



## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2019

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*secure foundations — excellent practice — faith, hope and love*

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## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

*secure foundations ♦ excellent practice ♦ faith, hope and love*

### WHY WE HAVE ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY GUIDELINES AT ST LUKE'S CE SCHOOL

St Luke's School strives to be welcoming and caring, so that everybody in the school community feels wanted and secure.

We want to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education to maximise opportunities for everybody to realise their potential. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

### THE TARGET

St Luke's School intends to maintain its high levels of attendance each year. Our annual target is 96.5%.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY SUMMARY FOR PARENTS**

#### 1. Punctuality:

The school opens the main entrance doors at 8:50. Children need to be ready in their classrooms to register at 9am and must be collected promptly at 3.30pm (or at 4.30pm from after school club). If the primary parent/carer is not collecting their child at the end of the day, the school must be informed in writing in the Day Book in the office. A pupil cannot be dropped off or collected by anyone below the age of 12 and parents must provide a letter of authorisation, accepting responsibility for the safety of their child, if the person collecting them is between the ages of 12 and 14.

#### 2. Attendance:

Full attendance is expected during term time, except in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances **do not** include holidays, long weekends, leaving for holidays one day before the end of term or visits to family or friends. Parents must understand this when they place their child in the school. Exceptional absences should be requested in writing in advance from the Head of School.

#### 3. Unauthorised absences:

Unauthorised absences are treated seriously by the school. Initially we try to resolve any such absences by contacting parents directly, but if there are persistent problems of either punctuality or attendance the local authority is informed. Although it is very much a last resort, ultimately, fines can be imposed on parents, and pupils may lose their place at the school. Each pupil's punctuality and attendance record will be passed on to any school they propose to attend after they leave St Luke's School.

### **Expectations and responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the pupils to:

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they inform the school daily of absence or, if known in advance, the dates when their child will be unable to attend school.
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- not take leave in term time

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality to monitor the individual child's attendance and punctuality. These records include reasons for absence when provided by a parent or carer.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the Head of School or deputy can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested by the school or the Educational Welfare service.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- meet when necessary with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Educational Welfare service.
- notify the Local Authority (LA) after 15 days sickness.
- notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) after 10 days unexplained absence or sooner if necessary (see note on FGM below).

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- request from the Head of School and senior leadership team regular reports on attendance and punctuality.
- support the Head of School and school staff in applying this policy.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

If a teacher or other member of staff suspects that a student has been removed from, or prevented from, attending education as a result of FGM or in order to undergo FGM, a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care and the police.

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/f/fgm%20guidance.pdf>

### What Happens After a Long Absence

The school is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of pupils returning after significant periods of absence and will support the smooth reintegration of pupils both academically and socially. In such circumstances the school works with parents, carers and pupil towards an agreed reintegration plan which may include opportunities for counselling and feedback, peer support and mentoring and an agreed review period.

### Punctuality at the beginning and end of the day

Children need to be ready to register at 9 am and must be collected at 3.30pm. By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. If the primary parent/carer is not collecting their child at the end of the day, the school must be informed in writing in the Day Book.

### Term dates

School term dates are published at least once a year in advance and can be found on the school website.

Staff training days (inset days) are included in the term dates schedule. Parents or carers will receive written notice of any changes in term dates. Those changes would also be published in the calendar on the weekly school newsletter.

### Reporting to parents

When reporting to attendance to parents we refer to Camden's classification of attendance and punctuality.

#### **Attendance Categories**

99% - 100% attendance	Outstanding
96% - 98% attendance	Good
Below 95% attendance	Requires Improvement

#### **Punctuality**

0 – 3 late marks in a year	Outstanding
4 - 9 late marks in year	Good
10 or more late marks year	Requires Improvement

### Pupils arriving and leaving school on their own

Parents of pupils in Year 6, who feel their child is responsible enough, may allow their child to walk to school and leave school on their own. Requests for this must be to the Head of School in writing. The Head of School will review the request and inform the parent if he/she feels this is appropriate.

If there are specific days in which a child needs to walk home alone, this must be clarified with the office staff and class teacher. For safety and security measures a child may bring in a mobile phone. The phone must be handed into the office as soon as the child arrives in school and can be collected at the end of the day.

### Exceptional Leave of Absence

*Parents are asked to note that amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.*

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that the Head of School may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The Head of School should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Head of School on behalf of the school governors, at the earliest opportunity.

- The Head of School will take into account the child's normal attendance pattern.
- During Key Stage assessments for Year 6 the Head of School reserves the right to limit the number of days absence so the child can complete their assessments within the permitted timeframe for a time-table variation.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the Education Welfare service may be notified.

#### Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued if a parent/carer fails to ensure regular school attendance. Failure to pay a penalty notice within the timeframes may lead to prosecution by the local authority.

#### **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Complaints Procedure

If anyone in the school community feels that this policy is not being followed then they should raise the matter first with the Head of School and, if concerns persists, with the Chair of Governors who will facilitate the appropriate action, which may include an investigation. If there is a formal complaint then the school's complaints procedure will be followed.

Copies of this policy will be available in the staff handbook, from the school office and on the school website.

This policy has been agreed by the Head of School and the Governing Body.

Head of School signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors' signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

