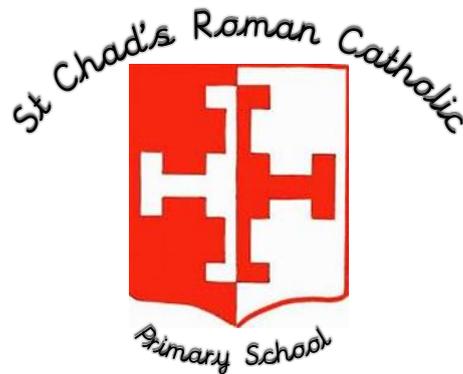


St. Chad's RC Primary School Policies and Procedures



Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attends regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending school.

2. Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. At our school we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximize the educational opportunities available to them. By ensuring good attendance parents are really helping their children to achieve the very best they can.

At St. Chad's RC Primary School, we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

St. Chad's RC Primary School values all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019](#)
- [Manchester City Council Children Missing Education protocol](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

- Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient fulltime education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.
- Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.
- The register must record whether the pupil was:
 1. Present;
 2. absent;
 3. Present, at an approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

4. School procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm in Key Stage 1 and EYFS and will be kept open until 1.10pm and in Key Stage 2 will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents must notify the school by telephone call or text. If they are bringing other children to school they can also call in at the school office.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Parents must provide the office staff with a copy of the medical appointment letter or appointment card.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Parents must notify the school office of an appointment at least 24 hours before the appointment so that the office can make a note on the school register.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed at 9.30am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed at 9.30am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

St Chad's monitor the punctuality of all children and if a child arrives after the register has closed the child will be marked with an unauthorized code.

Late arrivals to school after 9.00am must report to the school office to sign using the electronic signing in system. This will then record the minutes late.

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Day 1 school absence: School will contact all named emergency contacts on the child's information sheet. If no reason can be explained by the emergency contacts school will complete a home visit. If no access can be obtained to the family home school will issue a call to Police 101 and request a welfare check.

Day 2 school absence: Same as day one.

Day 3 Referral to social care and report to police.

Day 20 School will remove child from register once the school and the local authority have failed after jointly making reasonable enquires to establish the whereabouts of the child, if they have not returned for ten days after an authorized absence or is absent from school without authorization for twenty school days.

Reporting to parents

School will report to parents on their child's attendance every term through the school written report. On the summer term report parents will be informed of the attendance for the whole school year.

If school are concerned with the attendance of the pupil they will ask the parents to come to an attendance panel review.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs";
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.
- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in section 3.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (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
- If a child is excluded and no alternative provision is made. Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion. Parents must fill out a request for leave of absence form and this must be given to the headteacher for consideration. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the parents take their child out of school, the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may request the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice or consider other legal sanctions including prosecution in the magistrates court.

Valid reasons for **unauthorised absence** include:

- Family holiday
- Family shopping trip
- Transport issues

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for 10 unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

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. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
 - Previous academic attendance
 - 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school we reward good school attendance at the end of every term. We recognise children who have got 100% attendance with gold rewards and children with 96% or above with silver rewards as they have reached our school attendance target.

As a school we offer Early Help support through early help assessments to help support families who are struggling with attendance and punctuality. We also invite parents into the attendance panel reviews to start a conversation on how school can support them and to establish reasons for poor attendance and punctuality.

School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. Our school also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Updating the whole school community about attendance matters through newsletters and the school website.
- Celebrating good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Have a display board in the top hall dedicated to attendance of both individual pupils and classes.
- Rewarding achievements by way of certificates for attendance and other awards.
- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Referrals to support agencies
- Pupil Voice Activities

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, at our school we will consider the use of legal sanctions.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis with the headteacher and the school SEND Coordinator.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3).

Parents must call the school every day the child is absent to provide an update to school on the child's condition.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this and look at a possible referral to school health.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Our school uses SIMS computer system to store attendance data and this is also used track and monitor attendance of individual children.

Pupil's absence will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

School will follow the Manchester City Council Children Missing Education Protocol.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Our school believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The governing board

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Regularly review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
 - Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2016 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated offsite
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The headteacher and the leadership team

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents

- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2016 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
 - Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
 - Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
 - Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
 - Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
 - Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers and /or the school SEND Coordinator to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Sends out attendance and punctuality warning letters
- Uploads copies of attendance and punctuality letters to the child's SIMS record

Class teacher

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2016 and other attendance related legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated offsite
- Analyses attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Office staff

- Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Request that Parents will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours

- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances, send a written leave request to the Head Teacher.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the attendance panel. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board and staff.

10. Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil

Our school will follow Manchester City Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

11. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our safeguarding policy and child missing in education polic

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day