



# St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

An Academy within The Catholic Academy Trust in South Hampshire

'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre'  
'We love, we learn and we live'



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<b>Headteacher</b>	Katrina Straker
<b>Chair of S&amp;A sub-committee</b>	Anne Taylor
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# Attendance Policy



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The St Anthony's mission statement is 'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre. We love, we learn and we live.' To live out this mission, we are guided and led by our Catholic ethos that places the Catholic Social Teaching principles of Human Dignity and the Common Good at the heart of our school. We recognise that each of us is unique and loved by God and we are called to lead by example, as Christ did, to show respect and love to every person because each of us is made in the image of God.

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## 1. Aims

At St Anthony's, we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [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. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors/trustees to:

- Promote good attendance, enabling pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences, acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Promote positive support systems and advocate multi-agency approaches to improve attendance.
- Make parents aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

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 considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

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

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher, Katrina Straker and can be contacted via the School Office on 01489 579100.

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

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

The attendance officer is Vanessa Robertson and can be contacted via the School Office on 01489 579100.

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 8.45am and 1.15pm.

### **3.6 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to a member of the Senior Leadership Team where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or email the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Headteacher, Katrina Straker, who can be contacted via the School Office on 01489 579100

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.00pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken from 8.25am and will be kept open until 8.35am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01489 479100 or [office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk](mailto:office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk).

If a child is absent at the close of the register (8.35am) and no message has been received from the parent, the School Office will telephone and/or email the parents/carers. This is because we have a duty to ensure each child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. An absence request form must be completed and this can be downloaded from the school's website or the School Office can email a copy to parents.

Parents should try to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be signed out by an adult at the school office with brief details of the medical appointment. Parents will be asked to provide proof of the appointment to office staff. This may include a letter, email or text message confirmation of the appointment. This should be emailed in advance but can be shown to staff on the day if the appointment has been made at short notice.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

Parents/carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents/carers will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem and support available. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions (equivalent to 5 days or more) of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10-week period, the school will be required to consider issuing a penalty notice (see Section 5.2 of this policy for further detail).

Children must be collected promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take uncollected pupils to a place of safety and share concerns as necessary with other agencies. The place of safety is the school's Afterschool Club and parents will be charged for this accordingly.

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason
  - By 9.00am, if no contact has been made with the parents/carers, office staff will start to contact other emergency contacts on the pupil's record. An email will also be sent to parents/carers to warn that if the school does not hear from parents, a home visit will be made by members of the Senior Leadership Team
  - By 10.00am, if the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, two members of the Senior Leadership Team will conduct a home visit to check the welfare of the pupil
  - If no contact is made at the home visit, the Senior Leadership Team will inform the police to request a welfare check
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance. If absence continues, the school may seek consent from parents to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school will issue a penalty notice (see Section 5.2) as appropriate

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. Attendance reports will be sent at the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms.

If the school's Headteacher becomes concerned about a pupil's falling attendance, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will contact the child's parents to make them aware of the pupil's attendance rate. Support will be offered so the school and parents can work together to improve the attendance rate (see Section 8.4 for more detail).

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview

- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare, significant or unavoidable circumstances, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. Examples of exceptional circumstances include:

- Death or terminal illness of a close relative
- Wedding or funeral of a close relative
- Sporting event or performing arts competition at county or national level, if the child is participating
- Graduation ceremony of a close relative

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school's website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

### Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far

- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home/School agreement will include commitments to positive school attendance.

The school will promote good attendance by providing information on all matters related to attendance in the School Newsletter and on the website. This will include an update on each year group's weekly attendance.

Attendance targets are set and displayed in the school. A child friendly attendance policy (written with the School Council) promotes good attendance and rewards the year group with the best attendance each half term with a non-uniform day.

Good attendance is celebrated at the end of each term with badges for pupils who have had an attendance of 100% and postcards for pupils who have had an attendance of 97.0 – 99.9% for that term.

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

When a pupil's attendance becomes a concern, the school will contact parents/carers to discuss support and measures to reverse the trend and this may include putting in place a Family Support Plan. It is recognised that reasons for school absence can be complex so senior leaders will take a sensitive approach towards removing in-school barriers and each case will be handled on an individual basis. It is recognised 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, emerging health concerns. Pastoral support may be offered by the school's ELSA and Home School Link Worker to develop a programme to improve attendance.

### **7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

The attendance of pupils with SEND is closely monitored by governors and the Headteacher. When a pupil's attendance becomes a concern, the school will contact parents/carers to discuss support and measures to reverse the trend. If the reasons for absence are linked to SEND, the SENDCo will be involved in developing a programme to improve attendance.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

If the reasons for absence are linked to mental and physical ill health, parents and pupils will be contacted by our pastoral team (eg our ELSA or Senior Mental Health Leader) to support with developing a programme to encourage an improvement in attendance. Where appropriate, the school will seek consent from parents to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

### **7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

When a pupil is returning to school after a long or unavoidable period of absence, it is recognised that reasons for this can be complex so each case will be handled on an individual basis eg the Headteacher may decide that a phased return or reduced hours are appropriate.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This should go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Benchmark attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings should then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the governing body when appropriate.

### **8.2 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### **8.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

The school will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

Persistent absence is where a pupil's 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 could cause considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

Severe absence is where a pupil's attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 90 sessions (45 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

### **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Standards & Admissions Committee on behalf of the full governing board.

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

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Admissions policy
- Exclusion policy
- SEND policy

## 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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to

		study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

	closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Fixed penalty notice whole school warning letter

Dear Parent,

Date: xx/xx/202x

### Attendance at school and legal intervention

**Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.**

[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 St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

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

The DfE policy document entitled, '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' states:

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

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

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have **at least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during 10 school weeks**. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at St Anthony's Catholic Primary 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 notice. The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from unauthorised absence. When penalty notices are issued each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than 1 child who has been absent. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. In some circumstances, the Inclusion Support Service may choose not to issue a further penalty notice in the same academic year and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

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,

Headteacher



# St Anthony's Catholic Primary School



*An Academy School within The Catholic Academy Trust in South Hampshire*

## Request to authorise absence from school due to exceptional circumstances

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school, you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional.

**Please note:** A holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation are not considered exceptional circumstances. If you take your child out of school without permission, the absence will be unauthorised and we will consider legal action.

All requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed. Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised.

**I have read the above information and wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school for:**

Child's Full Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:

**Parent Details (please list all parents)**

<b>First Name:</b>		<b>Surname:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Relationship to the child:</b>	
<b>Address and postcode:</b>			
<b>Telephone number:</b>			
<b>First Name:</b>		<b>Surname:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Relationship to the child:</b>	
<b>Address and postcode:</b>			
<b>Telephone number:</b>			

**Siblings: Please provide the name of any siblings and the school that they attend**

Child's Full Name:	Date of Birth:	School:

<b>Details of the absence</b>			
<b>Date of First day of absence:</b>		<b>Date of last day of absence:</b>	
<b>Total Number of days absent:</b>		<b>Expected date of return to school:</b>	
<p><b>Please provide the reason for this request including supporting evidence:</b>  This should include why you are applying for an authorised absence and the <b>circumstances</b> which make your <b>application exceptional</b>, for example why the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements.</p>			
<p><b>Please read the following statement and sign to indicate you understand the this:</b></p> <p>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 understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied and my child is absent during this period. I understand that a fine will be payable per child, per parent of £160 if paid within 28 days but reduced to £80 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days.</p>			
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Full name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Full name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

### Important Information for Parents

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amended in September 2013) make it clear that Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

We expect every pupil's attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation during term time. It is the Headteacher who decides whether a period of leave during term time will be authorised or not in line with legislation. Every request for leave of absence during term time will reviewed on an individual basis with due consideration of the circumstances but the Headteacher can only grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply. If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Headteacher will determine the length of the absence to be authorised.

To be completed by the school:			
Date request received by the school:		Total number of days requested:	
Child's Name:	Current % Attendance	Application Authorised or Declined?	
Reason for school's decision:			
Headteacher:	Mrs Katrina Straker		
Signed:		Date:	

#### Appendix 4: Example reply to declined leave of absence request form

Dear [Parents name],

**RE: Absence during term time - [Child Name (Child DOB)]**

Thank you for your application for absence in term time for [child name]. Whilst we appreciate your circumstances, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School does not approve any absences during term time unless they are due to exceptional circumstances as per the guidance from the Department for Education.

The rationale behind this decision is that the Government has provided evidence that satisfactory progress at school is highly dependent on attendance.

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School works closely with the Hampshire's Inclusion Support Service and if you choose to take your child out of school for the above unauthorised leave, we will be obliged to notify the local authority and further action including legal action may be considered.

The local authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have **at least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during 10 school weeks**. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued, the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the notice. Please note that a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid after 28 days this may result in legal action be taken against you. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have noted the dates [insert dates] that [Child Name] will be absent from school and the registers will be marked with the G code (unauthorised family holiday) for this period.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact the school office on 01489 579100.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Straker  
Headteacher

## Appendix 5: Attendance policy quick guide for parents

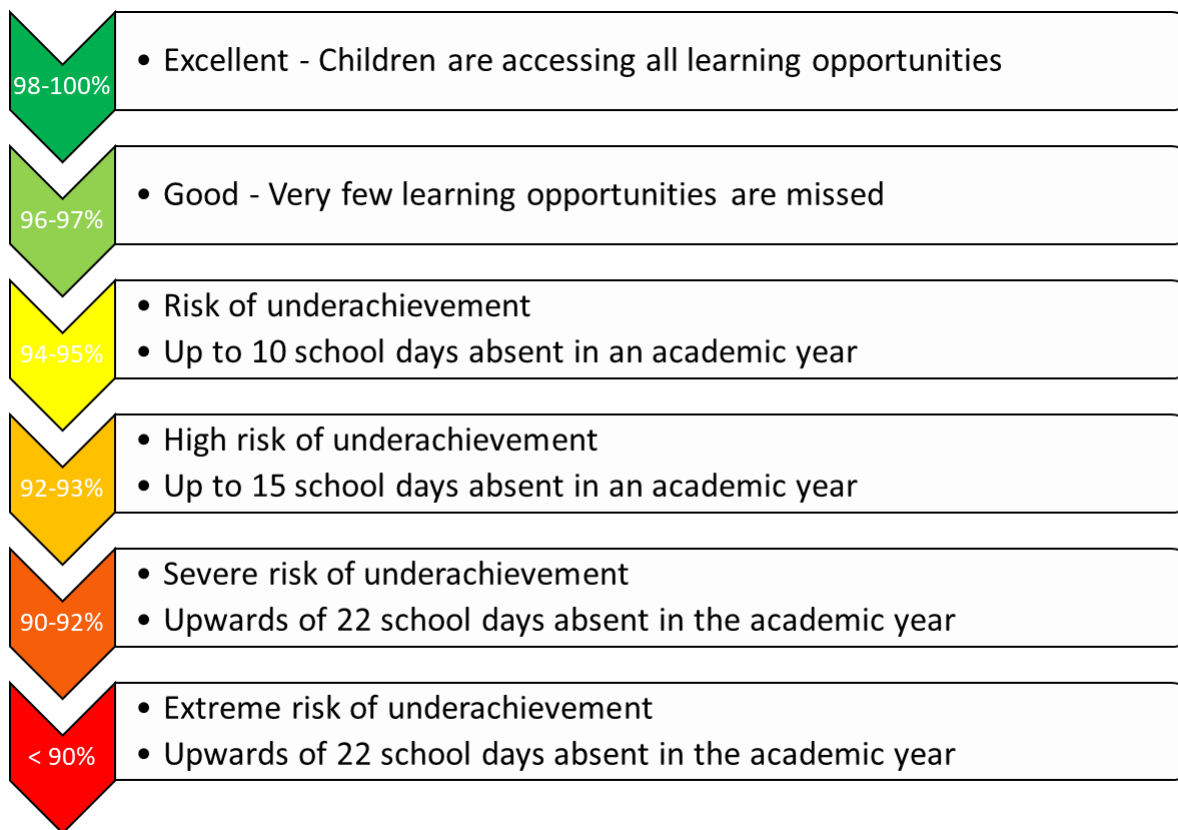
### Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

**You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:**

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Pupils must be in school by 08:35.
- If your child appears to be only slightly ill, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



#### **‘On the day’ absences: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?**

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, please report this absence using by phoning the school office on 01489 579100, where you can leave a message. Alternatively, please email the school office on [office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk](mailto:office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk). In the message you must leave your child’s full name and year group and give the specific reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register. Messages must be received by 08:30.

## **Leave of Absence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our 'Leave of absence request' form to make these types of requests. The form should be submitted in advance of the leave of absence, via [office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk](mailto:office@saint-anthonysfareham.co.uk) or by dropping it in to the school office. You will receive a letter in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined.

## **Punctuality**

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they are not in their classroom by 08:35.

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. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Please contact a member of the School Leadership Team if you require any support with ensuring your child's regular school attendance.