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Headteacher



St Peter's Church of England Middle School

Attendance Policy

Headteacher Sharon Yardley

Chair of Local Governing Body Rebecca Scott Saunders

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“Be present to realise full potential”

Our vision is “Rise above the ordinary”, inspired by our faith in Christ and in fellowship with our parents/carers, churches and communities.

We want all our students to reach their full potential in body, mind, heart and spirit and to prepare for life’s journey. This is encapsulated in our school motto: “Rise above the ordinary”

1. Introduction

The governors and staff at St Peter’s believe that it is important that students attend school at all times.

We are committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all of our students and believe that attending every session contributes significantly to students making consistent progress in their school work. We therefore expect good attendance and punctuality from all our students. We recognize that this can only be achieved in partnership with our parents/carers and in conjunction with our other policies supporting our students, e.g. our behaviour for learning policy, safeguarding policy etc.

2. The Law

Section 444 of the Education Act states that children should attend school regularly, unless there is a good reason for absence. The school must keep 2 registers: an admissions register, which serves as the school roll, and an attendance register.

Attendance registers must be taken twice a day: at the start of the day and during the afternoon session. The register must show whether, the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity, off-site or absent. If absent the register must show if the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

It is the school’s responsibility to mark the register correctly. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.

We recognise that some students and their parents/carers need support to enable the student to attend regularly and wherever possible St Peter’s will work with the family to ensure this support is in place on an individual basis as needed.

3. Expectations

The school will:

- Actively promote the importance of good attendance
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers
- Comply with Registration Regulations
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor attendance of all students
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Work closely with parents/carers to improve attendance
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance

St Peter’s expects that students;

- Arrive to school on time
- Attend registration
- Attend all lessons on time

- Seek support and ask for help if they experience problems

St Peter's requests that parents/carers will:

- Talk to their child about the importance of schooling and attendance and take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress and work with the school encouraging good attendance.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have high expectations
- Contact the school in the case of absence every morning for the duration of the absence **before 8:30, giving the reason for absence.**
- On return to school to confirm the absence and the reason with a note (email is acceptable).
- Ask for the school's help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that could affect attendance.

4. Medical appointments

Wherever possible medical appointments should be made outside school hours. Where this is not possible parents/carers are requested to inform the school in good time in writing, including a copy of the appointment letter or appointment card where possible.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absences

"Unauthorised absence" is where the school has not given approval in advance or has not accepted an explanation given. *Only the school can authorise absence.* Parents/carers should contact the school as early as possible to explain why their child needs to be absent and to obtain permission.

Absences that the school does not consider reasonable include, but are not limited to:

- Visiting relatives
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Looking after siblings
- Holidays

6. Request for Leave of Absence

Parents do not have the automatic right to take their children out of school during term time.

Any absence requested can only be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion. Parents / carers requesting leave must do so in advance and in writing using the **Leave of absence form** available from the school office or the school's website. Parents/ carers are welcome to make an appointment with the school to discuss this further.

Prolonged absence of any kind has to be reported to the Local Authority and can result in a fixed penalty being issued. Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority, not the school, and are on a "per parent per student" basis.

7. Absence for Days of religious observance

St Peter's recognises that, due to the multi-faith nature of British society, on some occasions religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and

this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. The decision remains with the Headteacher, who will take into account the child's attendance history, among other factors.

It may be considered reasonable to not attend school for a day of religious observance, where that day is recognised by the parents' religious body. This will be limited to **one** day.

Parents / carers are requested to give advance notice by using the leave of absence form. The Headteacher may ask for further information about or evidence of the nature of the religious observance concerned.

8. Persistent Absence

A student is deemed a *persistent absentee* when they miss 10% or more of their potential attendance across the school year; for whatever reason. Absence of this level is likely to have considerable impact on the student's academic achievement. Absence is monitored regularly to identify students at risk of becoming persistent absentees.

9. Monitoring attendance

The following processes are implemented at St Peter's:

- Parents / carers are contacted on the first day of absence, if they have been unable to make contact with the school.
- Attendance reports are run on a regular basis and analysed to establish trends
- Letters are sent to parents informing them if their child's attendance has fallen below 95% or 90%; follow up letters can be sent if there is no significant improvement.
- If attendance remains below 90% a meeting will be called to discuss and plan for improvement (Attendance support plan) with parents / carer and the student.
- St Peter's works closely with the Local Authority and attendance is regularly discussed with the Education Welfare Officer. Students with specific concerns may be referred to the Education Welfare Team.
- The education welfare team may consider legal proceedings, fixed penalty notices or other interventions.

Attendance Monitoring Flowchart

