



St Peter & St Paul
Catholic Voluntary Academy
Pro Petro Paulo Patria

Policy Document
Status: Approved
Confidentiality level: Public

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

The Ethos of St Peter and St Paul

“Our academy is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do.

Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith.”

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

The uniqueness of the individual

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God’s image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

The search for excellence

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

The education of the whole person

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the academy serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

The education of all

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

Moral principles

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:

Any person recruited to the service of the academy, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the academy and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

1. CORE PRINCIPLES

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all students. We believe that all pupils benefit from the education that we provide and, therefore, from regular school attendance. As such, we will do as much as we can to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any issues, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

The law states that parents/carers have a legal obligation to ensure that children within their care attend school regularly. Schools and the Local Authority have a duty to ensure that poor school attendance is dealt with swiftly. Local Authorities have legal enforcement powers under sections 444, 4441(A) and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 to bring legal action against parents in order to enforce attendance at school. Our Local Authority is Lincolnshire County Council (see Section 10).

2. IMPLEMENTATION

For the purposes of this policy, the school’s overall attendance target and, therefore the attendance target for each individual student, is 96%. This policy, and its attendance target, received the full agreement of the executive board and was agreed at their meeting in December 2019.

3. AIMS

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy recognises that;

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations,
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development,
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law,
- Some pupils and their parents/carers may need to be supported in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities,
- Situations beyond the control of pupils, parents or carers may impact on attendance. We will, with agreement and support of parent/carers, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these,
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their society.

4. EXPECTATIONS

- a) We expect the following from parents/carers;
 - To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually,

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

- To ensure that they contact their children’s school on the first morning of absence whenever their children are unable to attend, as appropriate. This should always be the first day of absence and everyday thereafter until the child returns to school, and,
 - That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending by calling 01522 871 400, extension 1 for the Attendance Officer.
- b) We expect the following from all our students;
- That they attend school regularly, and,
 - That they will be on time and be appropriately equipped for the day.
- c) Parents and students can expect the following from St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy;
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance,
 - Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a reason,
 - Immediate action on any problem notified to us, and,
 - A quality education.

5. ENCOURAGING GOOD ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways;

- Accurate completion of registers in school,
- Attendance checks at appropriate times,
- Recording of good attendance on individual progress reports,
- Establishing a mechanism for supporting those parents and carers who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty attending, including home visits by the school if necessary,
- An efficient use of computerised registration systems can provide valuable attendance data which can assist speedy analysis and timely responses by the academy, and,
- Sending parents absence figures periodically, as appropriate.

6. PUNCTUALITY

The importance of arriving at school on time;

- Arriving late at school may cause embarrassment for the student,
- Pupils arriving late is disruptive, not only to their own learning but the learning of others,
- Pupils will miss important information, such as messages in Form Time or instructions on how to complete a piece of work in lessons,
- Lateness can affect how students form friendship groups. Social interaction with peers before school is important, and,
- Punctuality shows reliability and is a valuable attribute for future working life. Future employers, universities and colleges look for reliability. A good record of attendance and punctuality is an indication of this and they may request to see it.

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

7. RECORDING OF ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- a) Students are marked present (with a “/” for a.m. or “\” for p.m.);
 - When they arrive at school and attend registration at 8:50am for the morning session
 - When they attend lesson 4 at 11:55pm for the afternoon session
- b) Students are marked late (with a “L”);
 - If they arrive between 8:50am and 9:30am for the morning session
 - If they attend lesson 4 after 12:00pm for the afternoon session
- c) Students are marked with an unauthorised absence (with a “U”);
 - If they arrive after 9.30am for the morning session, without an authorised reason – it is important to note that this will mean a full session of absence is recorded on the register and therefore has an impact on a pupil’s overall attendance figure
 - Fail to attend for the afternoon session, without an authorised reason – it is important to note that this will mean a full session of absence is recorded on the register and therefore has an impact on a pupil’s overall attendance figure

If unauthorised late arrival continues, parents/carers will be contacted and a meeting will be arranged to discuss this. If no improvement is made, a Penalty Notice may be requested from the Local Authority, Lincolnshire County Council (see Section 10).

The register is not only a legal document, but it also provides evidence that pupils have arrived in school and are safe.

8. LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The school will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher’s discretion and is **not a parental right**. In accordance with Government guidelines, the application must be made 12 days in advance by writing to the Headteacher, C/O The Attendance Officer.

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy may agree a ‘leave of absence’ in exceptional circumstances such as:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil’s education, and,
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy will not agree a ‘leave of absence’ in circumstances such as:

- Availability of cheap holidays,
- Availability of desired accommodation,
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods, and,
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term.

Leave of absence that has not been approved will therefore be unauthorised and may lead to a referral being made to the Local Authority for action (see Section 10)

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

9. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES WHEN APPROPRIATE

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed. As such, there are the many support services we can work with to improve the outcomes for our students, including but not limited to;

- Targeted Support,
- Educational Psychologists,
- School health,
- Social care,
- Youth Offending Team, and
- Police.

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard to the requirements of the Act. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

10. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

Parents should inform the school, preferably before school opens, giving the reason for the absence. This should be communicated by calling 01522 871 400, extension 1 for the Attendance Officer, or by letter from the parent/carer in advance of the absence if, for example, there is a pre-arranged medical appointment. We cannot accept a verbal message from a child. If we do not receive a message the absence will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

When a pupil is absent from school, and no reason for absence is received, the school will contact parents/carers. In the event we are unable to make contact regarding the absence, the school may try other contacts held on a child's record and/or make a home visit. Following a visit one of the following actions will be taken:

1. Arrange support for the family if the child refuses to attend despite the parent's best efforts.
2. Arrange that the child is brought to school the following day so that we can assure ourselves that the child is safe.
3. Issue a Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter.
4. Make a missing in education referral.

The school has a structured response for dealing with attendance concerns. When attendance falls below the expected level of 96% close monitoring will be put in place. We will communicate our

‘I have come that they may have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

concerns with parents/carers if attendance falls below our expected levels. This may be in writing, by telephone or in person, either through home visits or parent meetings. In response to non-attendance, Local Authority protocols will be adopted.

Attendance Meeting:

Parents of students with poor attendance may be invited to attend an attendance meeting. This may include a variety of professionals involved with student welfare. The aim of this meeting is to improve future attendance and prevent the need for referral to the relevant Local Authority to begin legal processes. Should poor attendance continue, however, then a Fixed Penalty Notice Formal Warning letter will be issued, and a referral shall be made to the Lincolnshire County Council as our Local Authority for further action.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN):

Lincolnshire County Council can issue FPNs on behalf of the school when a request is made under non-attendance; the code of conduct is issued by the Local Authority in accordance with the requirement of regulation 14 of The Education (Penalty Notice) (England) Regulations 2007 following consultation with the police and schools in Lincolnshire. Further information can be obtained from: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-and-behaviour/school-absences/131943.article>
(Nov 2019)

A FPN will be issued where;

- A child is absent from school due to unauthorised absence of 15% or above over a six-week period. This will include lateness after the close of registration when code “U” is used (see Section 7), and/or,
- When there is a period of unauthorised absence that does not meet the 15% absence or above over a six-week period criteria but it is still a period of unauthorised absence. This includes regular patterns of term time absence such as unauthorised annual holidays (see Section 8).

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

APPENDIX

Child Missing in Education (CME)

Children who have failed to take up a school place or who have been unexpectedly absent from school for 5 or more consecutive school days without any contact are potential Children Missing from Education. In order to safeguard these children and ensure that they are able to access education, we must investigate the whereabouts of these children.

Investigations include attempts to make telephone contact with all family members, home visits and liaison with partner agencies. If contact is established with the family and they are still residing in the local area then the parents must be notified of their legal obligations. If the family have left the Lincoln area, details of their whereabouts must be obtained if possible and the LEA (CMI Team) notified so that they can support the family to access education.

If contact cannot be established with the family and their whereabouts are unknown, a CMI referral form should be completed online (<https://lccdataexchange.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Roll-Changes-and-Child-Missing-Education>) and forwarded to the CMI team. We would normally notify the CMI Team if a child is unexpectedly absent from the Academy for 5 days or more and the Academy has been unable to contact the family.

If the child does not return to school after 20 days and with permission from the CMI Team the child's name may be removed from the Academy roll. Once a child is removed from roll the CTF will be uploaded to the school to school system. If we believe that a child may be absent from the Academy due to an unauthorised holiday, contact is not required.

We will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in the statutory guidance, '**Children missing education - Statutory guidance for local authorities and advice for other groups on helping children who are missing education get back into it**'.

Last updated 5 September 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>