St Augustine's
Church of England Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Document Name	Attendance Policy
Document written by	Ken Corrall/Rhian Williams
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Responsibility	Local Advisory Board
Approved by	

*subject to any relevant changes in legislation or other appropriate guidelines

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St Augustine's
Church of England Primary School

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St Augustine's
Church of England Primary School

Statement of intent

St Augustine's CE 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, and 2002 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.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

Signed by:

_____ Principal Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

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 and 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2015
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and 1993
- DfE Working together to improve school attendance Aug 2024
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'

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

- **Complaints Procedures Policy**
- **Self Esteem and Behaviour Policy**
- **Children Missing Education policy**
- **Pupils with Additional Health Needs Policy**

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The Local Advisory Board (LAB) has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures across the 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.

2.2. The Vice Principal who is the Senior Attendance Champion 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.
- Work in partnership with pupils and families to identify barriers to attendance and offer strategies and support to break down these barriers.

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.

2.7. The school will ensure that absence procedures are understood by pupils, parents and carers.

2.8. 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.
- The attendance of their children at school
- Promoting good attendance with their children

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.

- 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 **10 percent** or more 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.

4.3Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Pupil expectations

5.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day and to keep their attendance at, or above, 95 percent throughout the year.

6. Pupils at risk of persistent absence

6.1 The SLT will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents
  - Engaging with LA attendance teams
  - Using fixed penalty notices
  - Creating attendance clinics

6.2The governing board will engage in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment.

6.3Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm who need a social worker will be supported with pastoral and academic support, alongside action by statutory services in response to any unauthorised absences.

6.4Teaching staff will

- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

7. Absence procedures

7.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence.

7.2. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.

7.3. As soon as registers close at 9.15, an absence report will be printed and the office staff will list pupils who are absent from school. This will be cross checked against phone calls received and messages left on the school phone system.

7.4. 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.

7.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer.

7.6. If we are unable to contact a parent/carer then a home visit will be made on that day. In the interests of safety, two members of staff MUST attend a home visit. If we are unable to speak to a parent or carer during the home visit, then a letter will be posted through the door asking parents/carers to contact school as soon as possible.

7.7. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.

7.8. If a pupil's attendance drops below 95 percent, the Attendance Officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents. The principal will be informed and letter will be sent out saying that all future absences will be unauthorised unless accompanied by medical evidence.

7.9. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents. These meetings will be fortnightly until an improvement is seen.

7.10. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the Attendance Officer will complete the paperwork for fines and send it to the LA.

7.11. 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 could 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.

8. Parental Involvement

8.1 The school will build respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement.
8.2 The school will communicate openly and honestly with pupils and their families about their expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
8.3 The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. if a pupil has a social worker.
8.4 Parents will be expected to:

- Treat staff with respect.
- Actively support the work of the school.
- Call staff for help when they need it.
- Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

9. Attendance registers

9.1 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
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

9.2 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
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- 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 = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Duel registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

9.3 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.

9.4 All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

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

10. Contact information

10.1. 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.

11. Attendance officer

11.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation

11.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local authority has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents

11.3. The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence

11.4. The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures

12. Lateness

12.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.

12.2. The school day starts at 8.50am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

12.3. Registers are marked by 9:00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

12.4. The register closes at 9:15. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

12.5. After lunch, registers are marked by 13:30. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

12.6. Pupils attending after 9:20 will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

13. Term-time leave

13.1. At St Augustine's CE 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.

13.2. The Principal is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.

13.3. The Principal is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the Principal will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.

13.4. The Principal 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 Principal.

13.5. 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.

13.6. 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

13.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the Principal, they may be subject to sanctions such as Penalty Notice in line with the Penalty Warning Code of Conduct 2024.

14. Leave during lunch times

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

12.2 The Principal 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.

12.3 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 lunch time register at the school office.

12.4 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.

12.5 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.

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

15. Religious observances

15.1. 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.

15.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance

16. Appointments

16.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

16.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.

16.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.

16.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

17. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

17.1. Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).

17.2. Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the LA.

17.3. The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.

17.4. The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:

- The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer; and
- The conditions of the licence will be observed.

17.5. The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.

17.6. The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

17.7. The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.

17.8. The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.

17.9. The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

17.10. Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six-month period.

17.11. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.

17.12. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Principal to authorise the leave of absence for each day.

17.13. The Principal will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent.

17.14. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Principal will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

17.15. The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.

17.16. The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.

17.17. The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.

17.18. Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days.

17.19. A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.

17.20. The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:

- Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place;
- Where performances or activities are taking place; or
- Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.

17.21. The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time.

17.22. If the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the licence.

17.23. The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

18. Young Carers

18.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.

18.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

18.3. 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.

19. Monitoring and review

19.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

19.2. St Augustine's CE Primary School's attendance target is 95 percent.

19.3. Details of our absence levels can be found on our website and Newsletters.

19.4. This policy is reviewed every three years by the Principal; the next scheduled review date for this policy is April 2027 .

19.5. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

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