



**ST. ALBAN'S**  
Catholic Primary School

# Attendance Policy

## St Alban's Catholic Primary School

**Version: 1**

**Ratified by the Governing Body:**

**Signed by the Governing Body:**

**To be reviewed (annually):**

**September 2025**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**Mrs Jodie Clinton**

**September 2026**

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### 1. Aims

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 good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

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.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The governing body**

The governing body 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

#### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- › Monitoring and analyzing patterns and trends alongside data analysis

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Mrs Rebecca McKinney Mrs Celine Doherty, and can be contacted via [enquiry@stalbanrc.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@stalbanrc.bham.sch.uk).

#### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Celine Doherty and can be contacted [enquiry@stalbanrc.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@stalbanrc.bham.sch.uk)

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office daily.

### **3.6 School Office staff**

School staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer(s) in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- 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.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will 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 9:00am every day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm for KS1 and 1:15pm for KS2 and will be kept open until 1:05pm for KS1 and 1:20pm for KS2.

#### **4.2 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 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school staff - Mrs Birdi and Miss McLaughlin (see also section 7).

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.

#### **4.3 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.

Parents should request leaves of absence in writing. A holiday request form can be obtained from the school office.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

We comply with DFE guidelines, and offer Early Help as and when identified by the Attendance Officer.

#### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

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

- › Call the pupil's parent/carer by 10am 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, the school will undertake a home visit. If no one is contactable, the school would contact the police for a safe and well check.
- › 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 3 working days after the session
- › Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will have a meeting with parents to ascertain reason for absence.

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly letters home, parents' evening and in their end of year school report.

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a close family bereavement or a close family critical illness.

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 as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

#### 5.2 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.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must make payments to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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.

### 6. Children who are “absent from education”

6.1. A child going missing and/or patterns of unauthorised absence, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future.

6.2. Work around attendance and children missing from education will be coordinated with safeguarding interventions.

6.3. The school must notify the local authority of any pupil/student who has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 5 days or more after making reasonable enquiries

6.4. The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the local authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the prescribed regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 amendments

This means that in our school we will:

- Hold two or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil.
- Ensure all our attendance work liaises closely with the DSL.
- Adapt our attendance monitoring on an individual basis to ensure the safety of each child at our school
- Demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of pupils that would be considered 'missing'.
- Work closely with the CME Team, School Admissions Service, Education Legal Intervention Team, Elective Home Education Team and Birmingham Children's Trust.

## **7. Strategies for promoting attendance**

To reward attendance we;

Newsletter – We celebrate classes with high attendance with weekly class certificates for best attendance.

100% attendance certificates at the end of the school year

Personalised certificates for specific individuals who have been targeted.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

At St Alban's, we regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance.

### **8.1 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

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published

alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need 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

## **8.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers 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

## **8.4 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

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum per annum by Rebecca McKinney (Head Teacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

| Code                                           | Definition                                                                          | Scenario                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>I</b>                                       | Present (am)                                                                        | Pupil is present at morning registration                                                                                               |
| <b>\</b>                                       | Present (pm)                                                                        | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                                                                             |
| <b>L</b>                                       | Late arrival                                                                        | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                                                                          |
| <b>Attending a place other than the school</b> |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>K</b>                                       | 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 |
| <b>V</b>                                       | Attending an educational visit or trip                                              | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school                                                              |
| <b>P</b>                                       | Participating in a sporting activity                                                | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school                                                        |
| <b>W</b>                                       | Attending work experience                                                           | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement                                                                                      |
| <b>B</b>                                       | Attending any other approved educational activity                                   | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience                     |
| <b>D</b>                                       | Dual registered                                                                     | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered                                                         |
| <b>Absent – leave of absence</b>               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>C1</b>                                      | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school                                           |
| <b>M</b>                                       | Medical/dental appointment                                                          | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment                                                                                            |
| <b>J1</b>                                      | Interview                                                                           | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment                                                           |
| <b>S</b>                                       | Study leave                                                                         | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination                                                              |

|                                                                      |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>X</b>                                                             | Not required to be in school                | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend                                                                               |
| <b>C2</b>                                                            | Part-time timetable                         | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable                                                                                 |
| <b>C</b>                                                             | Exceptional circumstances                   | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances                                                                 |
| <b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>                             |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
| <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>R</b>                                                             | Religious observance                        | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance                                                                                      |
| <b>I</b>                                                             | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)                                                     |
| <b>E</b>                                                             | Suspended or excluded                       | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made                                                |
| <b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Q</b>                                                             | Lack of access arrangements                 | Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school         |
| <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              | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open                    |
| <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:<br>In police detention<br>Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or                            |

|                                      |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                      |                                             | sentencing, or<br>Detained under a sentence of detention                                                                                                        |
| <b>Y6</b>                            | Public health guidance or law               | 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                                                                                         |
| <b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>G</b>                             | Holiday not granted by the school           | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school                                                                                        |
| <b>N</b>                             | Reason for absence not yet established      | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes                                                                                          |
| <b>O</b>                             | Absent in other or unknown circumstances    | No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence |
| <b>U</b>                             | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session                                                                             |
| <b>Administrative codes</b>          |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Z</b>                             | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered                                                                                                         |
| <b>#</b>                             | Planned whole-school closure                | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays                                                                          |