



# Whole School Attendance Policy

Date: September 2020

Review date: September 2021

Approved by Advisory Board: September 2020

Linked with other policies:

- Safeguarding incorporating Child Protection
- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Exclusion
- SEND Information Report
- Behaviour
- Rewards

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Day".

## Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Advisory Board on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Advisory Body on September 2020. It is due for review on September 2021.

<b>Content</b>	
<b>1.Introduction/Aim</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.Legal Framework</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.Definitions</b>	<b>6</b>
Absence	<b>6</b>
Regular attendance	<b>6</b>
Authorised absence	<b>6</b>
Unauthorised absence	<b>6</b>
Persistent absenteeism	<b>6</b>
Parent	<b>6</b>
<b>4.Categorising Absence and Attendance</b>	<b>7</b>
Absence and attendance codes table	<b>7</b>
Leave of absence	<b>10</b>
Student absence for the purposes of Religious Observance	<b>11</b>
Traveller absence	<b>11</b>
Unauthorised absence	<b>12</b>
Persistent absence	<b>12</b>
Late arrival at school	<b>13</b>
<b>5.Deletions from the Register</b>	<b>14</b>
Deletions from the register regulations table	<b>14</b>
<b>6.Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>7.Attendance Protocols</b>	<b>18</b>
Expected absence procedure for parents	<b>19</b>
Support systems	<b>19</b>
Attendance procedure and reward system	<b>20</b>
<b>8.Related Policies</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>9.Statutory Framework</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>10.Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1: Example warning letter FPN for schools	<b>22</b>
Appendix 2: Leave of absence form	<b>24</b>
<b>11.Addendum: Arrangements for Attendance during COVID-19</b>	<b>25</b>

## **1. Introduction/Aim**

1.1 Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances.

1.2 At All Saints School we believe that regular school attendance enables children both to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and to become responsible, organised and motivated adults. We value all students. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

## **2. Legal Framework**

2.1 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, 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 student was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

## **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

Regular attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to students unless their absence has been authorised

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 or unavoidable cause

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
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

“Parent” as

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

## 4. Categorising Absence and Attendance

4.1 The table below shows the national codes which enable all schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and comply with the regulations.

Absence codes when students are not present in school	
Absence and Attendance Codes	
Present at School	
/\	Registration code /\ : present in school / = am \ =pm
L	Late arrival before the register has closed. School starts at 9.00 am and registers close at 9.25am. A student arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.
Attendance codes for when students are present at approved off-site educational activity	
B	Off-site educational activity. This code should be used when students are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of students educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard students. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a student is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual students. The school should record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.
D	Dual Registered – at another educational establishment. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school Census. The law allows for dual registration of students at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are students who are attending a student referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the student is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the student's attendance and absence for those sessions that the student is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.
J	At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment. This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity. This code should be used to record the sessions when a student is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational visit or trip. This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
W	Work experience. Work experience is for students in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual students. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

C	Leave of absence authorised by the school. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made. If no alternative provision is made for a student to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded student from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
H	Holiday authorised by the school. Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.
M	Medical or dental appointments. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
R	Religious observance. Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
S	Study leave. Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 students during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence. A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.  This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.  To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to

	register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.
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<b>Unauthorised Absence from School</b>	
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher. If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
N	Reason for absence not yet provided. Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for the student's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a student's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).
O	Absent from school without authorisation. If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Arrived in school after registration closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
X	Not required to be in school. This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. This code can be used where a student is unable to attend because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or</li> <li>• The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the student's home is not within walking distance; or</li> <li>• A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending school.</li> </ul> This code can also be used where a student is unable to attend because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the student is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).</li> </ul> This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.
Z	Student not on admission register. This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of students joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put students on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the school.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure. This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.



## **4.2 Leave of Absence**

4.2.1 Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance means that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence for the sole purpose of a holiday (unless in exceptional circumstances). All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

4.2.2 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances.' At All Saints School, leave of absence shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. This may only be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. All Saints School will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

4.2.3 Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave. If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher and it will be marked as unauthorised. All Saints School will treat each application individually and discuss with parents the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

4.2.4 A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fail to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period of time is taken in excess of the agreed number of days.

4.2.5 When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a student fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

## **4.3 Student Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance**

All Saints School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the student absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

## **4.4 Traveller Absence**

1. The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.
2. To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, Section 86 of The Education Act 1944 states that a Traveller parent shall be entitled to be acquitted if his or her

child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) during the period of twelve months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted, if the family are of no fixed abode.

3. However, it should be noted that this provision applies only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

4. When trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Norfolk, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

5. All Saints School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the student must have attended All Saints School in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the student's school place at All Saints School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

6. All Saints School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

7. Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.

8. Where Traveller children are registered students at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any student.

#### **4.5 Unauthorised Absence**

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school. That decision is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the student's hair
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the student is actually considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

## 4.6 Persistent Absence

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all students at our school is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or full prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3 month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

## 4.7 Late Arrival at School

At All Saints School all students are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 9.00am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. The school register will be taken at 9.10am. All students arriving after this time will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9.25am. All students arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a student arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

## 5. Deletions from the Register

5.1 In accordance with the Regulations, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

<b>A</b>	Where the student is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
<b>B</b>	<b>Change of school</b> Except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the student should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a student at another school.
<b>C</b>	Where a student is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.

<b>D</b>	<b>Home education</b> In a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the student is receiving education otherwise than at school.
<b>E</b>	<b>Moved away</b> Except in the case of a boarder that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
<b>F</b>	In the case of a student granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the student has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the student is
<b>G</b>	That he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
<b>H</b>	That he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) The proprietor of the school and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the student is.
<b>I</b>	That he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student will return to the school at the end of that period.
<b>J</b>	That the student has died.
<b>K</b>	That the student will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the student will cease to attend the school; or (ii) The student does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
<b>L</b>	In the case of a student at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a student of the school.
<b>M</b>	<b>Permanent exclusion.</b> That he has been permanently excluded from the school.
<b>N</b>	Where the student has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, which he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
<b>O</b>	Where— (i) the student is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the student; and (iii) Those charges remain unpaid by the student's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

All Saints School will follow Norfolk County Council's Children Missing Education procedures when a student's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Norfolk County Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

At All Saints School, we believe that improved school attendance is a responsibility shared by the Directors, Advisory Board, school staff, parents, students and the wider school community.

The Advisory Board of All Saints School will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the advisory board to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Regulations and other relevant legislation are 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 Advisory Board 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 students, including those who are educated off-site
- 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 Senior Management Team at All Saints School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents
- Form positive relationships with students and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students 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 Regulations and other relevant legislation are 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 Advisory Board and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, 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 students and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Set out how Student Premium will be used to support students with irregular attendance

All staff at All Saints School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents
- Form positive relationships with students and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Regulations and other relevant legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families

Students will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents, and the school timetable
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing student attendance data
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff members
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting good whole school attendance
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance
- Managing individual student casework files
- Coordinating Individual Action Plans for students causing concern including the instigation of a Family Support Plan (FSP) and/ or the implementation of a parenting contract
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to, if a child is absent from school without contact from parents
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and

- reward schemes
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies

All Saints School requests that parents will:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their school work or home and family life
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues

## **7. Attendance Protocols**

If a child is absent, the following will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all students who are not in school after close of register at 9.25am and where no reason for absence is known
- If there is still no contact made from the student's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned
- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a student, a home visit may be carried out
- School will telephone home if a student leaves the school without permission

In certain circumstances the School may also:

- Visit the home of the student or request a welfare check to be made by the police
- Write to the parents of a student to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance and advice
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS), where there are safeguarding concerns

### **7.1 Expected absence procedure for parents:**

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the first day of absence and each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return.

If no contact is received, the Attendance protocols will be instigated.

### **7.2 Support Systems**

School recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school 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.

We also recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and students
- Parent Support advisor
- Student Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- 1 to 1 mentoring
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Engaging the support of other agencies

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and students. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the Headteacher will consider the use of legal sanctions following consultation with the Local Authority.

### **7.3 Attendance Procedure and Reward System**

- Attendance procedures: attendance is monitored regularly and, for any student falling below the expected levels, parents/carers will be contacted.
- Reward systems: we have chosen not to have a reward system for attendance as this may disadvantage students, who through ongoing medical reasons, are unable to achieve full attendance.
- 100% - 97% attendance: This will be recognised through termly attendance letters/individualised updates
- 96% - 90% attendance: Parents or carers will be contacted by letter, with a copy of the attendance record, offering support and guidance on how to improve attendance, or the opportunity to discuss issues preventing good attendance.



- Under 90% - This is considered to be persistent absenteeism. Parents will be asked to attend a meeting at the school where attendance and related issues will be discussed and a plan devised to improve attendance.

If attendance fails to improve after support and guidance has been implemented, then referral for legal proceedings will be considered.

## **8. Related Policies**

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that students at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

## **9. Statutory Framework**

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, DfE (August 2020)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE (January 2015)
- Children missing education, DfE (September 2016)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (September 2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE (2018)

## **10. Appendices**

10.1 The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy

## **Appendix 1: Example warning letter FPN for schools**

INSERT SCHOOL LOGO

Dear Parent/Carer,

Date:

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At All Saints School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our students receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

In the DfE policy document entitled, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' it states, 'Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion'.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the Headteacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the Headteacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any student will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the student during the last 6 school weeks.

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any student at All Saints School who meets the criteria will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the receipt of the notice. The fixed penalty notice is per parent per child. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Ms S Dangerfield  
Headteacher

Appendix 2: Leave of absence form pg. 1

Name of School: All Saints School

**APPLICATION FOR STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME**

**Important Information for Parents**

- Head teachers comply with the 2013 amendment to the **Education (Student Registration) (England) (2006) Regulations 2013** which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the Head teacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not
- Head teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed
- If leave of absence is granted, please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child’s academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the parent who intends to remove the student from school during term time
- Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised

**Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.**

**I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:**

Full name of child/ren.....  
Address.....  
From (1<sup>st</sup> day of absence) .....To (last day of absence) .....  
Total number of school days.....Expected date of return to school.....  
Reason for proposed absence - please provide reasons to support the application including evidence:  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:**

*I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren’s progress. I undertake to make sure my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.*

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s):

Date:

**Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been:**

Agreed  Days agreed  Not agreed

Signature of Headteacher:

### Attendance at school and legal intervention

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At All Saints School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our students receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

In the DfE policy document entitled, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' it states, '*Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. **The application must be made in advance and the headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.***

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the headteacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the headteacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any student will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the student during the last 6 school weeks

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any student at All Saints School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the receipt of the notice. The fixed penalty notice is per parent per child. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Ms S Dangerfield  
Headteacher

## 11. Addendum: Arrangements for Attendance during Covid-19

This section of the whole school policy was created in response to Covid-19 and agreed by the Governing Body on [insert date]. It will be kept under review as circumstances continue to evolve in line with national and local guidance and should be read in conjunction with the full policy document.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors Date: \_\_\_\_\_

11.1 As set out in the [full opening guidance](#), the DfE expects schools to work with families and the Local Authority to secure regular school attendance for all students in September 2020 in line with statutory requirements.

From the start of the Autumn Term 2020 student's attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered student
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

At All Saints School we recognise and are mindful of the impact that Covid-19 will have had on our students and their wider family and community. We will therefore be taking a balanced approach when dealing with attendance matters and will work closely with the Local Authority's Attendance Team.

By working closely with the LA's Attendance Team, we will try to ensure a consistent approach to managing attendance concerns. We are committed to supporting our students and their families to secure a positive return to regular attendance for all our students. We believe that the key to facilitating good school attendance is:

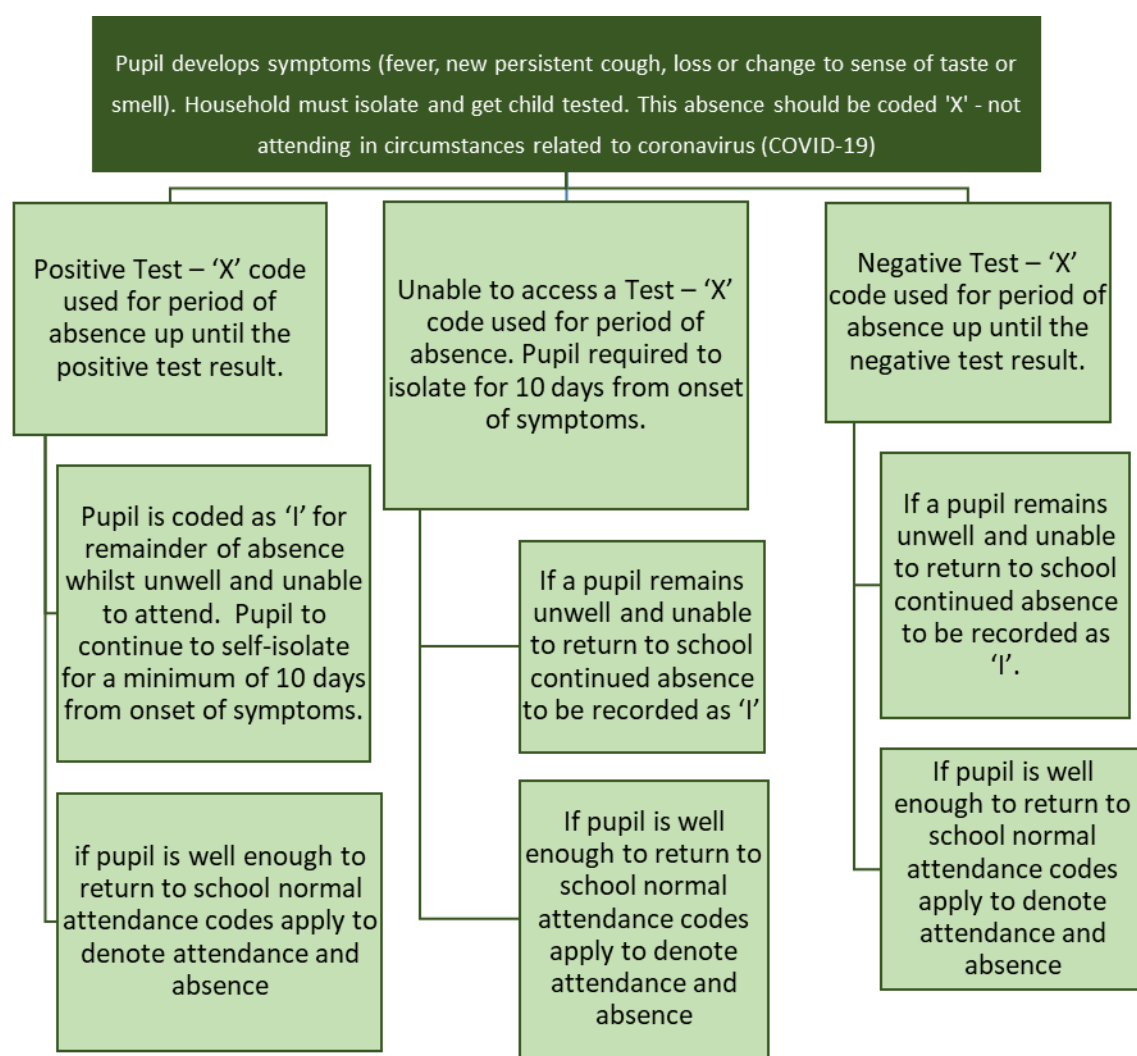
- clear communication with our families
- where concerns arise, early intervention and targeted support plans based on individual student needs
- use of appropriate statutory tools to ensure school attendance where appropriate

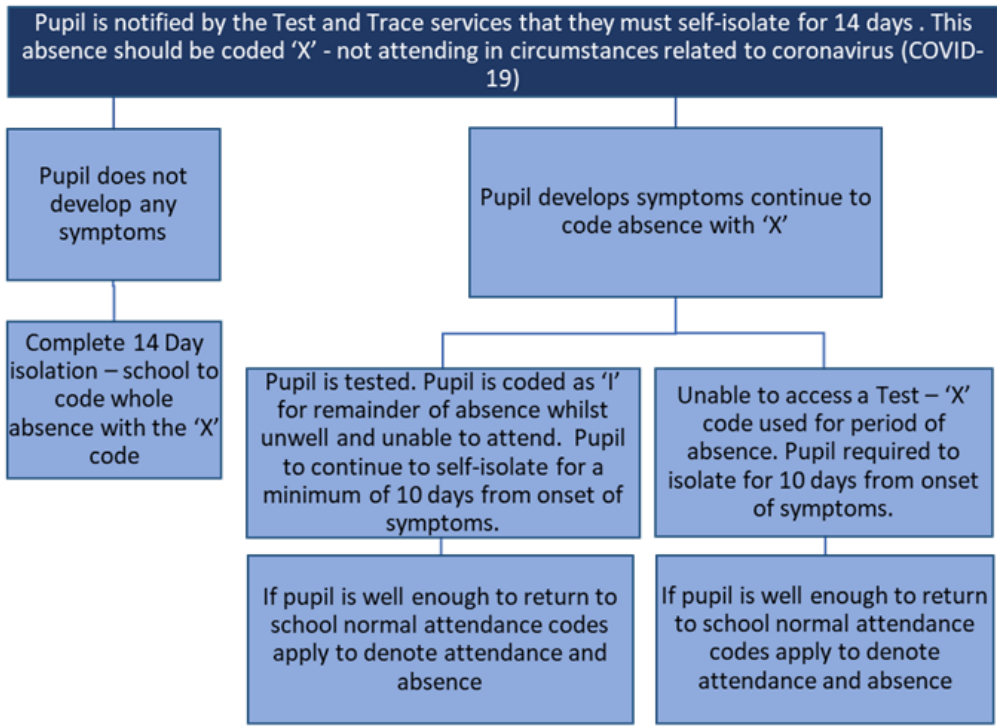
### 11.2 Recording absence related to Covid-19 during academic year 2020 to 2021

Although school attendance is compulsory from the start of the autumn term, there will be some circumstances where students cannot attend school due to Covid-19. Parents will not be penalised for a child's absence that is related to Covid-19.

The table below shows the national codes which all schools are required to use to record and monitor attendance and absence when absence is related to Covid-19:

Code	Reason
X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>absence accrued when students are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (Covid-19)</li> <li>If a student is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register</li> <li>Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)</li> </ul>
I	Absence accrued following a positive test should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.





### **11.3 Self-Isolation**

We ask that all parents and carers follow the Government guidance 'Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' if their child and/or someone in the household develops symptoms of Covid-19.

If a student tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.

In all cases of self-isolation, parents must inform the school immediately about the outcome of a test. In line with Department for Education guidance, we will not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

### **11.4 Continuity of learning**

We have developed the following plan to ensure that learning continues, irrespective of lockdown or the need to self-isolate. Our aim is to provide learning opportunities that will support learning at home whilst being mindful of teachers and parents and carers workload and wellbeing.

The plan documented below complies with the expectations outlined in the DFE document. Guidance for Full Opening of Schools.

The plan will be applied in the following instances:

- 1) An individual is self-isolating because of a positive test, or there is a symptomatic member of the household or an individual has symptoms themselves;
- 2) A group of children is self-isolating because of a case of coronavirus in the bubble;
- 3) A whole bubble or cohort e.g. taxi group is self-isolating because of an outbreak of coronavirus

In the case of any of the above scenarios, students will remain in contact with their form tutor or Miss King who will speak to them at least twice a week via Teams, phone calls or email. Work from English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Philosophy and Ethics and PSHEE will be sent via email or through the post (with a self-addressed envelope included for work to be returned). Miss King will be available to provide any additional support and resources that may be required. The completed work is to be photographed and emailed to school or returned in the self-addressed envelopes provided (it will be kept separate for two days and then opened). Any feedback or support that is required to complete the work can be addressed during the Teams meeting or via a phone call.

Teachers will create a number of learning packs, clearly labelled for students so that they can be sent home by the office staff, if and when required.

In addition to work sent home parents and students need to receive logins and passwords for the following platforms.

Teams  
TT Rockstars  
Nessy (for some junior students)  
Seneca (for some KS4 students)  
MyMaths



Miss King/form tutor will schedule a Teams meet or a phone call with the children and parents/carers the day after the first day of isolation when they will discuss the remote learning arrangements and expectations.

We will ensure that every student has some form of direct contact with a member of staff at least four times during their 14-day isolation. This could be through Teams, email or a phone call home. They will be invited into the weekly assembly through Teams and will, where possible, have the chance to meet as a form group via a Teams catch up session as happened during lockdown.

If work is not completed and returned either via email, post or through the Teams platform the form tutor or Miss King, we will contact home and see what support is required.

In the event of a form tutor or Miss King being ill, an alternative member of staff or SLT will be expected to take over the contact arrangements.

In the event of a Covid-19 related absence the school office will contact parents/carers to verify if a test is being taken and to agree a return date. Parents/carers should communicate the test results to Mrs Berryman in the office on [office@allsaintslessingham.co.uk](mailto:office@allsaintslessingham.co.uk) or call 01692 582083. If your son/daughter is entitled to free school meals, we will arrange for supermarket vouchers to be sent when we send work.

### **Safeguarding**

If the school is concerned about the wellbeing of a student one of the school's DSLs (Ms Dangerfield, Miss Paffett or Miss King) will ensure that appropriate agencies are notified and arrange for regular wellbeing checks to be made and normal reporting procedures will be followed. Where additional support is normally accessed (school counsellor etc) this will, where possible, continue.

Engagement in home learning is compulsory in the event of any form of isolation and loss of learning due to Coronavirus. However, if children are too ill to attend school, they should not be expected to engage in home learning.