



Inspired by Christ - Reaching out to all - Being the best we can be.

ALL SAINTS' C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL (N20)

As Christ the Sower offered his love freely and for all, so at All Saints' we seek to nurture Christ's love and his image in all of our children. Working in partnership with each student, their families and carers, we pledge to help them grow into happy, confident, and independent young people, whose enquiring minds will flourish in the world, seek after the truth, and serve others.

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Ratified by the Board of Governors: February 2026

Signed	Headteacher	Breda McKelvey
	Chair of Governors	Elaine French

Review Date: February 2028

Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working Together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending school.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a Parent/ Carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. The following legislation defines the importance of regular attendance:

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the statutory (2024) guidance working together to improve school attendance and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility

measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [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](#)

Recording attendance

We use an online attendance register on our Management Information System (MIS). All pupils are on this register. Back up paper versions are available.

We take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Pupils must arrive in school at the correct time for their phase on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at the start of the day (9am). Any pupils not present will be marked as absent.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am. Notification will be via a dedicated answerphone line, via email to the office or by calling in person.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

We ask parents/carers to provide proof of appointment which is kept in the pupil's permanent record.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)
- Children arriving late will have to sign in via the Inventory system in the reception of the school
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- Children arriving 30 minutes after the start of the day will be marked as absent for the session (U)

Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by first day calling or by sending a text message to the parent
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like:

- illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time
- external exams or appointments
- Religious Observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (Fairground people) and circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to Barnet LA using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Siblings or parents medical/dental appointments

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is better not to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Where the school identifies a pattern of persistent absence, it has a duty under the provisions of section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have due regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which may include a referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer .

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we expect parents' support and cooperation to tackle this.

The office and SLT regularly monitor attendance and punctuality.

Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and Parents/ Carers will be informed of this by letter or a meeting with SLT.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the office and SLT.

All PA cases are also automatically made known to the LA Educational Welfare Officer.

Where attendance does not improve, the parent/carer is invited to a formal attendance review with SLT and the LA Educational Welfare Officer. Attendance targets will be discussed and set for the child and further support and communication strategies will be put in place where necessary.

Absence Procedures:

If a child is absent Parents/ Carers must:

- Contact us as soon as possible by text message, email or via our 24hr voicemail service on the first day of absence by 9am.
- If a child is absent for a medical reason, a letter or email from the parents must be supplied with details of medical appointments.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text Parents/ Carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard an explanation for the absence;
- Use a child's 2nd and 3rd contact person's details to make contact with a child's family if the Parent/ Carer is not reachable.
- Arrange a home visit (Vulnerable) if a child's family is not reached by the end of the school day.
- For all children where contact cannot be made after 24 hours (and after having made a home visit), the school will take further steps to investigate the absence. This may include contacting the relevant authorities or the police.
- Invite a Parent/ Carer in to discuss the situation with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the LA Educational Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 90%.

Telephone numbers and contact details:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have Parents/ Carers contact numbers at all times. Parents and Carers should ensure that contact details are updated at the beginning of each school year and as soon as necessary in the event of any changes.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable.

If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day.

Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage

absence.

How we manage the morning and lateness:

The school gate opens at **8.45am** so that nursery children can begin their morning session. All other children can enter at this time and wait for the class to open at **8.50am**.

Classrooms will open at **8.50am** for a soft start where children can settle and prepare for the day.

The school day starts at **9.00am** and we expect your child to be in class and ready for learning.

The gate will close promptly at 9.00am. If you arrive after this time your child will have to enter through the office and will be marked late.

Registers are marked and sent at **9am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed.

If your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a child has a persistent late record, Parents/ Carers will be asked to meet with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to resolve the problem; however, Parents and Carers can approach the school at any time if they are having problems getting a child to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Usually holidays during term will not be authorised.

There is **no** entitlement in law to take time off during school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the school. In making a decision, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

The circumstances when leave in term time will **not** be agreed by school include, but are not limited to:

- When a pupil is just starting at the school. This is very important as a child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS).
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below the persistent absence threshold (Defined as 90%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of an agreed period of leave, will be classed as unauthorised, and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Legal Sanctions

The school or Local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Unauthorised absence would be 10 or more sessions (5 days) over a period of 10 weeks

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and every child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96% attendance.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling .

Through the school year, we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

The Headteacher – Breda McKelvey

The Deputy Headteacher – Rachel Adams-Constantine

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	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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