



Alverthorpe St Paul's CE (VA) School 3-11 yrs

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy



**January 2019**



## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

### **Vision**

At St Paul's we encourage everyone to let their light SHINE, for others and for God, as unique individuals and together as a school. We aim to equip children with the confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding to positively shape their future.

**S** – Safe & Successful

**H** – Happy & Honest

**I** – Independent & Inclusive

**N** – Nurturing & Never give up

**E** – Encouraging & Enthusiastic

### **Introduction**

Alverthorpe St Paul's is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents/carers and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities. We recognise that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation.

### **The policy intends:**

- to raise attainment and achievement levels by having high expectations of attendance and punctuality;
- to report attendance to parents;
- to work effectively with our various partners to maintain high attendance levels.

Child attainment and achievement depends on regular presence in school. Any absence leads to missed learning and may cause difficulties with social relationships. These, in turn, can encourage an increased pattern of non-attendance. Encouraging good attendance and punctual arrival is the shared responsibility of the school and parents. Parents have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education and it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that this happens.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- to deliver a motivating, relevant, accessible curriculum to all children;
- maintain high expectations in relation to attendance; all children should be aware that every day counts and that their attendance is important;
- to encourage and celebrate good attendance through our reward systems.

### **Collection of Data**

Electronic registration takes place between 8.55 and 9.00 and 1.15-1.20. All class teachers are responsible for the sending of registers to the office on time. Children arriving after registration will be given a late mark. Children arriving ½ hr after the start of the school session will be recorded as unauthorised absence for that session.

Morning = 1 session

Afternoon = 1 session

### **Use of Data**

The efficient and speedy collection of the data is essential to the development of effective strategies for action. Data is required to monitor individual absence and lateness at school. Patterns of lateness and absence and the identification of trends by (i) Year Groups (ii) Seasonal patterns (iii) Patterns and nature of absence.



## **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

Authorised absence is where the school accepts there is good reason for absence. An authorised absence requires a written or telephone communication from the parent/carer. A child's own word cannot be taken as reason for absence. Phone calls home are made on the first and every successive day of absence for all children unless word has been received from parents about reasons for an extended absence.

**If a child is not attending school for a particular session due to a medical appointment, parents must bring written evidence into the main school office to act as proof of the appointment. The appointment will be recorded as unauthorised without this proof.**

Unauthorised absence is any absence which does not fall into the following categories:

- a) Absence caused by illness or other unavoidable cause. If your child has higher than average illness then you may be asked for medical advice as proof.
- b) An approved absence for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- c) There is no acceptable transport and the school is not within walking distance.
- d) Special circumstances approved by the Headteacher.
- e) For information concerning exceptional leave see section below.

## **Term Time Holidays**

Since 2009, Governors have agreed not to authorise any holidays taken in term time. From September 2012, any parent who takes a child out of school for holidays or is late with no authorised reason, may receive a fixed penalty notice once 5 days (10 sessions) have been recorded as unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school has adopted the LA policy for this and exceptional circumstances only include holidays for armed forces service children and critical illness – final holiday with a terminally ill immediate family member. The school will work closely with the Education Welfare Service to enforce this policy.

Any medical appointments or illness attached to a 4 ½ days or less holiday will require a medical appointment card/letter or in the case of illness a telephone call to confirm the address where the child is during the illness absence. This is to allow for an EWO visit to authorise the absence. Failure to do this will mean that the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

The policy is in line with Wakefield Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices and falls under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice scheme. The Code of Conduct states that a Penalty Notice may be issued where there are at least 10 sessions (half days) recorded as unauthorised absence due to a holiday or lateness in term-time.

Payment of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the LA must either prosecute under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice. Penalty Notices will be issued for each individual child and to each individual parent or those with parental responsibility.

The definition of a "parent" in section 576 of the education Act 1996 includes:

- all natural parents, whether married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person and
- any person who, although neither a natural parent nor a person with parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.



A person has “care” of a child if that person lives with and looks after the child, irrespective of their relationship to the child. Such a person is considered to be a “parent” for the purposes of the Education Act 1996, even though that person may not necessarily have parental responsibility for the child.

### **Withdrawal from school events**

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from school premises due to exemption from a school event, this must be done with prior arrangement with the headteacher and the child must be in school for the attendance mark before being withdrawn or the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Information for parents**

The school doors are opened at 8.55am and close at 9.00am to allow for lessons to start on time. Any child arriving after this time will need to be signed in at reception by an adult, with the reason for the lateness and will receive a late mark in the register. Any child arriving after 9:30am, will be classed as being absent for the full session and this will be unauthorised unless there is an authorised reason for the lateness, e.g. medical appointment.

Parents are asked to telephone the school or speak to a member of staff to report an absence and to keep the school updated of any continuing absence by contacting the school every other day following the initial day of absence. School will follow up any absent children who we have not been informed about via direct messages on the parent hub or home visits from the EWO. If we have not received notification of the reason for absence by close of school on day 3 then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

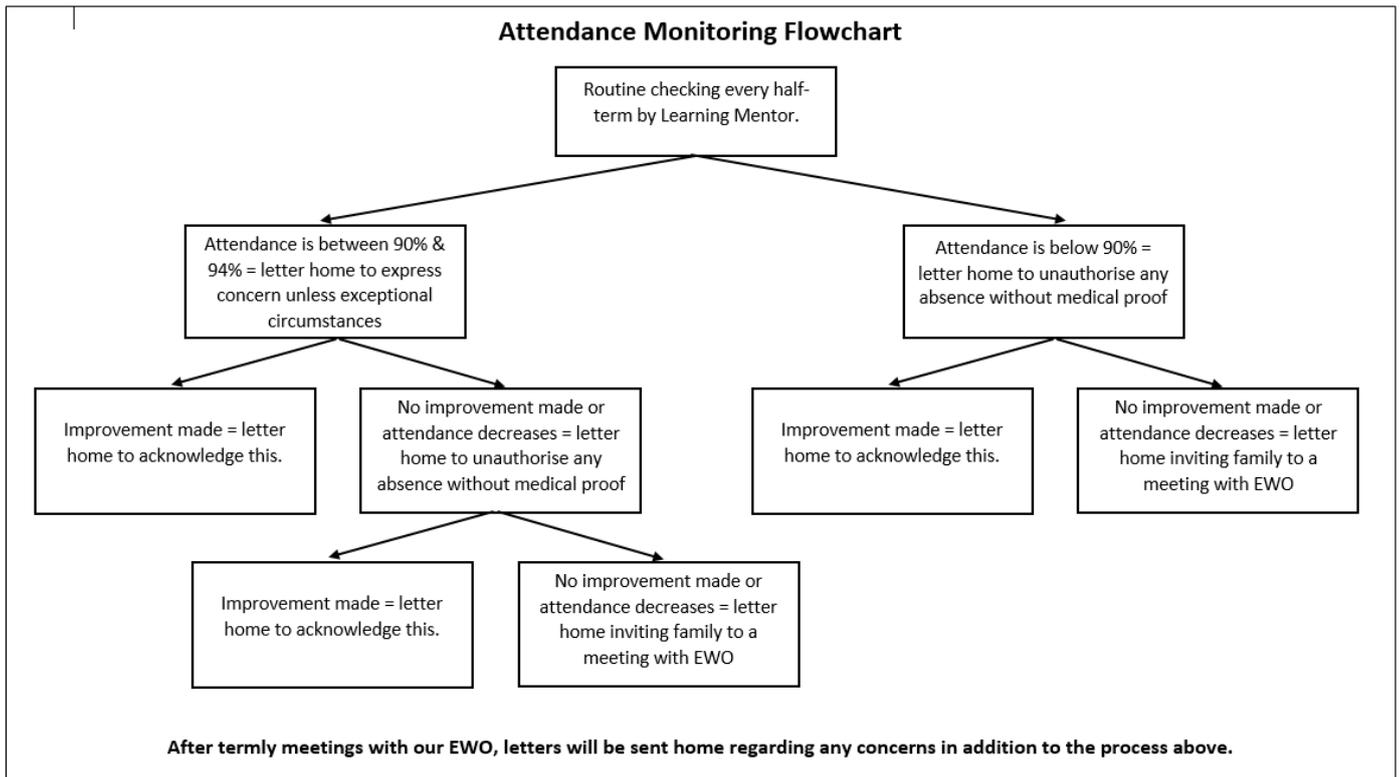
Parents are required to inform school of any term time holidays and a letter regarding the penalty will be sent in accordance with this (Appendix 5). If the holiday request is for less than 5 days, a letter informing parents that this will be accrued will also be sent. (Appendix 6)

### **Persistent Absence**

The Government defines any child with attendance at 90% or lower is termed as persistently absent from school. Under normal circumstances, at the start of each academic year, parents of children who were persistently absent last academic are written to in order to explain that no absences will be authorised until there is significant improvement over a period of time (usually half a term). Children who have more severe medical needs or severe SEN will be considered separately.

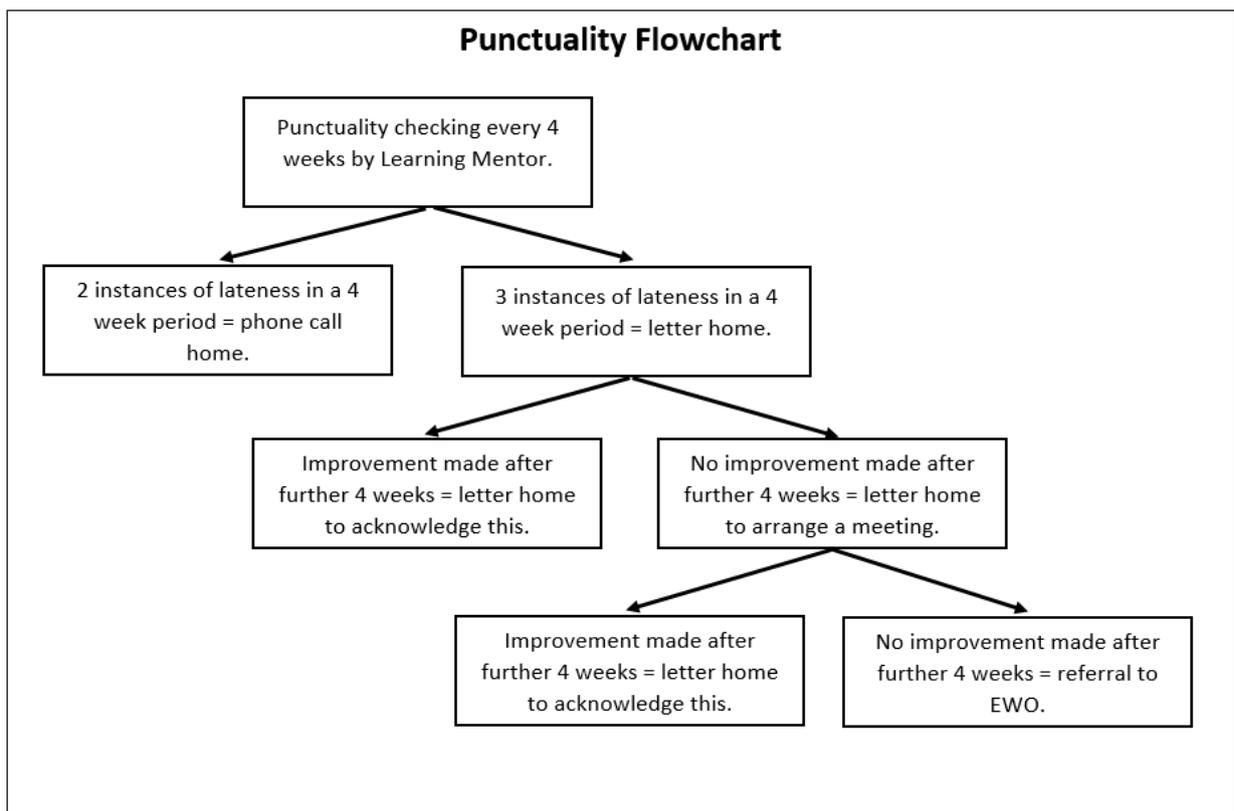
### **Attendance Monitoring**

The Learning Mentor monitors absence on a daily, weekly and half-termly basis. Families of poor attendees are contacted regularly in order to try and ensure attendance improves. The flow chart below is used each half-term in order to ensure good attendance and to address poor or declining attendance with families.



### Monitoring of Punctuality

Classroom doors are shut on a morning at 8:55am. After this time, children are deemed as late. They will need to be brought by an adult to the main entrance. The adult will be required to complete a form to give reasons why the child is late. Lateness is monitored closely by the Learning Mentor. The flow chart below shows the monitoring and actions that school take as a result of lateness.





### **Additional Notes**

- It should be noted that the Headteacher will make mention of the attendance and punctuality record on pupil reports and class teachers are required to discuss these aspects during Parents Evening.
- Should there be ongoing concerns surrounding attendance and punctuality beyond those outlined here, then the school will work alongside the parents/guardians and Education Welfare to resolve them.
- Attendance and punctuality is monitored across academic years. It is not a process of beginning again each September. Low attendance and poor punctuality issues will not be dismissed simply because one academic year had ended and another has begun. We operate a rolling system of monitoring so that trends, patterns and concerns across years will continue to be monitored.
- At any stage of the academic year, the school may contact parents with concerns relating to any aspect of attendance both relating to the areas outlined above and beyond this.