications	
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A Penalty Notice can be issued after 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and/or unauthorised late Parents/carers have both a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do this may result in parents/carers being prosecuted under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via their reports.

### **Rewards**

The school will:

- promote good attendance and punctuality in a range of ways which include commendations, letters home, texts, reward trips, prizes and achievement points
- 100% Attendance is celebrated every term with badges
- Achievement points are given for students with 100% attendance and punctuality
- Forms achieving 100% in any week will be given a reward
- Pupils with 100% punctuality in a prize draw for a voucher each term
- Pupils with 100% Attendance at the end of the year will receive a reward
- Attendance will be taken into account for Reward Trips and Prom

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 12 months by Emma Doherty, Attendance lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

### **Children Missing from Education**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk.

These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We follow Trafford's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/schools/Children-missing-from-education.aspx>

Children missing from education can be reported to the official Trafford CME team by:

Email [cme@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:cme@trafford.gov.uk)

Telephone 0161 912 4810

We hope that you find the information here useful in helping you to understand why school attendance and punctuality are so important for your child and thank you for your continued support. Supporting your child, by encouraging full attendance at school, will help give them the best possible start in life. We know that poor attendance only affects a very small percentage of St Antony's Roman Catholic School students and as a team we continue to do all we can to ensure full attendance at school. If you would like any further advice or guidance on attendance issues, please do not hesitate to contact us via one of the following:

T: 0161 911 8025

W: [www.st-antonys.com](http://www.st-antonys.com)

E: [p.kelly@st-antonys.com](mailto:p.kelly@st-antonys.com)

Mrs E Doherty – Associate Assistant Headteacher

Appendix 1

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school that is not sporting or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupils has been granted leave to study for public examinations
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable. Student is of compulsory school age.
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded from school but no alternative provision has been made
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>Q</b>	Lack of arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school.
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupils cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use.

<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather).
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: · In police detention · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or · Detained under a sentence of detention
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes