Faith Primary Academy

Attendance Policy

Our school vision is inspired by the bible verse Ephesians 5: 8-9:
For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

Faith Primary is a joint Catholic and Church of England Academy. Guided by our Christian ethos we are here to serve the community, helping the children and all involved in the school to reach their full potential in a safe and happy environment.

"Loving and Learning in the Light of the Lord"

Reviewed: **September 2025** Review date: **September 2027**

Faith Primary Academy Attendance Policy

Policy produced Policy produced with reference to:
DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance

Introduction

Faith Primary Academy recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Faith Primary Academy to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.

As a school we recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our polices on admissions, safeguarding and behaviour and inclusion. This policy demonstrates our commitment to meeting the requirements laid out in the Department for Education statutory guidance "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" (Statutory Guidance from August 19, 2024)

Aims

Provide a framework to support building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Ensure every pupil has access to a full-time education
- Have clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for all pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data is in place
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

This policy is based on the Department for Education statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance"

The guidance is based on the following legislation

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance Pupil (Pupil registration) Regulations 2023

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance:

The governing board is responsible for:

• Making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
• Ensuring that the school has high aspirations
• Regularly analysing attendance data and reviewing the school's performance
• Ensuring all staff receive adequate training on their role in supporting pupil attendance
• Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of the attendance policy

The Head of School

The head of school responsible for:

• Implementation of this policy
• Reporting school level performance data to governors
• Ensuring effective communication between school and the local authority
• Ensuring effective communication with *parents for all pupils where there are barriers to attendance *

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, the definition of a parent under education law defines "parent" as: (a) All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not; (b) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person; (c) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

The Designated Attendance Lead – Danielle Fox The designated attendance lead is responsible for:

• Leading attendance across the school
• Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
• Ensuing all staff are aware of their role in supporting pupil attendance
• Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's process and procedures for managing attendance
• Implementing specific strategies to address poor attendance identified through the analysis of data
• Coordinating targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Attendance officer – Carrina Taxiltaridis

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitor accurate pupil attendance and lateness records on a daily basis.
- Follow up on pupils absences and lateness by In-touch/telephone or other means, on a daily basis with guidance from relevant colleagues, making appropriate referrals.
- To ensure all unexplained absences are accounted for, seek the reason for absence via telephone or letter home if required.
- Identify individuals and/or groups of pupils that require additional support to improve their levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Identify and implement intervention strategies to address poor attendance and celebrate excellent attendance.
- Making home visits to pupils and parents/carers as appropriate.
- Initiate and follow through appropriate sanctions in liaison with the relevant colleagues and other professionals including fines and court action. • In liaison with relevant colleagues/school management, attend follow-up meetings and other relevant
- Completion of accurate statistical returns regarding pupil attendance and punctuality as required by the school, local authority and DfE.

Promotoing Regular Attendance at Faith Primary Academy

This is everybody's responsibility, all members of staff, parents and pupils. To help us all focus on this, Faith Primary Academy will ensure:

- There is a designated attendance lead (DAL) for championing and improving attendance.
- Effective strategies are in place to support all pupils to arrive on time for school.
- An engaging curriculum is provided
- High quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to ensure regular attendance at school
- Pupils who experience difficulties in attending school are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously
- Effective partnerships with parents are encouraged through regular contact and communication • Parents are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual pupil incentives
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with children in assemblies
- Attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure that these are followed

Safeguarding

A child not attending school, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding issue if this places the child at risk of harm. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence from school is required.

To safeguard all the children in our care, it is important that parents provide the school with their current contact details and provide additional contact numbers in case of an emergency.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours and confirmation of the appointment is provided.
- Contact school by ringing 0151 233 5092 on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school. Failure to do so may result in a first day response home visit by our Attendance Officer.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded. Failure to do so may result in a home visit by our Attendance Officer.
- Contact the School Attendance Officer (Carrina) at the school office (0151 233 5092) if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- In case of emergency we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

If a pupil is absent, we will:

- Telephone and text parents on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9:15am.
- If no response is received, a member of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absence continues, the parent will be invited to meet the Attendance Lead and any barriers to the child attending school can be discussed and support put in place. This may include:
- reintegration support packages
- Early Help assessment or referral to appropriate support services
- Attendance Contracts
- Attendance report cards

- time limited reduced timetable

- If the parent does not attend the meeting or engage in any support the school has offered and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period, the parents may be issued with a Notice to Improve, in accordance with the Liverpool City Council's Penalty Notice Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the Education Welfare Service.
- If unauthorised absences persist the Attendance Lead will discuss actions with the school's Education Welfare Officer.

Understanding types of Absence

Faith Primary Academy has to legally record every absence. This is why it is important that parents/carers directly inform school regarding the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence following a parental request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive late after the close of registration.

This type of absence may lead to the use of penalty notices or other legal interventions from the Local Authority. Faith Primary Academy, in agreement with the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Notice to Improve to parents (in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the Local Authority Code of Conduct) where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period. The Notice to Improve period will cover 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time, the school will refer the case to the Local Authority requesting a penalty notice be issued

Persistent Absence

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact the School Attendance Officer (Carrina) on - 0151 233 509 in the first instance.

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education(DfE) This cohort of pupils are a priority group for Faith Primary Academy and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance. It is essential that parents/carers work in partnership with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

Why Regular Attendance is important :

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) – will work with parents to support their child in overcoming any barriers in attending school, The EWO will always try to resolve any issues by working in partnership with the school and family. If a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists and the parent has refused or not engaged with support that has been offered, the local authority will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings.

Penalty Notices:

Liverpool City Council (LA) will issue a Penalty Notice to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child.

Before issuing a penalty notice the LA will consider: -

- If the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period

- If issuing a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve the attendance of the pupil
- If appropriate support has been put in place
- Consideration of the obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 that would make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- Each parent who is liable can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually be the parent who allowed the absence
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil in the rolling 3 year period is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no opportunity to pay a reduced amount
- **A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions**

Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Parents can receive a penalty notice for taking unauthorised leave in term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

Any application for leave in term time must be in only exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable**.** If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 9am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School doors open at 8:45am and this is the recommended arrival time. School doors will shut at 8:55am

- Reasons for lates must be recorded on the school late sign in system. Parents/carers will receive a text message/telephone call to inform them of / discuss their child's late arrival.

- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. (Code U). If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.
- The close of registration for Faith Primary Academy School this is 9:30 am.
- If a parent/carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the the School Attendance Officer (Carrina) at the school office (0151 233 5092), who will offer support to resolve the problem.

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

Removal from Roll

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to: Inform the LA in ***every*** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school. School must complete an Exit form and submit to the **CME@liverpool.gov.uk** inbox.

- provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- provide the attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing;
- if a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Appendices – ***working towards best practice - (Example guidance for strategies used in schools)***

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupils	• Arrive on school site by 8:55 am • Be in class on time for registration at 9:00 am •
	Class Teacher	• Registers are completed on the MIS system each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in class • Discuss absence with pupils returning to school • Welcoming long-term absentees back into the class
	School Attendance Officer	• Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via MIS • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before 10:00am) • Log on MIS, parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences • Ensure all Late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to MIS • MIS in touch messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also pupils who arrive late. • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned. • SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the class teachers. • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems. • Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff. • Daily Attendance SA/PA report sent to DSL for attendance.
	Safeguarding Team	• Safeguarding Team informal discussions with identified pupils to follow up attendance issues and agree future action required. • Safeguarding Team discuss with class teachers when required identified pupils of concern regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required.
	EWO	• Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families. • Phone call contact with pupils/parent/carers • Home visits • Instigation of legal proceedings • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to pastoral staff.
	Designated Senior Leader	• Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with • Safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with EWO, Pastoral staff and Curriculum Leaders regarding support work with identified pupils.

When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	Class teacher	• Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance • Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by contacting parent/carers where appropriate. • Update information on attendance boards
	School Attendance Officer	• Informing SLT and EWO of pupil patterns of absence. Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for DSL for attendance, class • teachers and pupil rewards • Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parent/carers Pupils rewards • Provide weekly punctuality data for the DSL for attendance, class teacher and • pupil Rewards Feedback on Attendance during Safeguarding Supervision Meetings
	Safeguarding Team	• Organise help for pupils to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence
	Designated Senior Leader	• Monitoring and Tracking of staff not completing registers in line with • Safeguarding requirements. Liaison with EWO, pastoral coordinators and curriculum leaders regarding • support work with identified pupils Determine priority actions for the following week

When	Whom	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	Designated Senior Leader	• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement • Use attendance data to identify and act to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils • Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy • Determine priority actions for the next half term
	School Attendance Officer	• • Monitor and track attendance SA /PA Action Plans Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern

TERMLY	Designated Senior Leader	• The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off-site provision • • School Attendance Review alongside the EWO Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise • attendance Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school • and that systems are operating effectively. Report to SLT on attendance matters • Ensure school prospectus, parent/carers welcome booklet and school newsletters promote Attendance Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents' evenings • Determine priority actions for the next term.
	Head-teacher	• Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors