



St Thomas and St Anne's CE Primary School

Attendance Policy

April 2025

St Thomas and St Anne's CE Primary is committed to a clear philosophy that regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and that unnecessary absence will be challenged and where appropriate unauthorised.

Aims and objectives:

- To sustain high levels of attendance
- To ensure that policy and procedures on attendance and punctuality are effective and applied consistently
- To ensure that registers are completed accurately
- For effective monitoring systems to be in place
- For individuals or groups whose absence is causing concern to be identified
- To target resources to work towards the resolution of any difficulties being experienced
- To continue to foster the collective responsibility whereby staff, governors, parents and pupils are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- For working partnerships with parents and the Education Welfare Service and other support agencies to address attendance issues

Roles & Responsibilities:

Class Teachers

- Class Teachers must maintain accurate records of attendance for their class, following given registration procedures at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions
- Inform admin staff if any concerns over their completion
- Ensure evidence of absence e.g. notes are passed on to the admin team. Inform the Business Manager of any concerns regarding absence
- Provide work for any period of long term absence including part-time placements

Administrative Team

- Monitor registers on a weekly basis to check for trends in absence and punctuality in relation to gender, ethnic background, vulnerable groups, year groups, seasonal patterns and the nature of authorised absences -any issues will be followed up by a member of the admin team
- To liaise effectively with the EWO
- Will monitor individual children causing concern very closely, liaising with the class teacher
- Collates attendance data for reporting to FGB
- Develops and updates strategies to promote and reward good attendance and behaviour
- Ensures all staff are completing registers correctly
- Provide evidence of action taken in individual circumstances
- Make 'First Day' calls after the completion of the registers each day and maintain a record of calls and responses
- Record all pupils leaving the school premises other than at the end of the school day

The Headteacher

- Monitors and reports on attendance, providing whole school data for internal/external use as required
- Ensures parents/carers are informed regularly about attendance procedures and criteria for authorising absence
- Ensures that parents are aware of the times for the beginning of each session, school term dates and other PD Days when a pupil is not expected to be in school
- Authorises absence for ill health unless there is any doubt as to the reason for absence
- Regularly informs governors about rates of attendance and strategies in place to maintain and improve attendance and punctuality
- Ensure registers are kept for a period of 3 years

Pupils

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive in class on time for registration prepared for the school day

Parents

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually
- To contact their school if their child is unable to attend on the first day of absence
- To ensure that children arrive in good time for registration at 8:50 a.m.
- To positively engage with school and inform appropriate members of staff of any issue or problem that may hinder their child's regular attendance
- Take holidays in the school holiday period - holiday in term time is not authorised unless in very exceptional circumstances and will not be for any more than 10 days in any academic year
- Should avoid taking their child out of school wherever possible and certainly not when national tests are timetabled
- Should provide school with a telephone number on which they can be contacted (more than one contact should be given where ever possible).
- An application form (see appendix) must be submitted to the Headteacher for any request for absence in term time – if the application is unsuccessful, the request will be passed on to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service who may issue a formal warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action for the current unauthorised absence and any future unauthorised absence

The Governing Body

- Include term dates and rates of authorised and unauthorised absence on the website
- Include dates of school holidays for the admission school year and the times at which each session begins and ends and rates of absence on the website
- Review attendance at regular intervals
- Agree challenging targets for attendance

The LA

- Has a duty to ensure that pupils attend regularly
- Assists the school in relation to overall levels of absence and lateness
- Collects and publishes attendance data on a regular basis and provides up to date guidelines to schools

The Education Welfare Officer

- Investigates causes of absenteeism
- Develops links between home and school
- Provides support to families by home visits when needed
- Works to maintain close co-operation with all services dealing with families in difficulty
- Liaises regularly with the Headteacher & admin team and provides comprehensive feedback on all action taken
- Attends conferences and court cases
- Visits the school regularly to liaise with the admin team regarding absence and lateness
- Identifies targets and prepares an annual action plan for the school

Procedures

Registers are completed via SIMS (our management information system) by class teachers - morning register is kept open for 15 minutes. Correct codes must be used on the register.

At 9 a.m. and 1.10 p.m. each day the Admin Team will check the registers to ensure that they have been completed correctly and follow up on any missing marks.

Any child arriving after 8.50 a.m. will report to the school office. A child will be recorded as late providing acceptable reasons are given. A child arriving after 9.05 a.m. will be recorded as late after the register has closed. The register will be updated by a member of the Admin Team.

The Admin Team will maintain a log of those children arriving late with reasons for lateness.

The Admin Team will monitor and follow up any issues/concerns.

Notes/messages are confidential and stored in the school office for safekeeping. These records are retained for three years.

Authorised/Unauthorised absences

- School will approve an absence authorised when there is deemed to be a valid reason for a pupil to be absent, otherwise the absence is recorded as unauthorised if the application is refused.

- Examples of unauthorised absence include shopping days and Birthdays
- Examples of authorised absence include child illness or medical appointments for the child

Managing illness in the school day

- If a child is ill, parents will be informed for the pupil to be collected from Reception
- The Admin Team will record the time that their child is leaving
- If a child is leaving for a medical appointment The Admin Team will sign out the pupil and note the reason

Following up on absences

- Class teachers should be alert for patterns of absence and inform the admin staff
- First Day calls are made to the first contact, if no answer then a voicemail will be left and a text sent. The second contact will also be called (where appropriate) if no answer from the first. If there is still no answer then a second follow up call will be made later the same morning
- If there has been no contact from parent/carer and there are safe guarding concerns then a home visit may be conducted by 2 members of staff to establish that pupil is safe
- The EWO may be involved if the situation persists
- The admin team will keep under review all the pupils whose attendance falls below 90%

Promoting good attendance

We promote good attendance in the following ways:

- New parents meetings
- Newsletters
- Website
- Assemblies
- Discussions with pupils & parents

Rewarding good attendance and punctuality

We reward good attendance by:

- Collective award for the class with the highest attendance
- Whole class 100% attendance certificates
- Daily meet and greet for all pupils with positive comments about attending school
- Individual praise for children who have absence patterns

Working together to improve attendance

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

School attendance for children with health needs

Where possible, the school will work with parents and pupils to support health needs in school. If a pupil with a long-term condition or ill health cannot attend, the school will collaborate with the family and the Local Authority's Education Access Service to ensure continued education—whether through alternative provision, home learning, or hospital school. The pupil's wellbeing will guide all decisions, and the school will offer support wherever possible.

Monitoring and evaluation

The school will review on a termly basis the effectiveness of attendance procedures.

The Business Manager, Headteacher and EWO will undertake these reviews, with a more formal review being undertaken on an annual basis linked to the action planning process.