

St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Documentation Information and Control

Attendance Policy

Current Status: Reviewed and revised March 2020

Review date: March 2020

Persons responsible for review: The Governing Body

Reference to other documents: Statement of Intent
School Prospectus

St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Attendance policy

1 Rationale

- 1.1 St Paul's School was established in 1862 to serve Almighty God and the community by providing, within a biblical Christian ethos, a broad, balanced, and engaging education and learning experience.
- 1.2 St Paul's School is an inclusive school in which each pupil is motivated to acquire both skills for life and a love of learning.
- 1.3 This policy is informed by the legal requirement (section 7, Education Act 1996) that all children of compulsory school age must get a proper full time education. Parents (or those responsible for children) are obliged by law to make sure that their child is registered at a school or makes some other suitable arrangements.
- 1.4 The school shall work with parents to help ensure that each pupil has as full an attendance record as possible.
- 1.5 If a child is registered at St. Paul's School permission for that child's absence can only be given by the school (in effect this will be the Head Teacher). If a child registered at St. Paul's School does not attend the school shall do all it can to inform and work with parents to encourage regular attendance. Nevertheless parents should understand that if they do not fulfil their responsibilities legal action may be taken by the Local Authority (LA).

2 Purposes

The purposes of this policy are to encourage regular attendance and punctuality so that:

- 2.1 all pupils have a good education and the best possible start in life;

- 2.2 all pupils are helped to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them;
- 2.3 all pupils develop positive attitudes and habits which are important life skills as they move through secondary education and beyond; and,
- 2.4 pupils do not truant and put themselves at risk from criminal and /or anti-social behaviour.

3 Guidelines

- 3.1 Parents shall be informed that they are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, arrives on time and is properly prepared for lessons (for example, completes homework and/or brings PE kit).
- 3.2 Parents shall be informed that it is their responsibility to contact school if their child is ever absent from school. This shall be done on the first day of absence and a reason must be given because, by law, only school can approve an absence. Parents may contact the school by telephone, in writing or in person. As the school is obliged to record both attendance and absence reasons must be given so that the school can decide whether the absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised.
- 3.3 An **authorised absence** is recorded if a child is ill, or has a medical, dental or similar appointment. It shall be communicated to parents that they are to encourage good attendance by trying to arrange routine appointments (such as dental check ups) out of school hours.
- 3.4 It shall also be communicated to parents that **unauthorised absence** shall be recorded if a good reason is not given (for example, a shopping trip shall be recorded as an unauthorised absence).
- 3.5 Parents shall also be made aware that school will not authorise an absences for any holiday or trip taken during school time. Parents shall be informed of school term dates. They shall also be informed of special dates such as SATs (Standard Assessment Tasks).

- 3.6 Parents should inform the school if they intend to take a child out of school during term time by completing a form available from the school office. Parents shall receive confirmation of receipt of the form and whether or not the absence is authorised.
- 3.7 Parents who take a child(ren) on trips or visits during term time shall be referred to the Local Authority (LA). The LA will decide whether a fine should be imposed and will take appropriate action with regard to the payment of a fine.
- 3.8 Parents shall be informed that they will be visited by attendance officers if their child has an unauthorised absence from school.
- 3.9 Parents shall be encouraged to work with the school when a child is absent. If a pupil is absent without explanation the school, when possible, shall contact the parents by telephone or text message the same day. When it is not possible to contact the parents, or when a child is absent for part of a day or days and no explanation is given, the parents shall be contacted by letter. If an absence lasts more than five school days the parents shall be offered work for their child to do at home so that their education is interrupted as little as possible.
- 3.10 Each half term attendance data for each pupil will be collected and reported to parents according to The Traffic Light System in which:
pupils with attendance **above 97%** will be in the **Green Zone**,
pupils with attendance **between 90% and 97%** will be in the **Amber Zone**, and
pupils with attendance **below 90%** will be classed in the **Red Zone**.
- 3.11 The attendance of pupils in the Amber and Red Zones will be monitored and if there is no improvement parents will be invited to meet attendance officers to draw up a Parenting Contract.
- 3.12 Pupils with attendance below 90% will be deemed persistent absentees.

- 3.13 Those parents who fail to work with the school and attendance officers to improve the attendance of their child(ren) may be prosecuted.
- 3.14 The School shall work in conjunction with other bodies to provide all pupils as full an education as possible. The Newcastle LA has a legal responsibility to make sure that pupils attend school regularly. The School shall provide the LA with information about individual pupils attendance (and absence) records as and when requested.
- 3.15 The School shall work in conjunction with the LA attendance officers to help parents meet their responsibilities. The School shall inform the LA when a child ceases to be a pupil at St Paul's School.
- 3.16 The School shall also work with other legitimate groups (for example the Hospital Teaching Service) to ensure pupils receive as continuous an education as possible.
- 3.17 Pupils shall be encouraged to attend regularly by informing them of the school term dates and the timings of the school day.
- 3.18 Appropriate motivational schemes shall be used to reward and promote good punctuality and attendance.

4. Review

The governors shall review this policy every other year.