



St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Academy

Attendance Policy

'Excellence for All'

Reviewed:	September 2023
Next Review Date:	September 2024
Governor Approval:	
Committee:	Full Governors
Signed:	

Equality statement

The Governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all students regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background and to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. All students have access to the curriculum and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping. The Academy aims to encourage students to achieve excellent levels of Attendance and Punctuality.

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education

Government research shows that missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and studies show that children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance.

Local authorities, the police, school governing bodies, school head teachers (and staff authorised by the headteacher) and teachers-in-charge of pupil referral units are required by law to have regard to the relevant parts of this guidance when carrying out their functions in relation to parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices.

Outstanding Attendance	98% and above	Less than 4 days absence	20 lessons missed	75% chance of achieving 5 grades of 5-9
Excellent Attendance	96% and above	No more than 8 days absence	40 lessons missed	70% chance of achieving 5 grades of 5-9
Requires Improving Cause for concern and risk of underachievement	95% and below	10 days absence	50 lessons missed	66% chance of achieving 5 grades of 5-9
Serious cause for concern and high risk of underachievement	90% and below	20 days absence	100 lessons missed	Average GCSE lowered by 1 grade
Serious cause for concern and severe risk of underachievement	85% and below	29 days absence	145 lessons missed	Average GCSE lowered by 2 grades

It is our responsibility to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Ensure parents perform their legal duty by guaranteeing their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- Ensure that all pupils are punctual to their lessons

Rights and Responsibilities

Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.

School will work closely with Parents/Carers if attendance and/or punctuality become a cause for concern.

Summary of school day

Time

8:30am	–	Personal Development
9:05am	–	Period 1
10:05am	–	Period 2
11:05am	–	Break
11:20am	–	Period 3
12:20pm	–	Period 4
1:20pm	–	Lunch
2:00 pm	–	Period 5
3:00pm	–	School Finishes

The purposes of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy are: -

1. To ensure all members of the school community, pupils, parents/guardians/carers and staff, are fully aware of the importance of full attendance for every child and maintain at least 97% attendance for the full academic year.
2. To ensure all members of the school community are fully aware that all absences, authorised or otherwise, should be kept to an absolute minimum.
3. To minimise the negative effects of low attendance on all involved. This includes the absent pupil; pupils whose learning is disrupted when absent pupils return; staff responsible for maintaining the progress of individual pupils and the whole classes of which they are members.
4. To highlight the importance of punctuality both to registration and lessons, to maintain an orderly start to the school day and each lesson.
5. To provide pupils and staff with guidance as to how to ensure highest levels of attendance.
6. To provide all school staff with clear procedures for promoting high attendance and responding appropriately and proportionately when problems arise.
7. To emphasise the school's high expectations to staff, pupils and parents/carers.
8. To maintain effective partnerships with other services and external agencies.

How attendance works in our school: -

1. The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for the operation of the attendance strategy and its procedures and systems.
2. The Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer is responsible for the maintenance of accurate and up to date attendance data.
3. The attendance officer and pastoral managers are responsible for liaising with any outside agencies, and in monitoring and responding to pupils whose attendance causes concern.
4. All pupils and parents need to be made aware (by staff, as appropriate) of the value of full attendance and punctuality.
5. Good and improving attendance will be identified, celebrated and rewarded. Attendance rewards are an integral part of the Rewards System, as well as being regularly celebrated in assemblies and form time.
6. It is our responsibility to provide the greatest motivation for attendance at school, by meeting pupil needs. It is also our responsibility to fully investigate when a pupil does not attend and act appropriately.
7. It is essential that all Form Tutors actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality of their Tutor Groups and apply sanctions where necessary.
8. Equally, it is essential that all subject specialists actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality of their teaching groups and support pupils on their return to school from absence.
9. To support the efficient recording of attendance records, and the fast and efficient generation of reports and analyses, all school attendance data is maintained on Arbor.
10. The Attendance Register is a legal document, it is a legal requirement that it is maintained accurately. We are required to be able to define at any time of the day whether a child is present or absent.
11. The Attendance Register for each Tutor Group must be completed at the beginning of each morning. For the afternoon session, this is completed using the register mark for period 4.
12. Students are expected to be in school by 8:25am with the school day starting at 8:28am with all children either attending a form period or an assembly. Within this time a formal register is taken and recorded on Arbor. It is here where form tutors and pastoral managers identify absent pupils leading to parents receiving a call by 9:05am to ask the whereabouts of your child (unless school has already been contacted by parent/carer that morning).

13. If your child is late to school, it will be recorded on their registration certificate, and they will receive a 'late warning'. If they are late again that week they will receive a 40 minute lunch time detention.
14. Within a school week if there are 3 or more lates, school will send an official warning and parents and carers maybe invited into school for a meeting. Parents and carers may be at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice if a child is persistently late for school.
15. The official school register closes at 10:00am so any pupils late after this time will receive an unauthorised absence for the morning session. Any student that is late after 10:00am will receive a 1-hour lates detention the same day.
16. 10 unauthorised late marks could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.
17. Where attendance is below 97% parents are required to provide medical evidence in relation to any absences occurring. Failure to provide this evidence will result in absences being unauthorised. Appropriate medical evidence would include a doctor's note, appointment card (covering one sessions absence only), copy of a prescription and / or prescribed medicine box / bottle clearly labelled with the child's name date of birth and relevant date. For longer periods of absence school may require a written confirmation by a medical professional supporting the absence.
18. This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Academy will issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct).
19. Home Visits will be completed to all pupils who have 3 days absence consecutively, or to pupils who are displaying irregular patterns of absence or have safeguarding concerns. However, a home visit can be conducted at the school's discretion on any day of absence.

Safeguarding absent pupils

School operates a first day response system; this means parents are expected to contact school on the first day of any absence to explain why their child is not in school by phone by 8:30am at the latest. Unexplained absences will be followed up with phone calls from pastoral managers to safeguard your child.

For safeguarding reasons school will attempt to contact parents until we receive a response, this may also involve a home visit to ascertain the reason for the absence.

Medical evidence should be provided for all absences, and this should be emailed to the school attendance team or handed to the student's pastoral manager on return.

Medical appointments

Only urgent or unavoidable medical appointments should be made during school time and pupils should return to school as soon as possible after the appointment. Students should attend school wherever possible prior to the appointment. Routine dental checks or medical appointments should be made outside school time whenever possible. Parents must provide evidence of appointments in the form of medical appointment cards or letters.

Medical Evidence

All student absences will be recorded as unauthorised until medical evidence is provided. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure all medical evidence is provided for the absences to be authorised. Where children miss out on education without permission the Local Authority is required by law to take appropriate action. Please help us to support you by giving school as much information about any known absence or medical condition that could adversely affect attendance.

Pupils educated off site

The Attendance Officer is responsible for monitoring the attendance of pupil's who are educated offsite by close liaison with the offsite education provider. Pupils will be marked with the appropriate registration code to explain the education provision being accessed.

Leave of Absence in Term Time (including holidays)

The Headteacher will consider applications for 'leave of absence' during term time in 'exceptional circumstances.

School cannot authorise time off for family holidays and **parents do not have the right** to take their child out of school for such holidays.

Parents must apply for leave of absence in writing using a 'Leave of Absence Request Form' (available on the website) and must attach any evidence for the school to take into consideration. The application must be submitted well in advance of the absence. The form should be returned addressed to the Headteachers PA. The Headteacher or delegated lead will decide if the leave will be granted and how many days will be authorised. Parents will be notified in writing of the decision.

If the Headteacher or delegated lead does not grant an application for leave of absence and parents decide to take the leave anyway, the absence will be unauthorised.

Leave of absence cannot be authorised retrospectively. If a child is removed from school for a period of leave of absence without the school being informed the absence will be automatically unauthorised.

Parents who are thinking of booking a family holiday **must check** with school when the school holiday dates are **before the holiday is booked**.

Unauthorised holidays during term time may lead to Penalty Notice fines. Penalty Notice Fines can be issued to each parent for every child concerned.

Penalty Notices

The school follows the Local Authority Code of Conduct for penalty notices. Penalty notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided.

More information on penalty notice fines can be found at: -

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/schools-education/education-welfare-service/legal-sanctions-forunauthorised-school-absence>

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for any reason. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral services and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through a Mentor, use of Pastoral Support Plans, Individual incentive programmes, parenting contracts and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The law states that a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation offered by the letter/message authorises the absence. Students with less than 97% attendance will not have absences authorised unless medical evidence is provided.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

When a pupil leaves with notice the school will: -

- Agree with parent the last day the pupil will be attending the school.
- Request current telephone numbers, e-mail and addresses.
- Ask if the pupil has been allocated a place at a new school and if so, collect the details.
- If a new school has been allocated contact the school to agree the date the pupil will be starting.
- If it cannot be established that the pupil will be attending the named/any school, follow the LA CME procedure.

Where a pupil leaves without advance notice or their destination is unknown, the school will investigate the whereabouts of the child by: -

- Checking possible whereabouts with staff.
- Contacting parents by telephone and e-mail.
- Checking if neighbours and friends are aware of the pupil's whereabouts.
- Contacting any other agencies known to be involved with the child including named social workers SEND services etc.
- Contact the last known school of any siblings.
- Check any social media sites e.g., Facebook.

If the pupil is still not located school will refer to the LA Children Missing Education Officer. If significant safeguarding issues are raised regarding the missing pupil school will also make a referral to the Safeguarding Contact Centre. This will enable the LA to make further enquires, as appropriate, to try and locate the pupil. School may also inform the Police.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 state that schools are expected to make reasonable enquires to find the whereabouts of a missing pupil.

Late to school protocols

We expect all pupils to be on school site by 8:25am for a prompt 8:28am start. The school gates will be closed at 8:28am sharp. Any pupils arriving at school between 8:28am and 8:45am will need to sign in at the late gate. If pupils are late without a valid reason, they will receive a 'late warning'. If they are late again in that week, they will receive a 40-minute lunch time detention. Pupils arriving after 8:45am. should 'sign in' at the school office and they will receive a 1 hour, 'same day' detention. Students arriving after 9:05am will receive a 90 minute 'same day' SLT detention. Parents and carers will be informed via Edulink and or Arbor. Parents should ensure they have both forms of communication as this is how they will be notified

Compulsory Catch Up

Poor attendance can lead to large learning gaps in pupils' learning. Compulsory Catch Up will provide pupils with the support to catch up on any learning that has been missed through absence. When a pupil has been absent from a lesson they are expected to catch up in their own time on any work that has been missed. When pupils return from an absence, they should use the Compulsory Catch Up booklets to make a record of the work they have missed for each subject.

Once the pupils have completed the work, they must bring their Catch-Up work log to their subject teacher who will sign it to confirm they have completed the relevant work for that subject. Pupils are required to complete all catch-up work before Friday of the week following their absence. Pupils who have not completed all catch-up work will be required to stay for compulsory catch up on the Friday of the week following their absence where the school will provide support. Parents will be notified of this via Edulink / Arbor.