



Attendance Policy

St David's C of E Primary School

2020

Ventrus Attendance Policy and Procedures

Rationale

St David's C of E Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all students. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible in line with procedures agreed by the local governing bodies.

It is the policy of our School to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career and establishes a good pattern for later life. We will actively promote, encourage and reward 100 per cent attendance for all our students. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives

- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence and pupils in vulnerable groups;
- To ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and to act early to address patterns of absence.
- To make appropriate provision for pupils with medical conditions
- To encourage parents to perform their legal duty in ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend both punctually and regularly.
- To Support pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

These requirements are contained in:

- a. The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)*
- b. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended*
- c. DfE Statutory Guidance*

Statutory Duty of Schools and Parents

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. This extends to ensuring that pupils arrive at School on time, properly attired, and in a condition to learn. All schools will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

Rights and responsibilities in Managing Attendance

➤ School

To promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.

To work closely with parents/carers where pupil's absence is cause for concern.

To support pupils to achieve good attendance and punctuality.

To support pupils returning to school after prolonged absence.

➤ **Pupils**

To attend regularly and on time.

To be punctual.

To attend with the right books and equipment

➤ **Parents**

To ensure their child attends the school/academy on those days it is open, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.

To ensure their child attends

The Educational Welfare Service and School Attendance

The EWS is a part of the Devon Local Authority. Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full-time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly (and their absence is not authorised)?

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and, as a parent/ guardian, this is your responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring you to pay a fine of up to £120 per parent/carer, per child if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2500.

You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

Punctuality/Registration Times

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at school on time. Punctuality is monitored by the school and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving to school on time. If a child persistently arrives after the registers close, cases will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer, who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Statutory Attendance

There is a legal requirement to have an AM and a PM registration.

AM: Students will be registered at the beginning of each morning 9.00am by the teacher. Registration closes at 9.10 am; any arrivals before this time (9.00 - 9.10) will be classified as LATE (Code **L**) Arrival after 9.10 is recorded as an UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (Code **U**). **X:** we shall be using this code for all children below statutory school age who are absent for any reason, including part time education.

PM: Registration takes place at the beginning of the afternoon session by the class teacher, and will remain open for 20 minutes.

As a result of Government guidance for the wider reopening of schools (Sept 2020) registration times may be subject to variance to allow for separate entry and exit times in to school for different pods (groups) of children. These times will be communicated clearly to parents and will be displayed on the school website.

- All registration will be recorded on ARBOR by the end of each week by the administrator.
- Class registers must be taken at the beginning of all sessions by the teacher.
- Accurate registration is very important and registration details can be used as evidence where parents/carers are prosecuted for school attendance offences.

Request for absence during Term Time

All requests must be made using the S2 form, available from the office or download from the school's website, a minimum of 3 weeks before the request absence. The school does not encourage any absence during term time and the Headteacher may no longer authorise absences unless for exceptional circumstances.

Permission must be sought in advance to take a pupil out of school during term time, this can only be requested from a parent/carer with parental responsibility and with whom the child normally lives.

If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child's attendance being satisfactory up to the date covered by this request. If the school withdraws the authorisation due to the attendance dropping to an unacceptable level, the parent/carer will be informed of this in writing.

If a request is refused and the child is taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may then be liable to a penalty notice, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

- No absence will be authorised for Y2/6 pupils during May SATs week(s), unless there are exceptional circumstances
- No absence will be authorised for pupils with attendance falling below 90%
- If a parent/carer is refused an absence request and the pupil is still taken out of a school by the parent/carer, the School / Education Welfare Officer will be informed.

Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the School of the reason for a pupil's absence by 09:15 on the first day. The School will operate a First Day Calling system and where no satisfactory explanation for absences is received, parents will be contacted by the school. If a parent cannot be contacted the school will continue down the emergency contact list until it is satisfied that the whereabouts of the child are known. If there are significant concerns about the welfare of a child (eg when a Child Protection Plan is in place and there are known risks) and contact cannot be made, the school will refer the matter to CYPS via a named Social Worker or the MASH team.

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the school by one of the following methods:

- By phone to the Administrator.
- Email notification directly to the school stdavids@ventrus.org.uk
- Direct contact at the school office, where a note will be passed to the teacher.

If you are unable to contact the administrator, a parental note explaining the absence must be passed to the class teacher on the first day back at school.

In the case of long term illness the school should be notified as soon as possible.

If it is known that the pupil will be absent for more than 2 weeks, the EWO should be notified.

Where over the course of an academic year, a student has 20 sessions of illness, the School will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription.

Medical Appointments

Wherever possible appointments should be made after school. Parents are requested to provide a medical appointment card if appointments are in school time.

Children Missing Education

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made

GUIDELINES

1. Absence can only be authorised by the school for:
 - a) sickness or other unavoidable cause (solely affecting that child)
 - b) days set aside for family religious observance
 - c) where LA school transport has not been provided to a child that is entitled to it
 - d) other reasons, approved by the school.
2. There is no automatic entitlement for absence for holidays during term time (Amendment to the Education [Pupil Registration] [England] Regulation 2006), except for families serving in the Armed Forces.
3. In cases of unauthorised Term-time holidays, Head teachers should follow the Devon County Council protocol and apply directly to the Education Welfare Service to generate a Penalty Notice warning letter (without, necessarily, contacting the school's EWO). This should be done by completing Penalty Notice Certificate of Absence Form and returning it to:
 - i. Penalty Notice Officer, EWS, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
4. Schools will liaise closely with parents advising them as early as possible if there are cases of suspected unauthorised absence, and persistent lateness, or their child's attendance falls below 90%. Or where medical/illness absences exceed 20 sessions in one year.
5. Late arrival should be actively discouraged. Separate registration codes are required for lateness prior to close of registration and afterwards. It has been agreed that registers should remain "open" for the first 30 minutes of the morning and the first 20 minutes after afternoon registration period. In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period. Late arrival during these periods will be coded as an 'Authorised Late' ('L').

6. Late arrival after the register is closed is an 'Unauthorised Absence' (coded 'U') which could provide grounds for prosecution. This code generates a morning of absence. Where a pupil arrives after close of registration with a legitimate reason, the absence should be authorised using the appropriate code (for example due to an appointment with a doctor)..
7. Where no satisfactory explanation for absences is received, parents will be contacted by the school.
8. The Education Welfare Officer will be notified in the following circumstances:
 - unauthorised absence by a student of more than 10 half-day sessions (in aggregate) in any one term
 - attendance of less than 85% by any pupil
 - where action taken at school level has failed to improve attendance/punctuality for a particular student
9. When a pupil's attendance falls below 85% and they also have 10 or more unauthorised absences, unless there are extenuating circumstances, they should be considered for "Fast-track to Prosecution".
10. Parents are to inform the school, in writing, if a child is to be removed from a roll. Details of the new school should be provided, if applicable.
 - a) If a child leaves a school to be home educated, then Form EWS 10 must be completed and returned to: EWO Service, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
 - b) When a pupil moves from school and no notification has been received from another school, the 'old' school should complete a 'Children Missing from Education' form (S2s) and return it to: EMS Data Team, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
 - c) Where the 'new' school is known, as a safeguard, the 'old' school should make contact with the receiving school to alert them to the move.
11. Schools will adopt a multi-agency approach in supporting children and their families to improve their attendance.
12. For Health and Safety reasons, schools need to be aware of where pupils are, particularly those leaving or arriving on the premises during a session. An appropriate recording system should be instigated.
13. Parents' meetings, and other occasions can be used to stress to all parents the importance and benefits of regular attendance and punctuality. Advantage should also be made of regular school to home newsletters etc

Staff guidance and procedures.

Reporting to Parents

Annual Report to parents/carers includes summative information on attendance as well as a comment on punctuality.

Distribution of Data

The Administrator will produce for the Headteacher/LGB:

- a) printout of all attendances for previous week
- b) reports on persistent lateness to school in the mornings (6 or more).

- c) all pupils with attendance below 95% attendance weekly
- d) The percentage attendance figures for all pupils half termly.

The Headteacher will report attendance data to the Governors termly and targets annually.

User Codes and reconciliation of registers

- If a student is absent, use Code **N** (unless there is already a code which has been entered).
- If a student is late during registration use Code **L**.
- Only the national attendance codes issued can be used.

Follow up procedures for unauthorised absence or persistent absence (including illness) from School: See attached flow chart

Follow up procedures for lateness to school in the morning:

Admin contacts the home or sends the standard letter if the student regularly arrives late at school.

Admin will alert the Head teacher to any pupil who has 6 or more lates in any half term. The head teacher will authorise admin to contact the parent(s) via phone or letter to establish a greater understanding of the issues involved.

Where there is no improvement or if lateness continues to persist the Head teacher will become involved and there may be a referral of the pupil to EWO who may consider instigating legal procedures.

Action		
Review Annually	Review Summer 21	
Note Changes in legislation		
Variations within VENTRUS schools		

Roles and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, including pupils, parents and staff.

School: Review the attendance Policy annually

Role of Governing Body: Monitors the policy, receives a termly report via Head of School's Report to Governors.

Headteacher: Oversight and implementation of policy.

School: Staff encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and, liaising closely with parents, will promptly investigate all absenteeism. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Administrator: Administration of attendance and punctuality data within the framework of this policy, first day contacts.

Teachers: Keep an accurate register and follow up of absences and lateness within the systems and procedures of this policy.

Parents: Responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If for any reason this is not the case procedures outlined above must be followed.

If possible, parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. Parents whose first language is not English, or who have literacy difficulties, will be offered appropriate support from the school in matters of communication.

Pupils: All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from their teacher and, if need should arise, from the head of school. At the end of each year, pupils whose attendance is excellent (100%) will be presented with an attendance certificate.

Education Welfare Officer: Implementation of LA procedures in enforcing attendance and assisting year teams with advising students and parents of the legal consequences of failing to meet these obligations. The EWO is the attendance enforcement arm of the LA. The EWO for our schools will be fully informed of all absences giving cause for concern and will have full access to the electronic registration system

Encouraging Good Attendance

Ongoing

Teacher and Admin

- Weekly Attendance Data provided.
- First Day Calling.

Teachers

- Keep Accurate AM and PM register.
- Follow up Absence promptly.
- Inform HT of any attendance concerns.

Headteacher

- To co-ordinate and monitor the above.
- Ensure Escalation Process consistently followed with discretion where appropriate.
- Responsible for Pupil & School Attendance Data and meeting Local and National Attendance Targets.
- To co-ordinate / monitor attendance of vulnerable groups (SEND / LAC / EAL / Travellers).

95%

90%

<90%

<85%

Intervention

Under 95%

- No requests to be authorized.
- Send absence request Refusal Letter.
- If absence still occurs consider Penalty Notice.

Under 95%

- Send L1/M1.
- Teacher meets and discusses with parents/carers.

20 Sessions – Illness

- Consider sending Medical Evidence Letter. M2

Lateness

- If Persistent lateness, HT to send Late letter.
- Discuss lateness with parents/carers.
- If no improvement escalate to EWO

Under 90%

- Send L2.
- HT meets and discusses with parents/carers.
- Agrees action plan with parents/carers and child.

Under 85%

- Send L3/3a
- HT meets and discusses with parents/carers.
- Plan immediate improvement.
- Discuss with EWO.

If No Improvement

- School and EWO consider Fast Track or alternative action.

29 July 2020

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Monitoring L1

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

I am writing to make you aware of your child's current level of attendance which is ----.
As a school we aim to have all our children attending 100% of the time.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late may be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day of unauthorised absence.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed).

We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them. Therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name

Headteacher

☐ -----

Please return to the school office

I confirm that I have received the attendance monitoring letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 29/07/2020

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

29 July 2020

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L2

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter, I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved and continues to be unacceptably low. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of «% attendance». As a result, I would like to meet with you within 5 school days of the date of this letter to discuss a plan to improve «forename»'s attendance at school.

If attendance continues to fall following our meeting, it may unfortunately be necessary for us to hold a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer and/or School Nurse.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name

Headteacher

✂-----

Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 29/07/20 and agree to attend a meeting with Head of School on _____.

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed:

Date:

29 July 2020

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L3

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter(s), I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of .

As a result, I have arranged a meeting at school with myself and the Education Welfare Officer on _____

The meeting will be held at St David's C of E Primary School.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Headteacher

✂-----

Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 29/07/20 and agree to attend a meeting on _____.

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

29 July 2020

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L3a

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter(s), I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of «% attendance» .

As a result, I have arranged a meeting at school with myself, the Education Welfare Officer and the School Nurse on

The meeting will be held at St David's C of E Primary School.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Headteacher



Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 29/07/20 and agree to attend a meeting on _____

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

29 July 2020

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern (Medical) M1
«forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

I am writing to make you aware of your child's current level of attendance which is ---%. As a school we aim to have all our pupils attending 100% of the time. «forename»'s attendance record shows --- sessions of unauthorised absence and --- sessions of authorised medical absence.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late may be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day of unauthorised absence.

If you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it. I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed).

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

✂-----

Medical Attendance Letter

Please return to the School Office

I confirm that I have received the attendance concern (medical) letter dated 29/07/2020 for :

Name: «forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

Parent / Carer name :

Signed Dated

29 July 2020

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern (Medical 2)M2
«forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter dated 29 November 2013, this letter is to inform you that your child's attendance level is still giving the school cause for concern. As a school we aim to have all our students attending 100% of the time.

Currently «forename»'s attendance is recorded as ---% Her attendance record shows --- session of unauthorised absence and --- sessions of authorised medical absence. This attendance percentage is liable to affect her overall education.

Therefore, as of today, no further absence will be authorised due to illness or medical appointments unless suitable evidence is provided. Evidence will be required each time that your child is absent from school for medical reasons and it is your responsibility to provide this to the school. An appointment letter, a stamped/signed appointment card from the medical provider or medication dated as dispensed on the day of the absence are all forms of evidence that we consider to be suitable.

If we do not receive evidence of an absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Education Welfare Officer and/or the School Nurse will be contacted.

Please contact me to arrange a meeting to discuss a plan to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

✂-----

Attendance Letter (Medical 2)

Please return to the School Office

I confirm that I have received the attendance concern letter (Medical 2) for :

Name: **«forename» «surname» «year» «reg»**

Parent / Carer Name :

.....

Signed Dated

.....