



All Saints'  
Academy  
Cheltenham

# Attendance Policy

<b>Reviewed:</b>	<b>July 2024</b>
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<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>July 2025</b>
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## 1. Introduction

The policies of All Saints' Academy, with its distinctive Anglican and Catholic traditions, exist to support the Sponsors' vision, Christian ethos and values that are embedded in the day-to-day and long term running of the Academy. Each policy evidences the commitment of the Sponsors to developing Body, Mind and Spirit.

## 2. Attendance Legislation

2.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2.2 Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that the child may have. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.

2.3 If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 and can be served with a penalty notice by an authorised officer, which includes a Principal. Full payment of the penalty discharges the parent from liability for conviction following a prosecution.

Regular attendance at school is a prerequisite for student achievement. Absence whether it is long term, frequent or occasional leads to missed experiences and may cause fractured social relationships which encourage an increased pattern of non- attendance.

*"School have a responsibility to engage pupils in learning and to promote attendance" DFES Publication –Tackling it together*

2.4 As an educationally inclusive academy, we constantly monitor and evaluate the progress each of our students make. All Saints' Academy is keen to work in partnership with students, parents and outside agencies to support all families and ensure students make progress with their education and life beyond education. We recognise that students who are absent will miss important educational opportunities which will affect their grades. The Academy is committed to the principles stated in our Attendance Policy.

2.5 We recognise that the relationship between the attendance and achievement of our students is inextricably linked.

We believe that all students benefit from the education we provide and, therefore, from regular school attendance. In order to achieve this, we will take appropriate action to ensure that all students achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted on as quickly as possible.

### **3. Aims**

3.1 The Academy aims to ensure that:

- All students receive a full-time, faith based education which maximises opportunities for achieving their full potential.
- We provide a welcoming, caring environment, so that each member of our community feels safe, valued and included.
- All students have an equal right, and access to, an education in accordance with the National Curriculum, or agreed alternative.
- Action is taken where necessary to secure an improvement in attendance.

3.2 It is recognised that:

- The majority of students want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peers, and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society.
- Students and their parents may need to be supported at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Students who attend and/or make significant improvements need to be rewarded and recognised.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children's attendance at school as required by law (ref Section 7, 1996 Education Act).

### **4. Expectations**

4.1 The Academy expects that all our students will:

1. Attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence.
2. Arrive on time - Students are expected to be on site by 8.30am in preparation for Meet Greet and Pray at 8.40am. The register will remain open for 20 minutes at the start of each

session. **Private reading in tutor groups runs from 8.40 - 9.00 am.** The morning register officially closes at 9:00am and any pupil arriving after this will require a reason for their lateness and school will take the decision as to whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Students who arrive late twice or more in one week will serve a one hour detention. Parents may be issued with a penalty notice by the LA if their child is repeatedly late. Students are also expected to arrive promptly to afternoon registration.

3. Students are expected to arrive appropriately prepared for the day, as stated in our Home School Agreement which parents are asked to sign when their child starts school.
4. Students are expected to be aware of their own attendance percentage and take responsibility for it. This will include target setting for improvement.
5. Students must report to Reception to sign in if they arrive late. This is a Health and Safety requirement.
6. Students authorised to leave site during the day must sign out.

4.2 The Academy expects that parents/carers will:

1. Fulfil their legal responsibilities and ensure their child attends school.
2. Notify the **Attendance Officer** on the first day and every following day of absence if their child is ill.
3. **Contact their child's form tutor or Progress Leader when they need support to solve reasons why their child doesn't want to return to the Academy.**
4. Respond to any text sent daily, indicating why their child is absent or late.
5. Provide evidence of illness if requested. (If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. It is at the Academy's discretion whether **ANY** absences are authorised.)
6. Contact the Academy at an early stage about any concerns they have about their child's attendance.
7. Work with school in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child and their attendance.
8. Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
9. Recognise that the Academy will be concerned when any child fails to meet the attendance target and work with us to improve their child's attendance.

4.3 Parents and students can expect the following from The Academy:

- close monitoring of attendance.
- regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- early contact on the first day of absence when a student is away without explanation.
- monitoring of lateness and action taken for repeated lateness to school. i.e. detentions/ Penalty Notice.
- referral of specific attendance issues to pastoral staff and supporting agencies where appropriate.
- support for parents and students to achieve the target attendance %.

- 4.4 The Academy encourages full attendance by:
- consistent, clear communication with parents and students about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance.
  - setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with Governors, parents and students.
  - the accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session, and at the beginning of each teaching session.
  - rewarding good attendance in a variety of ways.
- 4.5 The Academy responds to non-attendance by:
- contacting parents on the each and every day of absence. Contact will be by text or telephone or a home visit. If there has been no reasonable explanation for the absence the absence will be coded as unauthorised.
  - where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging, the Attendance Welfare Officer in school will investigate.
  - the parent/carer is invited to attend a school meeting to work with Pastoral Staff to help resolve the difficulties, support from school or agencies will be offered.
  - where intervention is not successful, parents and students may be invited to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting.
  - when other strategies have failed to have an effect, information will be referred to the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team who will consider prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

## 5. How All Saints' Academy manages attendance

- 5.1 When there are concerns regarding a student's attendance, the escalation system will be implemented. All students whose attendance is below 90% will be monitored by the Attendance Welfare Officer daily.
- 5.2 **Stage 1 Below 95% attendance** - Tutor to meet with student to discuss absence. Details of discussion recorded on SIMS and sent to Progress Leader.

**Stage 2 92-95% attendance:** Progress Leader contacts parents/carers to discuss should there be a further period of absence.

**Stage 3 Below 92% :** Attendance meeting with Progress Leader, student and parent/carers to discuss support to improve attendance. Targets are set and monitored for a defined period – review can be brought forward should there be a further reduction in attendance. Penalty Notices and Prosecution discussed.

**Stage 4 Targets set in Stage 3 Meeting not reached:** Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) with Student, parents/carers and Attendance Welfare Officer, chaired by Vice Principal. Support and further targets set and monitored for a defined period. Notification given that

absence due to sickness without medical evidence will be treated as unauthorised. Penalty Notices and Prosecution discussed.

**Stage 5 AIM Review Meeting:** Review Meeting with student and parents/carers, chaired by Vice Principal and Attendance Officer. If there has been no improvement in attendance, a referral to the Educational Entitlement and Inclusion Service will be made with a request to initiate legal proceedings.

**Dependent on the level of concern, a student can be placed on any stage of the procedure at any time.**

### 5.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The Academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

### 5.4 Legal sanctions

The Academy must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk) **NB if schools use this link they will not have to update the document when it is changed on GCC's website – the new Code of Conduct will go on the website at the end of the summer term ready for the changes wef 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil

Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

## **6. School Systems and Procedures to promote good Attendance and Punctuality**

### 6.1 Registration

The accuracy of the register is of paramount importance both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It is imperative that the data entered is accurate and that there is a mark for every student. Every student must fall into one of three categories of: present, absent or late. We all have a duty of care and are responsible for safeguarding students; therefore it is vital that the information is accurate.

### 6.2 During Lesson

All staff are responsible for completing electronic registers for every lesson. If a student is present they are marked with /, if they are absent with N, if they arrive late they are marked with L and staff record minutes late.

NB. When a student arrives after the electronic register has been “saved and sent”, staff must remember to resend the amended register as soon as possible.

### 6.3 Use of Data

The efficient and speedy collection of the data is essential to the development of effective strategies for action. At All Saints’ Academy we have a Red /Amber/ Green system of identifying those students whose attendance is falling below an acceptable level. This information is used by staff weekly to ensure intervention takes place and should be used by all Tutors to inform their discussions with students.

### 6.4 **Data is used routinely to monitor and target:**

- Individual absence and lateness to both Academy and lessons
- Patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by: Year groups, Seasonal patterns, patterns and nature of unauthorised absence, Vulnerable groups e.g. SEN, EAL, LAC, FSM, PP

- 6.5 All staff need to be alert to changes in attendance patterns and raise any concerns with the student’s Tutor who will investigate. Teachers concerned about a student’s poor attendance should check with pastoral support staff and the Attendance Welfare Officer and then contact the parent to discuss their concerns if necessary.

## **7. All staff have a role to play in encouraging students to attend regularly.**

### 7.1 Tutors

- Inform students of importance of attendance and consequences of non-attendance. • Set individual student attendance target to monitor & record in Student Handbook.



- Speak to students who have missed lessons to ensure they can catch up.

#### 7.2 Progress Leader

- Liaise with Attendance Officer regarding students likely to fall into PA.
- Identify students causing concern.
- Set termly individual student attendance target.
- Inform parents and invite to a meeting.
- Follow the process for referral to LEA.
- Monitor all students whose attendance is below 92% and consult with Attendance Welfare Officer
- Contribute to Attendance Improvement Pan for those students who become persistent non-attenders.
- Liaise with external agencies about students causing concern.
- Organise celebration events for good/improved attenders in their Year.
- Work with parents and other external agencies as appropriate to raise attendance percentage.
- Highlight/update attendance at year team meetings/assemblies.

#### 7.3 Attendance Welfare Officer

- Check all absences daily.
- Work with the lowest attenders.
- Ensure all routines related to improving attendance are followed .
- Identify concerns where new students have poor attendance.
- Work with families that are reluctant to engage with Academy staff.

#### 7.4 Vice Principal (Pastoral)

- **Mr L Bradley (VP Pastoral) will be the Academy's Senior Attendance Champion. This role will:**
  - **Oversee the whole Academy attendance strategy to improve student attendance**
  - **Promote and incentivise good attendance through the use of significant weekly and termly rewards**

#### 7.5 The Board of Trustees

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Working with the Principal and Vice Principal (Pastoral) to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Principal and Vice Principal (Pastoral) to account for the implementation of this policy

## **8. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

8.1 Authorised absence is where All Saints' Academy accepts there is good reason for absence. An authorised absence requires communication from the parent/carer. Any student whose parent does not provide a reason for absence will be deemed to have truanted, a sanction given and the absence recorded as unauthorised.

- 8.2 Unauthorised absence is any absence which does not fall into the following categories
- Absence due to illness or other unavoidable cause
  - An absence for religious observance sanctioned by the religious body to which the parents belong
  - There is no acceptable transport and the school is not within walking distance
  - Situations where the school authorises absence
  - Only All Saints' Academy can authorise a student's absence, and the Academy is not obliged to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason.

## **9. Holiday Absence**

9.1 Avoid any holidays during term time as these will not be authorised, unless the Principal is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

9.2 If a parent wants to take a child out of school for a holiday, they must fill in a 'Leave of Absence Form' informing of the date of any proposed absence. This form includes a clear warning that holidays in term time are rarely approved and referral to the LA Education and Entitlement service will be actioned if necessary. The Principal will only authorise planned absence in exceptional circumstances. If a parent takes a child on an unauthorised holiday in term time, this will be referred to the LA and a penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child without warning. The definition of a parent in education law is broader than the definition in legislation. The 'parent' in this case does not need to be named on the birth certificate and could be, for example, the birth parent's current partner if they are involved in the day to day care of the child.

If you require clarification please contact the Academy Attendance Officer on 01242 711200.

## **10. Children who are absent from education**

*'Children who are absent from education All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and*

*neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.'* Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Academy staff will follow up all absences rigorously and in the case of prolonged unexplained absence, work closely with the Local Authority Attendance and Inclusion Team, as well as any agencies supporting families.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair