



St. Paul's C of E (Aided) Primary School

Attendance Policy

Policy date: June 2018

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~ version 11/6/18~

The staff of St. Paul's C.of E. (Aided) Primary School is committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud.

The school staff, alongside the LA, firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

The school doors open at **8.45 am** with the school day starting at **8.55 am** and ending at **3.10 pm for KS 1** and **3.20 pm for KS 2**, Monday to Friday.

Registration times are at 8.55 am and 12.45 pm (KS1), 1.05 pm (KS2) respectively. It is very important for all children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling, both for the child and for the rest of the class. The registration period will finish at 9.00 am and 12.50 pm, 1.10 pm respectively. If a child arrives in school after that time, they will be marked as late.

Registers close at 9.30 am each day. Arrival after that time will be unauthorised.

If a child is ill or is absent for any reason, the School Office must be contacted **on each day of absence** with a reason for this. There is a dedicated voicemail option on the telephone for absence reporting. This must happen by **9.30 am**.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day
- attend school on time
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher any problems that deter them from attending school

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day-to-day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day

- ensure that they contact the school **every day** by 9.30 am whenever the child is unable to attend school
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school
- ensure the school has up to date telephone numbers for family and nominated contacts

We expect that the school will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily
- monitor every pupil's attendance (see Monitoring Attendance below)
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence (see Responding to Concerns below)
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain reasons for absence. The absence will then be considered for authorisation
- encourage good attendance (see Encouraging Attendance below)
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- provide a safe learning environment
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service
- meet the rights of the child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them as appropriate

Absences including that for Holidays

The Department for Education has stated that from the 1st September 2013, schools are no longer allowed to authorise leave of absence for family holidays. Headteachers may only authorise leave of absence for students during term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays. If an absence in term time is unavoidable, an absence form must be completed prior to the holiday. This can be obtained from the school office.

Encouraging Attendance

St. Paul's School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns related to school
- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded appropriately
- by celebrating good attendance through presentation of certificates each term and in July for excellent attendance for the whole year
- by monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the Education Welfare Service if the irregular attendance continues

Responding to Concerns

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by **9.30 am**, the school will endeavour to contact them that day
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by the end of the third day, there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern regarding attendance which includes a response date
- Should there be no response by the date stated in the letter then contact will be made with the Education Welfare Officer

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform St. Paul's School staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- a letter giving the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next and any reason for the move
- the address of the new school
- the new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Monitoring Attendance

St. Paul's School will monitor pupil attendance in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of registers by school staff, including using appropriate codes for absence and any concerns passed onto the Headteacher.
- Admin staff will follow-up pupils where unauthorised absence continues to be unexplained.
- Attendance will be monitored regularly by the Head Teacher and concerns will be addressed by sending a letter to the parent/carer initially.
- Parents may be invited to a meeting to discuss attendance concerns with the Headteacher.
- A meeting may be arranged with the Educational Welfare Office if necessary.
- The school may consider recommending that a Penalty Notice be issued by the Local Authority in cases of persistent* unauthorised absence, or unauthorised holiday in term time.

*Persistent absence is noted as 5 days, 10 sessions or more unauthorised absences in a half term.

Lateness

It is imperative that children arrive at school on time. Key learning starts promptly as the register is taken and if a child is late this learning will be lost. This will not only be disruptive for the child concerned but for all of those in the class. Late arrivals should enter the school via the main entrance and will then be marked into the register at that point.

Penalty Notices

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and require the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued

Pupils identified by police and Education Welfare Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more, and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.