

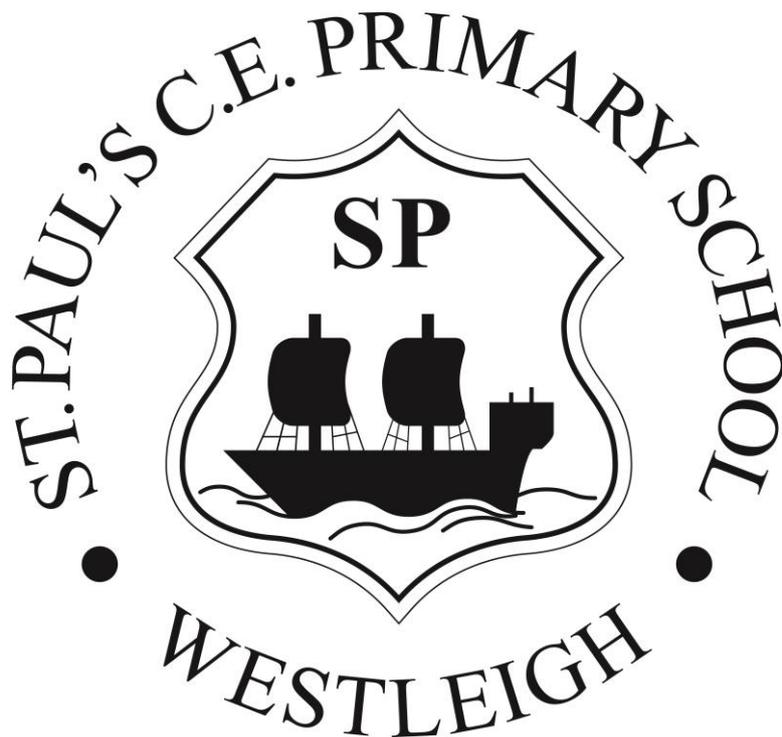
**WESTLEIGH ST. PAUL'S
C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

SCHOOL STREET

LEIGH

GREATER MANCHESTER

WN7 5JN



Attendance Policy

Working together, playing together!

1. Mission Statement

Westleigh St. Paul's CE Primary School is committed to the provision of a high quality education for all its pupils, designed to ensure that they can realise their individual potential within a Christian framework.

2. Aim

All children are entitled to receive a high quality education that enables them to reach their full potential. Our aim at Westleigh St. Paul's CE Primary School is to provide the greatest opportunity for children's learning to take place.

To enable this to take place, we will:

Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance

Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.

Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school

Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole school attendance levels.

We will develop a procedural framework that will define the responsibilities for:

- Parents and carers
- School
- The child

The framework will identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance. This procedural framework will include guidance on:

- Registration
- Attendance procedures
- Authorised and Unauthorised absences
- Leave of Absence requests

3. Why is attendance important?

Improving the attendance and therefore life chances of the children in the school is the joint responsibility of the parent, the school and the child. We recognise that good attendance is essential for pupils to maximise their achievement and attainment at school. Working together in partnership will ensure the child is most likely to achieve their full potential by ensuring their frequent and punctual attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between higher achievement and good attendance
- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attendees find learning more satisfying

4. Responsibilities

4.1 What the school expects the parent to do to support good attendance

- Arrive on time: We expect you to ensure your child arrives at school between 8.50am – 9.00am each day (unless informed otherwise). The school does understand that occasionally circumstances beyond your control mean that you may arrive late. In these instances we believe it is important that your child arrives later, rather than not at all, so please ensure you still bring them to school. The school monitors all late arrivals. Persistent late arrivals cause the school much concern. Consequently, a letter will be sent home reminding you of your commitments to the school. This may be followed by meetings with the Pastoral

Manager and Headteacher. Arrival after 9.30am is marked in the register as 'U', which is late after the register closed and is considered an absence.

- Report absences before 9.00am: If your child is sick and needs to stay off school, you must inform us of this as early as possible and before 9.00am. Failure to provide a reason for absence will result in the absence being considered unauthorised.
- Medical Appointments: If at all possible, please make any medical appointments for your child outside of the school day. The school does understand that this is not always possible and is understanding in these instances.
- Arrive ready: You should ensure your child arrives equipped for their day at school. Ensure they have any PE kit, swimming kit, reading books, musical instrument, packed lunch etc that they may need. (Please see your child's class teacher for further information).
- Term Time Leave of Absence: Any requests for holidays during term time will only be authorised for exceptional circumstances. Request forms are available from the Admin Office.

4.2 What you can expect the school to do to support good attendance

- Before starting school: When parents come to the induction meeting before their children begin their schooling, the importance of regular attendance and punctuality is stressed. New parents, whose children are admitted to school throughout the year, are also given an outline of procedures in the school brochure.
- Yearly reminders: At the beginning of each academic year, the school will send you a letter and a guide on school attendance detailing the procedure for reporting an absence to the school.
- Weekly reward for attendance: The class with the highest attendance each week are rewarded with an additional playtime and this is announced during our weekly Celebration Assembly on Thursdays.
- At the end of the Summer Term awards are given for 100% attendance.
- Phased Entry into class from 8.50am: The school opens for pupils at 8.50am each day (unless otherwise specified). The school considers this informal start to the day to be very beneficial for your child. It provides them with the opportunity to mix with friends, have time to settle into school. At 9.00am the school closes all external doors and the register is taken.
- Daily monitoring of attendance: Upon completion of registration the Admin Officer will generate a list of children who are absent from the school. This list is cross referenced with the school's late book and with any messages that have been left on the school's answer phone. Any children who remain on the list (i.e. unexplained absences) give us much cause for concern. As such, the school will contact the parents/carers of these children to establish a reason for the child's absence.

4.3 What the school expects your child to do to support good attendance

- Attendance Target: All pupils are expected to strive to achieve an attendance target of at least 96% and to aim for 100%.
- Eat a balanced diet: Healthy eating is encouraged whilst at school. The school offers a highly nutritious school meal and children are encouraged to eat fruit at playtime. Water is readily available for each child.
- Participate in physical activity: The school has an extensive programme of physical activity. The older children also have access to regular inter-school sporting competitions. After school sporting clubs work on rotation so each Key Stage has access.
- Develop good sleep patterns: We encourage all children to have reasonable sleep patterns at home. In general, children need more sleep than adults and should try to achieve 10 hours sleep each night.

5. Registration

- The school records must show whether your child was present or absent at the time of registration (9.00am). This is a legal process and authorised external personnel can request to see your child's attendance records and use information contained to support any investigations they may have to pursue.
- The morning class register is taken at 9.00am and closes at 9.10am each day. After this, the only entrance into the school is through the main entrance. Children who do arrive after this time, must go to the main office to register their attendance, receive their mark and gain entry to the school. Please note: - The school registers close at 9am, and lessons start. Any children arriving after this time will receive a late mark, (this is shown as a 'L' on your child's registration report).
- Arrival after 9:30am with no explanation will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (this is shown as a 'U' on your child's registration report).
- The register is also taken at 1:15pm.

6. Informing school of an unexpected absence

The school answer phone is in operation at all times. If it is apparent that your child will not be in school, you should leave a message on the answer phone before 9am on the first day of absence, stating your child's name, your child's class teacher and the reason for absence. If it is not possible to give a return to school date you should ring each day of the absence and leave a message. You should expect to receive a reminder text and/or letter if you fail to inform school about the reason for an absence. If no response is received following this letter the absence is considered as unauthorised.

7. Informing school of an expected absence

If your child is having a planned absence (e.g. medical appointment), can you please inform the school office of the absence and the reason for it, we can then make the necessary amendments to your child's attendance records. In these instances of expected absences, it is not necessary for you to ring the school, if you have already informed the school office. You may be asked to provide an appointment card or letter.

8. Attendance Procedures

8.1 Teachers

They will:

- Take the registers promptly on SIMS.
- Mark all children present with a '/'.
• Registers will be marked with a 'N' if the child is absent.

8.2 The Administration Officer

They will:

- Check the registers daily and cross reference with messages and the late book to create an accurate list of children whose absence has not been explained.
- Sign in any late arrivals and amend the register on SIMS accordingly.
- Send out a text, by 10am, to the parents of children with unexplained absence to ask them to contact school with an explanation.
- Produce annual attendance reports and letters for parents.

8.4 The Pastoral Manager

They will:

- Follow up absence texts with phone calls if no reply is received.
- Carry out a home visit, on the second day of absence without explanation. the Pastoral Manager.

- Generate the report needed to give the information on pupils with a level of unacceptable absences, every half term.
- Generate individual attendance reports for those children whose attendance is below 90%.
- The Pastoral Manager will contact these parents to arrange to meet with them to discuss ways to improve their child's attendance/punctuality.
- Generate individual reports to identify those children whose attendance is below 96%.
- Produce half termly reminder letters for those children whose attendance falls below 96%.
- Implement Attendance Contracts as required. (See Appendix 1 for timescales)
- Liaise with the Wigan Enforcement Team regarding the issuing of Penalty Notices.

9. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

9.1 Parents should be made aware that it is the school which decides whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. A message on the answer phone does not in itself necessarily authorise an absence.

9.2 All reasons given for a child's absence are considered by the school. As examples, absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Minding the house
- Caring for brothers/sisters, relatives
- Holidays
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

In all instances, each individual case is considered on its own merit and in relation to the child, family and previous circumstances. No holidays will be authorised if a child's attendance is below 96%.

10. Key Personnel

The Governing Body is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Attendance Policy and work closely with the Head teacher to evaluate the success of the strategies implemented.

The Head teacher is responsible for reporting Attendance to the Governing Body on a termly basis and working closely with the Pastoral Manager to promote good attendance.

The Pastoral Manager is responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality and is responsible for contacting parents/carers when required. They are responsible for regular reviews of all attendance issues and registers, as well as liaison with parents, pupils and other agencies.

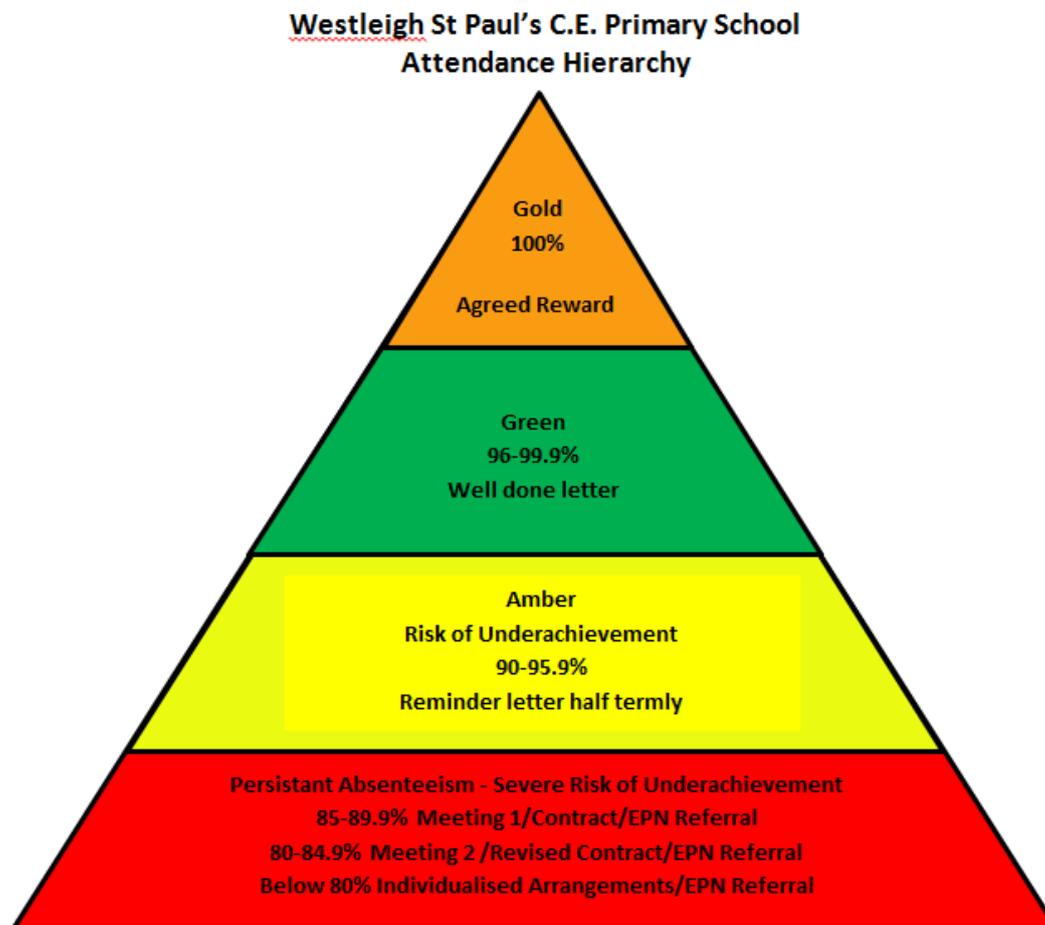
When a concern is identified, the Pastoral Manager will liaise with the parents/carers concerned. If there is a lack of improvement after a reasonable period, the Pastoral Manager will invite parent/carer to discuss the issues preventing adequate attendance. At this point an Attendance Contract may be put in place with specific targets being set to help improve attendance.

The final stage will involve the problem being dealt with in legal terms by the Attendance Enforcement Team with the support of the Pastoral Manager. This could result in a penalty notice/ fine being issued to parent/carer concerned.

It is vital that all members of the school community work together to instil good attendance and punctuality in pupils as a means of preparing them to be socially responsible and to facilitate learning, allowing all pupils to achieve their potential.

Appendices

1. Attendance Hierarchy of Action



2. Local Authority Education Penalty Notice Guidelines

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12 week period:

- * 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- * 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- * Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

You could receive a Penalty Notice of £60, which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a

penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- * Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- * You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing difficulties please contact your school and ask for support.