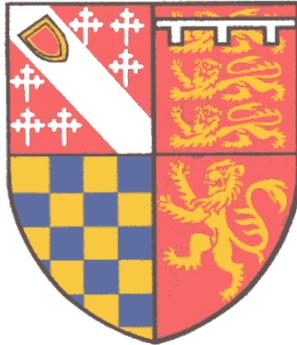


# St Philip's Catholic Primary School, Arundel



# Attendance Policy

**Attendance Policy**  
**Appendix September 2020**

*In March 2020 when the Coronavirus outbreak was increasing, and school was only open to a core group of pupils, the Department for Education made it clear to parents that at this time attendance was non-compulsory. Parents choosing not to send their child to school, even if invited, would face no sanctions at the time. This was reiterated in the summer term when schools opened to pupils in reception, year 1 and 6.*

*Because of the change in circumstance with coronavirus and the decrease in the transmission rate, the Department for Education has made it clear that from the beginning of the autumn term, all pupils with very few exceptions, will be expected to attend school on a regular basis.*

*This additional appendix to schools own Attendance Policies, details the school's procedures at this time in line with national guidance. This document continues to be an interim document and will be amended and updated throughout this period as the situation changes.*

**Status and Review Cycle; Statutory and annual**  
**Responsible group: Governing Board**  
**Implementation date: Sept 2020**  
**Next Review Date: Ongoing as needed.**

## **Attendance from September 2020**

*Missing out on time in school, risks all children falling behind their peers. After an extended period out of school it is vitally important that all our children return to school this autumn to minimise the impact of the pandemic*

*Attendance is therefore mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term, except where statutory exemptions apply in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020. The normal rules and sanctions as outlined in Section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996 (England) will now be reapplied.*

*From this point on the usual rules of school attendance apply.*

- 1. Parents have a duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of a compulsory school age,*
- 2. Schools have a responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence*
- 3. Schools are able to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' code of conduct.*

*In line with the checklist from the Department for Education, this school will ensure that it follows this five-step process at all times.*

- 1. Plan - for full attendance for all pupils and the value of this.*
- 2. Communicate- with all stakeholders' expectations and importance of full attendance*
- 3. Be consistent - set and maintain culture of high expectations of all within community.*
- 4. Support - for those within the community that need additional support to get back into school regularly.*
- 5. Monitor and Improve to ensure that schools high expectations and additional support are having the impact intended.*

*At St Philip's Catholic Primary School, we will ensure that through newsletters and our Facebook page, we will regularly remind all within our community of our expectations of attendance.*

## **Pupils or Parents demonstrating symptoms of Coronavirus**

*St Philip's Catholic Primary School will remind all within its community that should a child or a member of their family display any symptoms of Covid-19 they must not enter the school grounds.*

*Parents will inform school by contacting school if their child is ill, and/or displaying symptoms of coronavirus, and is unable to attend school as a result.*

*Parents should contact NHS 111online or call 119 to arrange a test. Schools will regularly remind parents of what to do if they demonstrate symptoms.*

*St Philip's Catholic Primary School will follow the Public Health England guidance at all times when a parent or pupil demonstrates signs of Covid-19. Advice and guidance can be obtained by phoning 0300 303 8162 or [swhpt@phe.gov.uk](mailto:swhpt@phe.gov.uk)*

## **Organisation of the school day.**

*The Department for Education is clear that whilst schools will need to stagger start and end times for pupils to avoid mass gatherings, schools must ensure that this does not impact on teaching time for pupils. We have ensured that we have met this expectation by adjusting our break times to make up for this change.*

*If a pupil that is expected to be in school does not attend by 9:30am St Philip's Primary School will contact the pupil's parents/carers, once the registers have closed for the morning session to ensure that school staff are aware of the reasons for non-attendance. Because of the risks of transmission of Covid-19 this is vitally important.*

*In line with the current requirement, staff will follow PHE guidance for any child who is not attending because of coronavirus.*

*For all other absences school staff will ensure that they follow the school's normal policy and procedure including Children Missing Education guidance.*

## **Statutory exemptions**

*In line with the latest guidance there are now a small number of pupils who will be exempt from mandatory attendance because of the exceptional reasons outlined below.*

- 1. Pupils who are unable to attend school in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has had coronavirus.*
- 2. If rates of the disease rise in local areas, there may be occasions where children (or family members) from that area, and that area only will be advised to shield for this period, whilst transmission rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent. School will ensure that for these pupils, education will be provided remotely. Where children are not able to attend school for either of the reasons above, then absence will not be penalised.*

## **Pupils who were previously shielding**

*From 1st August, shielding advice and guidance for all adults and children paused, subject to continued decline in the community transmission of the coronavirus. Children who were previously on this list can now safely return to school as can those who had family members who were shielding.*

*If the rates of the disease rise in local areas, children who were on the shielding list may be contacted by government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period of time the rates remain high. The letter that families received to inform them of this, should be shared with the school.*

## **Local Lockdown.**

*Local authorities have been delegated the power to enforce a local lockdown, should transmission rates rise. Should there be the necessity for a local lockdown, then rules that were in place between March 23rd and 1st June will apply. Children of critical workers and those judged to be vulnerable will be invited to attend school. All other pupils will be at home and will access education remotely in line with schools own systems. As was the case in this initial period, in line with Department for Education guidance, no parent will be penalised for their child's absence should a local lockdown be enforced.*

### **Support for parents and carers with managing anxieties.**

*St Philip's Catholic Primary School respects the concerns of parents and carers. Any parent and carer that has concern about their child returning to school should contact **office@st-philips.w-sussex.sch.uk** to discuss this concern so that in partnership, with support, we can ensure that all pupils attend regularly.*

*We can reassure parents of the safeguards put in place in line with Public Health England's (PHE's) advice. We will provide reassurance when necessary.*

*If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, then St Philip's Catholic Primary School will offer parents the opportunity to discuss their concerns and the measures that they are putting into place to reduce the risk.*

*St Philip's Catholic Primary School will continue to work closely with social care and other professionals to safeguard pupils, in line with the steps outlined in our appendix to our safeguarding and child protection policy.*

*If a vulnerable pupil does not attend school, the social worker and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will explore the reasons for this directly with the parents/carer so that it is resolved as soon as possible, and the pupil return to full attendance.*

*However, it remains an expectation that all children of compulsory school age should be in school unless there is a statutory reason that applies in line with the normal school attendance policy or the exemptions mentioned above St Philip's Catholic Primary School will continue to work with parents to ensure that this is addressed as quickly as possible.*

### **Taking the register.**

*All schools will resume normal procedures for completing the school's registers. Staff must use attendance codes consistently to ensure that an accurate record is kept. The DfE has created a new category of non attendance for the academic year of 2020/21 to record any pupil who does not attend because the travel to, or attendance at school would be either;*

- 1. contrary to guidance from Public Health England, or Department of Health and Social Care*
- 2. prohibited by legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19.*

*In line with the guidance from the Secretary of State, no parent will be penalised for following official public health guidance for their child not to attend a session.*

### **Registration Codes**

*DofE guidance advises that from the start of the academic year normal registration codes will apply. Should any pupil not attend a session because of either of the two reasons above, then the code X will be used to record their non-attendance. This code will not count as an absence in the census data. If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they will be recorded as code I – illness, as would usually be the case. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.*

*If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. Code X will be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test. If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code X will only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.*

*If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code X should be used during this period.*

***In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test.***

*Schools should not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.*

### ***Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine***

*Parents will have planned their holidays taking into account term times. However, with the rapidly changing picture around the necessity for pupils to quarantine following a planned holiday, some pupils may not be able to return to school at the start of term. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine because of government guidance, then the Code X should be used in the register for this period.*

### ***Monitoring of attendance***

*We will continue to monitor pupil's attendance by regularly reviewing our registers to ensure that any pupil whose attendance begins to cause concern will be invited to meet with Mrs Horne.*

*Mrs Horne will make sure that support is put into place to work with parents and carers to address attendance concerns.*

*If issues with attendance cannot be resolved despite additional support from school, then school will follow guidance in consultation with the local authority inclusion officers to determine next steps which could involve penalties.*

## **Attendance Policy**

At St Philips Primary School we believe that, in order to reach their full potential, children need to attend school regularly and punctually. High levels of absence are associated with low academic achievement.

We aim to work together with parents and carers to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure good two-way communications and sharing of information between home and school.

## **Aims of the Attendance Policy**

- To support the general aims of the school;
- To help promote and maintain high attendance and punctuality;
- To reinforce that high levels of absence are associated with low academic achievement;
- To detail procedures for noting that children are absent and for appropriate follow-up;
- To help clarify 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absence;
- To assist children whose attendance is a cause for concern

## **Responsibilities**

### Parents/Carers

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis and to ensure their children are punctual.

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends and stays in school unless alternative arrangements for their education are made.

Parents and carers are responsible for notifying the school of external appointments and where possible will make appointments out of school hours. Copies of Hospital/Doctor/Dentist appointments should be shared with the school.

Parents and carers are responsible for informing the school of any absence. This must be on the first day of absence. They can telephone the school and speak to a member of staff or leave a message on the school's absence line. They should state the nature of the illness and when the child is expected to return to school. If a child is absent and the school has not received any notification of the absence, then the school's attendance administrator will contact the parent/carer. Parents and carers need to keep the school informed of continued absence.

Parents and carers can be prosecuted under the Education Act of 1996 for failing to ensure their child's attendance at school with the following exceptions:

- The pupil was absent with permission from school;
- The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious group to which the family belongs and a completed request for absence was received in advance by the school.

### Children

- To understand the need to attend school regularly and punctually;
- To begin to take responsibility for themselves and their attendance

### Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher & Governors

- To monitor attendance data;
- To ensure that school has a systematic approach to the promotion and maintenance of high attendance and the management of poor attendance;
- To follow up the support available to children whose attendance is a cause for concern;
  - To ensure staff understand and follow procedures for registration and for dealing with absence and lateness;
- To provide staff training as necessary for matters relating to attendance.

### Class Teachers

- To mark registers in an appropriate manner;
- To understand and implement the school's policy on attendance;
- To encourage high attendance and punctuality;
- To discuss with parents initial attendance/punctuality concerns at Consultation Appointments;
- To liaise with the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher with regard to support for children whose attendance is a cause for concern and follow up as appropriate.

## **Absence in School Time**

In September 2013 the policy changed following amendments to the Education Act 2006, references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days were removed. Time off school for family holidays is not a right and is now actively discouraged by legislation and case law.

## **Absence Requests**

If a request for leave is absolutely unavoidable parents should complete a 'Request for Leave from Learning in School Time' form, wherever possible, two weeks in advance of any

planned absence. Each request for absence is dealt with on its own merits and all the available evidence/additional information is considered.

Copies of the 'Request for Leave from Learning in School Time' form can be obtained from the school Reception or the website.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

Government guidelines state that children can only be absent for the following reasons:

- illness and treatments
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances

Absence requests will **not** be authorised for:

- holidays
- days out (including long weekends, birthday treats, visiting relatives)

Requests for absence to attend funerals or associated events are responded to sympathetically and are normally authorised by the school.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Regular unauthorised absence by a child will be scrutinised by the school and may attract one or more of the following interventions:

- A warning letter
- Request for parents/guardians to attend the school for an interview to discuss attendance
- Referral to Local Authority (Pupil Entitlement: Investigation Team)
- Referral to Social Services (in cases of child welfare concerns)

If your child has **10 unauthorised sessions** (a session is half a day) of absence within a **10-week period**, we will inform the Pupil Entitlement Investigation Team who may choose to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice on the parents/carers.

### **Illness**

If your child is too ill to attend school, you must contact the school on the first morning of absence, ideally, before school starts. You can do this by telephone on 01903 882115

- You must give a reason for absence.
- You must telephone or email each day your child is absent.
- If your child does not arrive at school and you have not contacted the office, we may contact you to ensure the child is safe.

### **Children Missing in Education**

If a child fails to attend or appears to have disappeared, and the period of absence is unusual, the school will make every effort to trace the child and will also inform the 'Children Missing in Education' team at the Pupil Entitlement Service. If the Child is Looked After or the subject of a Child Protection Plan, the school will notify the Key Worker within the first 24 hours of absence, if no contact has been made with the parent/carer. In the event of it being suspected that the child is at potential risk of harm, the school will notify Children's Social Care Services and/or the Police Child Protection Team immediately.

### **Punctuality**

It is vital your child arrives at school on time and is prepared for the school day.

The school day starts at 9.00am. If your child arrives after these times, they must enter the school via the main entrance and sign in at Reception.

### **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

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