

St Philip's Catholic Primary School

Attendance Policy

Summer 2023 Review Summer 2025



Our Mission Statement

St Philip's is a welcoming community where everyone belongs.

With Christ at the centre, we pray together and show our love for God by living the Gospels.

Showing care and compassion for each other, we are kind and sharing; treating each other fairly and with respect. We value everyone as unique children of God.

We create a caring, stimulating environment where everyone feels safe and secure.

We foster a love of learning, embracing challenge and never giving up. With support and encouragement, we learn from our mistakes and always strive to do our best.

We find the best in everyone, nurturing our individual strengths and developing the confidence to allow everyone to reach their potential, preparing ourselves for the journey ahead.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- *Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily*
- *Truancy before or during the school day*
- *Absences which have never been properly explained*
- *Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark*

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to ESBASS. ESBASS will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may however be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

It is the responsibility of parents or carers:

- To notify the school by on the first day of absence, as early as possible and no later than 10.00am.
- To inform the office in writing or to provide Medical Appointment Cards if the child needs to attend a medical appointment in school time. Whenever possible, please try to make all appointments out of school hours.

- To liaise with the school about specific family problems, which might cause absence.

Holidays will not be authorised during term time. In exceptional circumstances absences may be authorised e.g. Family illness, bereavement. Parents/ carers should fill in a form from the school website to seek permission. A medical certificate will be requested if a child has not been given permission to attend a residential trip and is subsequently absent from school.

Targets and Initiatives

We have a reward system in place which aims to encourage good attendance, and discourage unauthorised absence. Children are awarded stickers for 100% and 97+% attendance.

Role of the School:

The school has the responsibility to be open to children for 32.5 hours a week. The school's role is:

- To register the children promptly and accurately.
- To record absence appropriately, including signing in and out during school hours.
- To record as late, pupils who arrive after 8.45am and before the close of registers at 9.00am.
- To record as unauthorised absences, pupils who arrive after the registers close at 9.00am.
- To check registers daily for first day absence.
- To keep records of all telephone calls and keep all letters concerning absence.
- To monitor regularly absence and lateness, to look for patterns and to take appropriate action.
- To obtain details of telephone contacts for all pupils and to ensure that records are updated regularly by writing to parents to remind them of their responsibilities, whilst requesting current contact information. An emergency telephone number must be recorded for every pupil.
- To raise concerns regarding absence at parent consultation meetings, or sooner if necessary.
- To discourage the practice of taking children out of school for odd days and holidays.
- For the Headteacher to decide whether or not to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances and to inform the parents or carers of the decision.
- To report all unauthorised absence to the East Sussex County Council and on

the child's annual report.

- To publish attendance data in the School Prospectus.
- To report all unauthorised absence to the LEA and the DfES.
- To monitor and set attendance targets annually.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Step by Step Guide to First Day Calling

When no reason for absence has been provided by the parent/ carer, schools should as a minimum follow the below steps.

Pupils deemed at risk	<p>Pupils deemed at high risk should be treated as a priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children subject to a child protection plan• Looked After children. <p>If these children are absent and there has been no contact - notify the key worker/contact within the first 24 hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is suspected or known that a pupil is at potential risk of harm.• There is information that a pupil is, or may be, a victim of criminal activity.• At risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
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Day 1 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible. • Record actions on Schools Information Systems
Day 2 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible. • If no response - telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return call • If international dialling tone is heard, leave message advising of this and ask for a call back. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This may indicate they are on holiday and have not notified the school. ▪ If you believe this to be the case, send a 'believe absence is a holiday' in the fixed penalty information pack. Attendance and behaviour - Penalty Notices - Useful Links - Czone (eastsussex.gov.uk) ▪ Letters should be sent separately to both parents first class. • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems.
Day 3 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers. • Telephone parents/carers, if a response is not received following the text leave a message if possible. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message asking them to return the call • Make home visit - if there is no answer leave calling card and move to next step. • Send a letter of concern for absence, first class to all parents/carers and those with day-to-day care. • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Day 4 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, if there is no answer, leave a message if possible. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return call. • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems •
Day 5 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone parent / carers and leave a message if possible and then follow up with an absence text. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return call. • If you believe this family are not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare request a welfare visit from the police. • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems. •
Day 6 - 8 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return call • Either send a further letter or make a further home-visit. If there is no answer leave calling card and move to next step • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems •
Day 9 - 10 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return call • If you have not done so already, and you believe the family are not on holiday and are concerned about the child's welfare, request a welfare visit from the police. • Send a further concern letter separately to both parents / carers by first class post stating: You are making a referral to the Local Authority as their child is now considered Missing from Education • Contact the Children Missing Education Team 01273 481967 to discuss whether appropriate to submit a Child Missing Referral and checklist. <p>Attendance and behaviour - Off Rolling: a notification if a child is missing education - Child Missing Education (CME) - Czone (eastsussex.gov.uk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Missing Pupil Checklist	<p>Must be completed by the 10th day of absence, when one of the following criteria applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pupil has gone missing, and no contact can be made with parent/carer to establish reason for absence. • A pupil ceased to attend the school and forwarding address of the family is not known. • A pupil has not returned from holiday within 10 school days of the expected date of return. • A pupil fails to take up their place at the start of the academic year and the whereabouts of the young person is unknown. <p><u>School must continue investigations, while the Local Authority undertake their investigations.</u></p>
Day 11 - 19 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the email, leave a message if possible. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to return the call • Make another home visit during this period and leave a calling card. • Inform parents / carers in writing that their child is at risk of being removed from roll. • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems

Day 20 of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send absent email to parent/carers • Telephone parents/carers if a response is not received following the text, leave a message if possible. • Telephone all contacts on Schools Information Systems, if no answer leave message to the return call • <u>You cannot remove a child from roll until you have received notification from the Local Authority</u> • Record all actions on Schools Information Systems
Coding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These absences must be coded as O for unauthorised absence due to no reason provided from parents/carers.

Appendix 2

Persistent absence procedure

- Attendance is monitored half termly.
- At each parents' evening attendance is discussed and attendance for each child is given out. This is also sent with reports.
- All holidays are unauthorised and PCN issued if 5 days or over.
- Attendance records for individual children examined if attendance below 92%.
- Attendance that falls below 50% is referred to Level 2 Key Work Support.
- Children excluded from intervention if due to one holiday or a recognised serious medical condition or for example one bout of chicken pox.
- Children who do not have a one off absence affecting their attendance are in the first instance spoken to by the class teacher. If attendance is still a concern they are set targets and medical evidence requested for sickness to be authorised.

