



St Peter's C of E Junior School

Attendance and Lateness Policy

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1.Introduction

At St Peter's, our ambition is for all pupils to strive for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all pupils and expect pupils to be in school every session and every day that school is open. We consider this paramount to pupils achieving their full potential and enhancing lifelong outcomes.

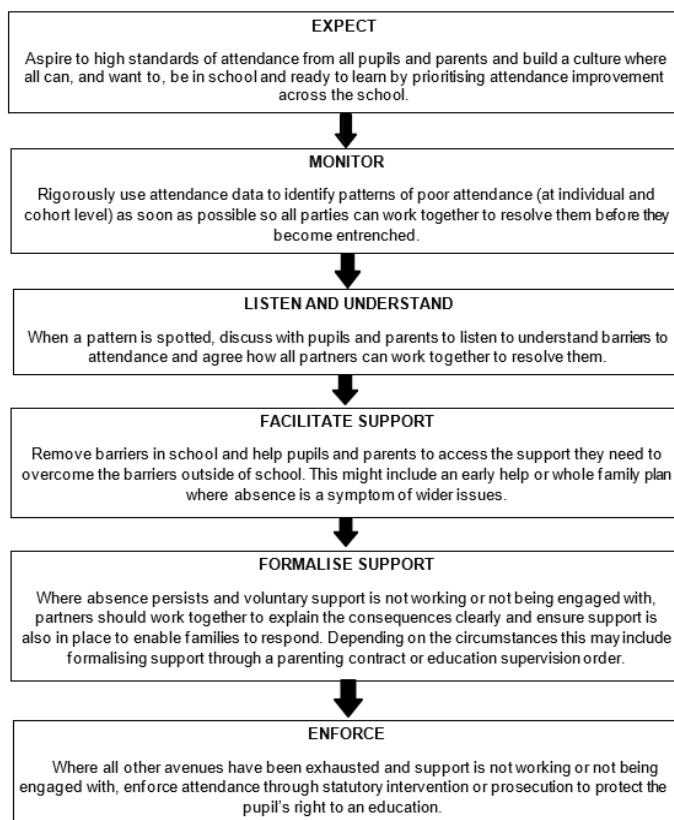
Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a wide range of evidence and research as to the health and wellbeing benefits of regularly attending school.

Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils and is an integral part of our school ethos.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "Working together to improve school attendance" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance including the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing education or absent from school.

We understand that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore, at all stages of improving attendance, we will work together with parents/carers, pupils and relevant partner agencies to remove any barriers and build strong and trusting relationships. We believe that promoting and ensuring excellent attendance is everybody's business within our school and community.

As a result, our policy follows the DfE Working together to Improve School Attendance Approach:



By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved and as part of the wider school community.
- Raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents, pupils and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- Work with external agencies where required, such as health, the LA and local organisations to support our pupils, parents and school.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge learning gaps.
- Celebrate good and improved attendance and punctuality.

2. Why is Attending School Regularly So Important?

Evidence shows pupils with excellent school attendance are more likely to reach higher standards of achievement and be at less risk of exposure to crime and other safeguarding risks.

Pupils who attend regularly are more likely to achieve better results than their peers that do not, both at Key Stage 2 tests in the Primary phase, and in GCSE's at Secondary.

Excellent attendance enables pupils to be part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. This further supports each pupil's development socially, morally, and ethically, enhancing personal well-being.

If attendance over the school year is:	...a pupil will miss this many days:	...and this many lessons:
100%	0	0
95%	10	50
90%	19	95
85%	29	145
80%	39	195
75%	49	245
70%	58	290

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

At St Peter's we will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues.

In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school has made all reasonable enquiries and cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare and safety.

4. Legislation and Guidance

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

- [Working together to improve school attendance \(February 2024\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education \(September 2016\)](#)

- [Keeping children safe in education \(September 2023\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children \(December 2023\)](#)

5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. We believe that the key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them. To achieve this we:

- * Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families.
- * 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.
- * Benchmark our 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.
- * Provide data and reports to support the work of the governing body

6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all pupils and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing to enhance understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in conjunction with relevant partners.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers such pupils may face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Strategies we may use to support include:

- Facilitating any relevant pastoral or nurture support
- Access to our Early Birds club
- Putting in place an individual attendance contract and action plan
- Looking at ways we can address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Consider adjustments to school practice and policies

- An invitation to join our parent support group led by Lisa Allcock, our nurture and parent liaison lead
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Onward referrals to external agencies to provide specific support

In line with DfE expectations reduced timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period, to support pupils to reintegrate back into education and access full time provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and external partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

7. Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

8. Contents of Attendance Register

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, require schools to take an attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session.

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed on the admission register at the time.

9. Present at School (and Lateness)

Pupils are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

At St Peter's, all pupils 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 (after 8:45am). All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office. If their arrival is after 9:10am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The table below shows the key timings that all pupils are expected to adhere to:

8:45am	Gates open – pupils can begin to arrive at school
8:50am	Year 5 and 6 doors are open

9:00am	Year 3 and 4 doors are open
9:00am	Morning registers are taken
9:10am	Pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the office and are marked as 'late'
1:00pm	Afternoon register for Year 3 and 4 are taken
1:10pm	Afternoon register for Year 5 and 6 are taken
3:30pm	End of the school day

The school register will officially close at 9:30am. All pupils 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.

Where there is an agreement in place with the school SENCo for a pupil who has additional needs, arrival times may be more flexible. This maybe so crowds can be avoided or to reduce anxiety.

10. Effects of Late Arrival at School

When a pupil arrives late to school, they miss an important part of the school day which could involve reading, interventions, teacher instructions and introductions to lessons. Children can often feel embarrassed having to enter a classroom late and can have a negative impact on their self esteem.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others:

Minutes late per day...	Equates to days of teaching lost in one year...	Which means this number of lessons have been missed...
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons
20 mins	12 days	60 Lessons
30 mins	18 days	90 Lessons

11. Authorised Absence

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:

11.1 Illness

The NHS has produced a helpful guide for parents regarding childhood illness and school: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents/carers following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows Department for Education guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some exceptional circumstances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order best support the child or young person and to be able to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school on each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

11.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our school supports pupil mental health and wellbeing following DfE guidance [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Attendance Lead or other relevant member of staff for further information on the support available.

Online Mental health support and advice can be accessed: [Children's mental health - Every Mind Matters - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Parents can also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by telephoning 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

11.3 Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent or another authorised adult and signed out.

11.4 Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents should always try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are urgent or unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day of schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

11.5 Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

11.6 Suspensions

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an Exclusion. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions.

Any exclusion **must** be agreed by the headteacher.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out.

12. First Day of Absence Response

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 on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

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

- The first day communication procedures via a text message will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.30am and where no reason for absence is known. If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned.

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil.
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to Early Help and/or other external agencies 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.

13. Children missing from education (CME)

From day 1-10 the school will continue to make efforts to engage the family and will keep a record of their contact. If there has been a history of Safeguarding Concerns or there is ongoing Social Care involvement, the MASH team will be notified.

Beyond day 10, if whereabouts is confirmed, if the pupil is still not attending education or engaging with school, a referral for Early Help through the Family Service (Pathway to Provision) will be made.

If a pupil's whereabouts is unknown and reasonable efforts have been made to locate and make contact with the family a referral will be made to the Children Missing Officer (CMO). This will be no later than day 10 when there is no explanation for absence and the above checks have been completed.

In the case of school allocations, if a child has been allocated a place at school and they do not arrive the CMO must be informed within 10 days evidencing efforts to engage which will follow the same procedures as above.

14. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

The traffic light system is used to track, monitor and plan actions to improve a pupil's attendance.

Here is St Peter's monitoring and planning system for improving school attendance:

96-100%	Attendance levels are good to excellent Positive encouragement/incentives/rewards required to maintain high levels of attendance
93-95.9%	Attendance levels beginning to cause concern <u>Analyse</u> data and provide reports to regularly monitor attendance/reasons for absence, patterns etc. Letter from school warning parents of concern and advise that future absences not to be <u>authorised</u> unless medical evidence is provided.
90-92.9%	Attendance levels causing more significant concern Parents invited to a meeting at school and Attendance Action Plan/contract agreed. A date for plan/contract to be reviewed agreed at the meeting (four weeks), individual attendance target set.
90%* 85%**	Attendance decreased to unacceptable level –below persistent absence rate – despite interventions *Below 90% - refer to Early Help when complex issues identified **Below 85% - refer to Nottinghamshire County Council for enforcement/possible prosecution

Attendance incentives

- Attendance information display updated weekly in the library area, including a Roll of Honour naming the children with best attendance for the week
- 100 Club is for those who have 100 per cent attendance over a term, they will receive a certificate and be entered into the school attendance raffle to win a prize, a restaurant or cinema voucher that the whole family can enjoy

- In to Win, an interactive game whereby a wheel is spun and a child's name is displayed, if they have had 100 per cent attendance, they are the weekly winner of a small prize

15. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

The headteacher can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. The headteacher will restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstance set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances*

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

*The headteacher will consider a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. This must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. The headteacher will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

Leave of absence in term-time will never be authorised in these circumstances:

- during the first few weeks of any school year – this is a vital part of the school calendar for all pupils
- during an assessment/test period – e.g. End of Key Stage SATs in May
- when a pupil's attendance record already includes **any** level of unauthorised absence.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or leave of absence for the purposes of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

All absences associated with a family holiday (without exceptional circumstances) during term time will be marked as unauthorised on 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 by the headteacher and be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

A penalty notice request may be submitted to the Local Authority by the headteacher should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not authorised by the headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance.

When absence is granted by the head teacher, the parent will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil 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 a possible children missing from education procedure being instigated.

16. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school has not been given a reason or is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it remains the school's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips
- Absences whereby parents are stating they are waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in legal sanctions, use of penalty notices or prosecution.

17. Persistently and Severely Absent pupils (PA and SA)

A pupil is classed a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

A pupil is classed as 'severely absent' if they miss 50% or more of their school across the school year for whatever reason.

Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils 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 as outlined in the section above. 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 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.

18. Approved Educational Activity

When pupils are attending educational activities off the school site, that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, our school will arrange for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). We will liaise regularly with alternative providers to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary. Attendance updates will be provided on a daily basis, with the alternative setting.

19. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in DfE attendance guidance)

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by our school or the Local Authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE's '[Home to school travel and transport](#)' guidance document, or ask the school for a printed copy.)
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- The pupil is in custody, but still on the school roll. (If the school has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as 'present at approved educational activity'.)

20. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal attendance action plan or parenting contract being drawn up.

If our school is unable to work in partnership with parents to overcome any barriers preventing regular attendance, we may refer a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions. We will show all the steps we have taken to support parents and pupils and that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter and school records will be shared with the Local Authority.

We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic, early help approach to the issue and will involve other agencies if deemed necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support

offered by the school and/or other agencies, or, fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a penalty notice or other legal sanction.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

21. Pupils on Reduced (Part-time) Timetables

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

22. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice for absence is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The school will prioritise a 'support first' approach offering support to families in cases where it is appropriate. Penalty notices can still be issued where support is not appropriate, such as leave of absence in term time or when support has not been engaged with.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a penalty notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a penalty notice or prosecution.

Penalty notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance, for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

Penalty notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

Penalty Notices will be issued by post to your home address to each parent or carer by the local authority at the request of the Headteacher. The Penalty Notice is:

- £80 for each of your children if paid in full within 21 days.
- £160 if paid in full after 21 days but within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent within a rolling 3-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

A national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent of the same child within a rolling 3-year period has been set within the National Framework, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) a prosecution will be considered.

23. Reporting to Parents

Regular communication with parents is crucial in raising the profile of school attendance and punctuality. Here are some of the ways St Peter's will communicate with you:

- INFORM newsletter
- Text message
- Phone calls
- Letters home
- Email
- School website
- Parent support group
- Face to face discussion and meetings

Where a child's attendance falls below 90% for whatever reason, our school will most likely contact parents to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

24. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Name	Contact details
Senior Attendance Lead	Hannah Roberts	<u>0115 974 3303</u>
Contact for support around attendance	Hannah Roberts Lisa Allcock	<u>0115 974 3303</u>
Headteacher	Michael Bradley	<u>0115 974 3303</u>
School Office	Judy Noble	<u>0115 974 3303</u> <u>Admin.office@stpetersjunior.org.uk</u>
Named Governor for Attendance	Sheila Johnson-Marshall	<u>0115 974 3303</u>

The Governing Board

The Governing Body recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Supporting the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, identifying areas of progress and where greater focus is needed
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
- Designating a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the education achievement of looked after and previously looked after pupils.
- Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Senior Attendance Lead

The Senior Attendance Lead will:

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and plan intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families.
- 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.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts

Parents

St Peter's requests that parents:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).

- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

25. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Headteacher, or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be ratified by the governing body.

26. Links with other policies/procedures

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

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