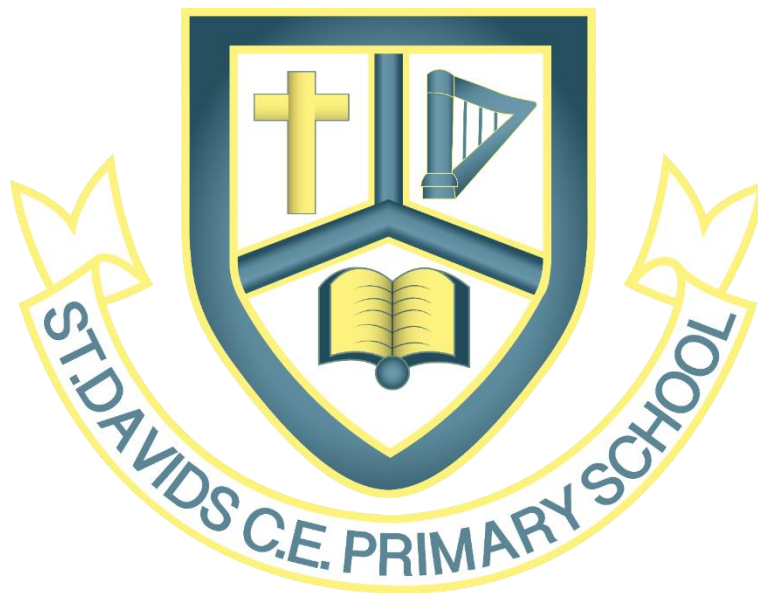


Attendance Policy

2023



Together in God's love: aim high, stay strong, be determined!

*"Stand firm in the faith: be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love."
(1 Corinthians 16: 13-14)*



Rationale

St. David Haigh and Aspull C.E. Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards 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.

School attendance is subject to various Education Laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. These will reflect both National and Wigan attendance figures.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Executive Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unexplained, if the absence is still unexplained after a 2-week period, this will be changed to unauthorised.

Lateness

The classroom doors open at **8.45am** and the class teacher is responsible for manually documenting the morning registration, which closes at **9.00am**.

If a child is absent, the class teacher will leave the register blank and the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered by the administration officer.

Pupils arriving after the close of registration **must** report to the school office. Pupils arriving before **9.30am** will be treated, for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as Late (before registers close).

Pupils arriving late after **9.30am** will be marked as U (after registration closes), unauthorised absence.

Pupils arriving from a medical appointment will be given a 'medical mark'. A medical mark is an authorised absence but does affect the pupils' overall attendance percentage.

The afternoon registration will be at **1.00pm** and will close five minutes later, **1.05pm**. The class teacher is responsible for manually recording the correct mark.

Continuous lateness is monitored by the Executive Headteacher, during each half term. A letter (Appendix 1a) will be sent to all parents and carers, whose child has a high number of late sessions (five or more), during a half term. If lateness improves, no further action will be taken. If the number of late sessions continues, and parents and carers have not been in contact with school, the Executive Headteacher will request a meeting with parents and carers to establish the reason for lateness, and to offer support.

First Day Absence

Parents and carers should keep children at home if they are acutely unwell. School should be notified, either in person, by telephone or by email, as soon as practical, on the first day of absence.

Parents/carers are required to notify school on the fourth day, if the child is still unwell.

If the school has not been informed of a child's absence on the first day of absence, a telephone call to the child's parents/carers will be made by the administration officer before 10.30 am, to ensure they are absent with their permission, and to establish the reason for absence.

The telephone call will only be made once further clarification has been sought from the appropriate class teacher. This is to ensure that a child arriving after registration has not slipped into class without first reporting to the school office. The class teachers will ask late comers if they have reported to the school office, and if not, arrange for the administration officer to be informed.

If there is no answer on either parent's contact numbers, a message will be left for them by the administration officer, stating why they are calling and asking them to contact the school as soon as possible.

If the child does not attend school the following day, and parents/carers have not contacted school, the administration officer will contact **all** of the named contacts for the child and send an email requesting an urgent telephone conversation.

For safeguarding reasons, if the child does not attend school on the third day of the absence and parents/carers have not contacted school, a home visit will be arranged. If, after a home visit, no reason for the absence has been established, school may request a police welfare check.

If, after five school days, the child does not attend school and there has been no communication with parents/carers, school will complete and submit a 'Child Missing in Education' Form.

Persistent Absence (defined in legislation as 10% or more absences; either authorised or unauthorised)

A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment. Any pupil with attendance below 90% will be closely monitored and appropriate interventions will be implemented to raise attendance above the Persistent Absence threshold.

This initially will include parents/carers receiving a **'white letter'** (Appendix 1b), stating their child's attendance figure (below 90%) for up to that half term and an attendance certificate will be enclosed.

The attendance of children with attendance below 90% will be carefully monitored throughout the following half term.

If attendance improves and the cumulative attendance is above 90% at the end of the following term, parents/carers will receive a **'green letter'** (Appendix 1c).

If attendance improves, but the cumulative attendance remains below 90% at the end of the following term, parents/carers will receive a **'yellow letter'** (Appendix 1d).

If attendance does not improve and remains below 90%, parents/carers will receive a **'red letter'** (Appendix 1e), and will be contacted by school to discuss how they can be supported to improve their child's attendance.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the relevant school attendance staff to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with parents and carers. If this is unsuccessful, school may open an Early Help, which parents/carers will be invited to attend, and attendance targets set and reviewed.

If attendance remains a concern, school will contact Startwell, who may offer family support.

Where attendance and punctuality are a concern, absences will only be authorised with proof of any illness or appointments requiring time away from school.

Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence, that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes/Emails

Notes and emails received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about a specific pupil, then the notes will need to be retained for a longer period in case they are required further investigation.

Medical Appointments

Parents/carers may request to take children out of school for medical appointments. Routine appointments such as GP, dentist and optician appointments should be made outside of school hours, where possible.

Holidays in Term Time

Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and will not be authorised as stated in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

The school will only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances that are not related to holidays.

Parents/carers must complete a '**Leave of Absence in Term Time Request Form**' (Appendix 2), which is on the school website, to the Executive Headteacher in good time (at least 6 weeks before a planned absence) to request permission to take their child out of school during term time. The 6-week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.

If the request is denied, school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter (Appendix 3). If the parent/carer chooses to continue with the planned absence, it will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence** and could result in a penalty notice.

In the rare circumstances when the Executive Headteacher is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for an absence, they will determine the number of days a child can be away from school and the leave will be granted as **authorised** (Appendix 4).

Penalty Notices

Wigan LA are informed of unauthorised absences by school and will take appropriate action, which may include issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to parents/carers or court action. Parents/carers are informed of the criteria for Education Penalty Notices at the beginning of each school year (Appendix 5).

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came in to force on 27 February 2004) and were amended in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

A Penalty Notice may be issued if a child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period:

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

Attendance Awards

Attendance awards are given for 100% attendance each term and children receive a reward (book voucher) for 100% attendance during the full academic year.

The registration system

The School will use manual paper registers and a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

NON-ATTENDANCE RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
X01	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school	Non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend
X02	Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (Covid-19) symptoms	Pupils who are self-isolating because they have symptoms of COVID-19 but they have not yet had a positive test
X03	Not applicable for this academic year	
X04	Not applicable for this academic year	
X05	Pupil required to self isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory)	Pupils who are required to be in a quarantine on arrival, in or return to, the UK.
X06	Pupil who is clinically extremely vulnerable if shielding is advised	Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. However, this code is used if shielding is advised nationally or in a local area by DHSC, Public Health England (PHE) or UK Health Security Agency. In this scenario, pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school.
X07	Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in government advice	Pupils who as part of local or national restrictions to education settings are specifically advised not to attend school for public health reasons related to COVID-19.
X08	Pupil not attending school in line with advice from Directors of Public Health as part of outbreak management	Pupils who are advised not to attend school, for public health reasons, as part of formal contingency planning (sometimes called outbreak management) advice related to COVID-19
X09	Pupil required to self-isolate as a close contact of a confirmed case	Pupils who are advised to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are not fully vaccinated and are over the age of 18 years and 6 months
IX01	Illness	Pupils who are absent because of non-COVID-19 related illness or sickness
IX02	Illness confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupils who are absent because they have tested positive for COVID-19

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. Unauthorised absences affect attendance figures.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996. Authorised absences also affect attendance figures.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements;
- Field trips and educational visits;
- Sporting activities;
- Link courses or approved education off site;
- Most types of dual registration.

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

The school will use paper registers and a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

Register Security

The registers are kept securely in designated folders in the administration block overnight.

Each morning registers are taken to the classrooms and are left in a designated place ready for the return of the registers.

After morning registration, the registers are collected and returned to the school office. Once received, the administration officer updates/amends the manual registers in line with absence information recently received.

Before the afternoon registration period, the registers are taken to the classrooms for manual completion. Once completed, they are returned to the school office for the input of attendance data onto the computerised system, and for safe keeping.

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he/she may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1a - Late Letter

Date

Re: Attendance of (insert child's name)

Dear Parents/Carers,

During the last half term, your child arrived at school after 9.00am and received a late mark on x **occasions.**

Your child's attendance and punctuality will be closely monitored during the next half term. I enclose a copy of the attendance certificate for your information.

When a child is late for school, they will miss valuable learning time, which could have a detrimental impact on your child's progress and attainment. They may also miss key information and messages from their class teacher. Arriving late for school can affect a child's routine and wellbeing.

If you would like to discuss any issues regarding this, please contact the school office to arrange a convenient appointment with your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher

Attendance Letters

Appendix 1b - White Letter

Date

Re: Attendance of ... Class ...

Dear Parents/Carers,

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. As a school we consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Systems are in place to carefully monitor attendance and we aim to communicate with parents when there are any concerns over attendance figures. The Local Authority consider any attendance below 90% as 'Persistent Absence'.

During the academic year so far, your child's attendance is %.

As this is below 90%, your child's attendance will be closely monitored during the next half term.

I enclose a copy of the attendance certificate for your information.

If you would like to discuss any issues regarding this, please contact the school office to arrange a convenient appointment with your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher

Appendix 1c - Green Letter

Date

Re: Attendance of ... Class ...

Dear Parents/Carers,

During the academic year so far, your child's attendance is %.

I am pleased to inform you that there has been an improvement in your child's attendance.

Your child's attendance figure is now above 90%, which is the Local Authority Threshold for Persistent Absence. We hope that this remains above this threshold and your child's attendance continues to improve.

I enclose a copy of the attendance certificate for your information for your information.

Many thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher

Appendix 1d - Yellow Letter

Date

Re: Attendance of ... Class ...

Dear Parents/Carers,

During the academic year so far, your child's attendance is %.

I am pleased to inform you that there has been an improvement in your child's attendance.

However, the attendance figure remains below 90%, which is the Local Authority Threshold for Persistent Absence. Therefore, we will continue to monitor your child's attendance during the next half term and I hope that it continues to improve.

I enclose a copy of the attendance certificate for your information for your information.

If you would like to discuss any issues regarding this, please contact the school office to arrange a convenient appointment with your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher

Date

Re: Attendance of ... Class ...

Dear Parents/Carers,

During the academic year so far, your child's attendance is %.

There has been no improvement in your child's attendance since the last half term and the attendance figure remains below 90%, which is the Local Authority Threshold for Persistent Absence. Therefore, we will continue to closely monitor your child's attendance during the next half. I enclose a copy of the attendance certificate for your information.

You will be contacted by school to discuss how we can support improving your child's attendance.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. As a school we consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Systems are in place to carefully monitor attendance and we aim to communicate with parents when there are any concerns over attendance figures.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher

Appendix 2 - Leave of Absence in Term Time Request Form

Date

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Leave of Absence Requests

As I am sure you appreciate, regular school attendance is essential if your child is to maximise their educational opportunities. Interruptions in school attendance not only disrupts your child's education, it makes it harder to catch up on work missed, and it can also affect their social life within school.

It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if your child attends regularly.

From September 2013 amendments to the 2006 School Attendance Regulations make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any requests for holidays in term time.

Additionally

- All requests for leave in term time must be in writing on the Leave of Absence Request Form (see reverse).
- Any granting of leave does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency/duration of such leave periods will be considered as factors in any decisions.
- Requests will be considered by the Executive Headteacher.
- Any approved leave must be subject to a contract/agreement between parents and the school stating what leave has been granted and the pupil's date of return to school.
- School will not provide work for children for unauthorised absences.
- If a request for a Leave of Absence during term time is unauthorised, you may receive a fixed penalty notice.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. J. Woodcock

Executive Headteacher

Term Time Holiday Request Form*

Child's name: _____ Class: _____

Date(s) of absence: _____

Length of absence: _____

Reason for absence: _____

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date requested: _____

NOTE

***Please be advised that, by taking this term time holiday you may incur a fine from the local authority/attendance enforcement service (Educational Penalty Notice – EPN). For further details please refer to the school's Attendance Policy – available on request or via the school website, thank you.**

All term time holidays are all unauthorised therefore: Absence code =

G

Signed: _____

Mrs J. Woodcock (Executive Headteacher)

Date:

Filed:

The Executive Head Teacher will consider the following points before authorising leave:-

- The pupil's previous attendance history
 - The age of the pupil
 - the child's stage of education
 - time of the year (SATS/Exams)
- The nature/reasons for the absence

Appendix 3 - Leave of Absence in Term Time Outcome Letter: Unauthorised

Date

Dear (insert name of Parents/Carers),

From September 2013 amendments to the 2006 School Attendance Regulations make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any requests for holidays in term time.

Unfortunately, I am **unable** to grant your request for (insert child's name) to be absent from school during term-time on/from (insert dates requested) as it does not meet the agreed criteria.

I assure you that I have made this decision with the best interests of your child in mind and, I therefore, will not authorise this absence.

The importance of school attendance is such that leave of this kind will only be granted where the circumstances are exceptional. This is in line with Local Authority's Policy on absence during term-time.

Wigan LA are informed of unauthorised absences from school if your child falls into one or more of the following categories within a 12-week period:

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

Wigan LA may take appropriate action, which could include issuing Fixed Penalty Notices or Court Action.

It is essential that your child attends school regularly to benefit fully from their education.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. J. Woodcock

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 4 Leave of Absence in Term Time Outcome Letter: Authorised

Date

Dear (insert name of Parents/Carers),

We have agreed that your child will be absent from school on (insert date) as per the Leave of Absence Request Form submitted recently.

The granting of this period of leave does not set any precedent for future applications.

It is also understood that if he/she does not return by the agreed date without suitable reason, any further absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock

Executive Headteacher

Appendix 5 – Information letter regarding Education Penalty Notices

Date

Dear Parents/Carers,

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

You could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties please contact your child's class teacher and ask for support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. J. Woodcock
Executive Headteacher