



September 2025

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality

Date ratified by Governors:	Committee responsible for review: PPC
Date of next review of the policy: Autumn 2026	Signature of Chair:
This policy is reviewed: Annually	Last reviewed September 2025

Let the light of Christ Shine in our School



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Attendance and Punctuality

1. Overview

For a child to achieve their full educational potential excellent school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

Parents and pupils play a part in making our school a success. Every child has a right to access the education to which s/he is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers, the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for an absence is unavoidable.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on excellent attendance.

Excellent attendance is important because:

- i) statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance;
- ii) regular attenders make better progress, both academically and socially;
- iii) regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to manage;
- iv) regular attenders find learning more satisfying and
- v) regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school and secondary school.

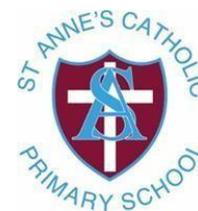
A child is of statutory school age between 5 and 16. This means it is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure the regular, full-time attendance of their child/ren. Failure to do this could lead to legal proceedings from the Local Authority.

Parents need to see themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children. They should ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a good condition to learn.

If teachers have concerns about a pupil being absent or do not accept the explanation for an absence as genuine or exceptional, they will raise the matter with the Inclusion leader and, if necessary, the Head Teacher.

2. School Target

The target for school attendance at St Anne's is 96%. Our target attendance has been set with reference to the Department for Education's aim of reducing unauthorised absence.



3. Absence

We appreciate there may be times when your child is unwell or absent due to exceptional circumstances.

The school has a policy of first day absence calling. On the first day that a child is absent it is expected that the school will receive notification from their parent/carer. If this is not received, the school will call, email, and or text to determine the reason for the child's absence.

If no contact has been made after day 2 by the parent/carer and the school can not make any contact, this will be reported verbally to a DSL and recorded on CPOMS alerting the DSL team.

If a child has a significant level of absence due to illness or medicals, the school will ask for medical evidence. If this cannot be provided, the absence/s will be unauthorised.

Should a child be absent for 20 consecutive days for any reason other than exceptional circumstance, the child will be taken off roll and may be reported as missing from education to Lambeth Council's attendance team.

4. Attendance Registers

Attendance registers are legal documents. Schools are required, by law to register pupils twice a day; first thing in the morning at the start of the school day, and again in the afternoon session. If a pupil fails to attend or arrives late, they can be marked as absent for that session. It is the legal obligation of parents/carers to report the true reason why their child is absent from school to ensure the attendance registers are completed correctly.

5. Parent/Carer Responsibility

It is the parent/carers legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend the school where they are registered regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of children and then should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Once a child is registered at the school, attendance is compulsory.

If a pupil is unable to attend the school, parents/carers are expected:

- To contact the school before 9.30am every day of a pupil's absence by email or telephone. A reason for absence must be given. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that the child is safe.
- To contact the school when the period of absence runs longer than originally advised giving a reason and new date of expected return to the school.
- To provide a letter (or written note) explaining the absence on the day the pupil returns to the school.
- To provide supporting evidence if requested, to enable informed decisions to be made by the school when authorising absence

If a child is absent and the parent or carer has not contacted the school, then as part of our safeguarding policy, staff will:

- Send an email and/or text reminding them to make contact.



- If there is no response, the office will try and contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts. This is so that we can check on the safety of the child.
- If it has not been possible to contact either the parent, carer or emergency contacts then school will give due consideration to making a home visit based on their knowledge of the child. If no contact has been made after 3 days, then a home visit will definitely be made.

Parents/carers should contact the school if they are concerned about their child's attendance, or if their child is experiencing difficulties either in or outside the school which are affecting their attendance. The school aims to work in partnership with parents/carers and will discuss ways to support a pupil and family to ensure improved attendance.

6. Persistent Absence & Monitoring Absence/Punctuality

Improving attendance is a whole School responsibility. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

The school has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concerns. Our expectation is that a child's attendance is 98% or above at the end of the school year. The school will carry out regular register checks and contact parents/carers when a pupil's attendance or punctuality is under target. Parents/carers may be invited to attend meetings to the School to discuss issues affecting a pupil's attendance.

Each pupil will be considered individually before any action is taken. Actions will be agreed by the

School Attendance Officer and the member of Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for attendance. Actions may include:

- Staff speaking to parents and carers as and when concerns arise
- The Attendance Officer contacting families whose attendance is below average to try to find ways to improve
- Writing to parents when attendance or punctuality does not improve

The school monitors children's attendance when it drops below 96%. A series of letters is sent when

attendance does not improve, approaches or drops below 90%

Letter 1 – advising parent or carer that attendance is low and requesting that every effort is made to ensure attendance improves.

Letter 2 – raising concerns that attendance is low or has not improved and setting the expectation

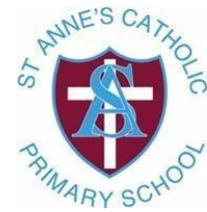
that all future absences need to be accompanied by medical evidence. This may be accompanied by

a telephone call from the Attendance Officer

Letter 3 – either a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the Attendance Officer to review attendance or an attendance panel meeting with the LA Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

A child whose attendance falls below 90%, i.e., has been absent for more than 10% of possible attendance, is deemed to be persistently absent. The parents/carers of a persistently absent child can be referred by the school to the local authority for a fixed penalty notice (fine).

Persistent unauthorised absence may result in the matter being referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued or for investigation which could result in prosecution. It is a



criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per pupils, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. The legal framework governing Penalty Notices is set out in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, amended 2013.

7. Appointments

Appointments, medical or otherwise, should, wherever possible, be made outside of school hours i.e. before school, after school, on weekends or during school holidays. If a medical appointment can only be made during school hours, or if there are more than three days of absence or repeated absence due to illness, evidence of the appointment will be required (this can take the form of an appointment card or a copy of a prescription).

If a child is absent due to vomiting and/or diarrhoea then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last time that the child was sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.

Where there are concerns about a child's attendance (particularly when it drops below 90%) the school will request medical evidence for any absence.

8. Siblings

If a child attending an appointment during school hours has a sibling in school, arrangements should be made for the sibling who does not have an appointment to be in school at the start of the school day and to be collected from school at the usual finishing time at the end of the school day, where possible.

If your child is taken ill during the school day or is unable to come to school due to illness, it is important that arrangements are made so that siblings attend/remain in school, where possible. If parents have an appointment or are unwell, arrangements should be made for the child/ren to be in school on time and picked up at the end of the school day, where possible.

9. Punctuality

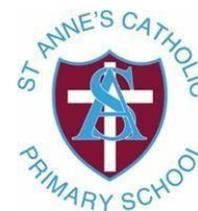
It is imperative that your child is punctual. School begins promptly at 9.00am. Arriving after this time can affect a child's progress. It also disrupts the class if a child arrives after lessons have already begun. Therefore, not only must children attend school regularly, but they must not be late.

Being late can add up to a loss of learning. If a child is late just 5 minutes every day, this adds up to over three days lost each year. Arriving 15 minutes late each day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.

Punctuality is closely monitored. Each half term, punctuality reports will be analysed and for those pupils whose punctuality is a cause for concern, the parents/carers will be contacted notifying them of the school's concern and possibly inviting them to attend a meeting with the Inclusion leader or the Head Teacher to discuss the issues.

Late present – pupils arriving after the start of the school session, i.e. after 9.00 am but before the official close of the register at 9.30 am, are marked 'late present' using the L code. Pupils

arriving after 9.00 am must enter the school via the main school entrance and report electronically their name and reason for lateness.



Late absent – pupils arriving after the official close of the register, i.e. after 9.30 am, are marked as 'late absent' using a U. Their presence on site is noted to meet the fire regulations but their lateness is treated as an unauthorised absence for the session. Late absence becomes authorised only if an appropriate reason is given for the significantly late arrival by letter or telephone call.

In the event of a child arriving at school on more than a couple of occasions after the close of registration, the parents/carers may be referred to the local authority which could result in a fixed penalty notice being issued or the parents/carers being required to attend a court panel for legal intervention.

10. Late Collection at the End of the School Day

School finishes at 3.30 pm. If there are any unforeseen circumstances as to why parents/carers are running late, the school office must be contacted as soon as possible. If children are collected late on a regular basis, parents/carers will be asked to make alternative childcare arrangements to ensure their child is collected promptly.

If a child is not collected by 4.30 pm and the school has had no communication with the parents/carers, the school has a duty of care to contact the police and social care to make suitable arrangements for the child.

11. Incentives

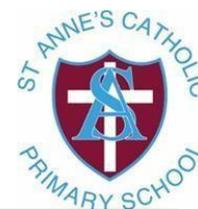
Pupils whose attendance and punctuality are outstanding, or is most improved, will be recognised with certificates and or postcards and considered for further rewards which include prizes and whole class treats.

12. Summary

Attendance

100%	Excellent attendance	At school every day – learning and achievement maximised
98%	Target	Absent from school for 4-5 days a year - allows for occasional days of illness
96%	Minimum expected	Absent from school for 9-10 days a year – some concern
<90%	Persistently absent	Absent from school nearly 1 day each week or more – learning and achievement severely affected
87% - 92%	Penalty notice (fine)	Learning and achievement severely affected
<87%	Refer to local authority for legal intervention (court panel)	Learning and achievement severely affected

Punctuality



09:00		Expected
09:00 – 09:30		Late before register closed (L)
After 09:30		Late after register closed (U) School can refer to local authority for penalty notice or legal intervention (court panel)

Appendix 1

Dear Parent/Carer,

I wanted to take the opportunity to remind you about our attendance and punctuality expectations, as well as our policies and procedures in relation to children who have unexplained or persistent absences from school as well as absences due to illness on either side of a school holiday.

There have been cases in the past where schools have not chased up the reasons why children are absent from school. It has then transpired that there have been tragic circumstances around these absences. For example, the illness of a parent and a child has been unable to seek help, etc.

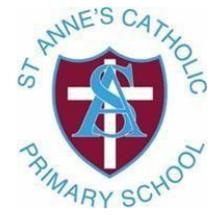
Attendance at school is important and research indicates that missing school for even a day, which can affect their life chances. At St. Anne's, our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential. We encourage all pupils to strive for 100% attendance every day, and every lesson counts.

All schools in England must follow Department for Education guidance regarding attendance it clearly states 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. We appreciate there may be times when your child is unwell or absent due to exceptional circumstances. However, dental and medical appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible.

St Anne's aims to work in partnership with parents/carers and will discuss ways to support a pupil and family to ensure attendance improves. **If there are any issues preventing attendance, please communicate with us.**

If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, for safeguarding purposes, it is imperative that you phone school on **02077354516** or email info@st-annes.lambeth.sch.uk before 9.30am to inform us. If we have not heard from you, by 9:30, and we cannot contact you, we will call all emergency contact numbers that you have provided in order to gain an explanation for the absence. This procedure is to ensure that we know where your child is and that you are all safe.

When absence first becomes a concern, parents/carers will receive an attendance letter. If your child's absence does not improve, we will invite you in for a meeting with the school to put an action plan in place to improve attendance. Persistent unauthorised absence may result in the matter being referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued or for investigation which could result in prosecution.



If your child/ren is too unwell to attend school on any day on either side of a holiday period, you may be required to provide evidence of your child's illness, for the absence to be authorised. (E.g. GP appointment, Prescription).

Pupils whose attendance and punctuality are outstanding, or are most improved, will be recognised with certificates/ stickers and considered for further rewards which may include prizes and whole class treats.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Hanscombe if you have any questions or queries regarding attendance or punctuality.

Thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Hilton