



## Policy on School Attendance

### St Laurence School Academy Trust

<b>Date of last review:</b>	December 2023	<b>Review period:</b>	1 year
<b>Date of next review:</b>	December 2024	<b>Owner:</b>	Deputy Headteacher

Approval: Community and Ethos  
Review: December 2024



## St Laurence School Policy on School Attendance 2023

### 1. Introduction

As a Church school, our ethos of 'People are our Treasure' is one that values all students equally and seeks to support, encourage and provide the opportunity for every student to develop to their full potential during their time at school. We embrace our moral duty to ensure that attendance is a high priority and are unwavering in our drive to continue to improve the attendance of all students, to give them the very best possible chance of success and to flourish as confident learners and active members of our community.

Furthermore, all young people have a right to a full-time education; it is well documented that poor attendance can result in restricted access to the curriculum, disaffection from school, lowered academic success and loss of educational opportunity.

The Governing Body recognises the causal link between student attendance and student achievement, learning and development. It expects staff to place high priority on punctuality and attendance by students in partnership with their Parent / Carers to maximise student achievement and progress. All students are expected to attend school every day.

We recognise that following the impact of national lockdowns, students have returned or arrived at St Laurence school with an inconsistent prior experience of attendance. The coronavirus pandemic notwithstanding, our large network of feeder primary schools also means that parents / carers experience of how school's attendance is monitored will vary. We therefore aim to work collaboratively and supportively with all stakeholders with clear, transparent, and consistent guidelines and expectations in order to ensure high levels of attendance in a school in which children feel confident, valued and supported.

This policy is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Returning to pre-pandemic expectations and exceeding the last current national average attendance rates (2018-19) for secondary schools of 94.8%
- Setting aspirational targets for our school average attendance rate above the national average.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence in a supportive manner
- Exploring with parent/carers when a child's attendance is less than 95%
- Offering support to students and parents/carers where attendance is low, including reasonable adjustments where appropriate (see section 4.7)
- Requesting medical evidence (This may include a medical appointment card, a prescription or a doctor's note.) when a child's attendance falls and remains below 90%

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- Adopting a ‘whole school approach’ to ensure clear and consistent implementation and communications within the school
- Following attendance procedures in line with the Educational Welfare Service
- Ensuring that we meet the requirements of the 2010 Equalities Act and put in place appropriate reasonable adjustments to support all students.

**Students should be on school site for 8.30am. The register closes at 9.00am. The end of the school day is 3.00pm.**

We will also support Parent / Carers and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and we will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

This policy is closely aligned to policies on Child Protection, Behaviour Management, SEND policy, Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

The Law firmly places the responsibility for attendance with the Parent / Carers or carers of the child. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that Parent / Carers of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive sufficient full time education. Attendance includes punctuality and the responsibility for ensuring a child is in school on time also lies with the Parent / Carer.

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive full time education suitable -  
 (a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and;  
 (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

Section 4441 of the Education Act 1996

For transparency, we are obliged to state that if a child who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly and there are no legitimate reasons, then Parent / Carers are guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted, Parent / Carers will be liable to a fine of up to £2500 and / or a prison sentence of up to 3 months. Magistrates may also impose a Parent / Caring Order.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on school attendance Parent / Carer responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy also meets the requirements of ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ Sept 2022 and the ‘Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance’ Sept 2022

## 3. Strategies

The Governing Body agrees Annual Attendance Targets as part of the annual review of the attendance policy and is committed to the following approaches for maximising standards of attendance:

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- Promoting a welcoming and caring school environment where students feel valued, supported and encouraged
- promoting a caring ethos where good attendance and punctuality are recognised as ‘the norm’ and are valued by the school community
- where appropriate, making decisions that allow for a programme of personalised learning and individual learning pathways often in consultation with other agencies
- acknowledging improved attendance through a meaningful system of rewards
- emphasising Parent / Carer responsibility as shown by the Home-School Partnership document
- working in partnership with Parent / Carers and carers and communicating clearly about matters relating to attendance
- using an accurate system for collating and monitoring attendance with a rapid follow-up of any unexplained absence
- evaluating attendance data systematically and targeting appropriate intervention to students or student cohorts who need it most
- providing support for students and families who, for genuine reasons, may experience attendance problems
- offering a tailored approach to the reintegration of students after long periods of absence
- raising awareness about the importance of uninterrupted attendance with staff, Parent / Carers, carers and students
- employing a clear set of criteria for authorising planned absence
- working in partnership with our cluster primaries to maintain clear criteria for the granting of exceptional leave of absence
- ensuring an effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and a range of outside agencies
- making a firm stand against low levels of attendance including the use of Fixed Penalty Fines and Fast Track Prosecution, when support provided by school is not successful or engaged with by the parent/s.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 **Governors of the Community and Ethos Committee** are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. They also hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

4.2 **The Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that the policy is effectively implemented across the school and communicated to Parent / Carers as well as for making decisions regarding Parent / Carer requests for holidays or pre planned exceptional leave of absence.

4.3 **The Deputy Headteacher Quality of Education - Attitudes** is responsible for:

- a) monitoring school-level attendance data, identifying trends and presenting termly summary reports to the senior leadership team and the governors
- b) line managing the implementation of the Policy on School Attendance with the Heads of House
- c) initiating whole school policies as required
- d) developing coherent whole school systems for improving attendance including supportive interventions
- e) promoting good attendance through assemblies, briefings and communications with Parent / Carers and carers
- f) supporting other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students
- g) developing safeguarding systems and effective working with partners and other agencies to protect and promote the welfare of students, maximising their attendance
- h) representing the school at Local Authority Attendance Meetings which are chaired by the Educational Welfare Officer
- i) delegating representation of the school at Local Authority Attendance Meetings which are chaired by the Educational Welfare Officer to the Co-operative Head of House when necessary

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This includes close liaison with the Attendance Officer and other members of the admin team who ensure that data is circulated regularly to the Deputy Headteacher and the House Teams.

**4.4 The Assistant Headteacher – Teaching and Learning** is responsible for:

- a) monitoring the attendance of LAC (looked after children) students in line with their PEPs
- b) ensuring that disadvantaged students are monitored carefully and appropriate intervention and support is provided where needed
- c) informing the HOH on emerging attendance issues involving LAC students

**4.5 Heads of House, in conjunction with their Assistant Head of House,** are responsible for:

- a) monitoring the attendance of their House Group, including the monitoring of vulnerable students and disadvantaged groups
- b) being vigilant about possible safeguarding issues associated with poor attendance and referring these to the safeguarding team
- c) being vigilant about any SEND needs, or the potential of as yet undiagnosed SEND needs, which may be the underlying cause of poor attendance and referring these to PLD (Personalised Learning Department)
- d) promoting and celebrating good and improving attendance through the rewards system and House Briefings
- e) challenging unexplained or persistent absence through contact with Parent / Carers and carers
- f) meeting with Parent / Carers and carers where attendance and/or punctuality are a cause for concern e.g. below 95% attendance
- g) closely monitoring students with previous attendance concerns using historic data where available
- h) co-ordinating the sending of letters to Parent / Carers and carers of those students with attendance concerns
- i) holding school attendance meetings and reviews following a downward trend in attendance below 95%.
- j) targeting appropriate intervention to secure improvement
- k) putting in place early intervention for students who are at risk of persistent absence (PA)
- l) using knowledge of historical patterns of attendance to identify students at risk of poor attendance and apply early intervention
- m) identifying and reporting children who are missing in education
- n) offering support through external agencies as required
- o) To consider what reasonable adjustments can be made to support students improve their levels of attendance, in line with guidance with from health professionals and whilst maintaining our statutory attendance responsibilities
- p) Requesting medical evidence (This may include a medical appointment card, a prescription or a doctor's note) when a child's attendance falls and remains below 90%

**4.6 The Assistant Headteacher (Director of 6F) in conjunction with the 6F Support Officer and tutors** are responsible for:

- a) monitoring the attendance of Y12 and Y13 students, including the monitoring of vulnerable students and disadvantaged groups
- b) being vigilant about possible safeguarding issues associated with poor attendance and referring these to the safeguarding team
- c) being vigilant about any SEND needs, or the potential of as yet undiagnosed SEND needs, which may be the underlying cause of poor attendance and referring these to the AEN team
- d) promoting and celebrating good attendance through the rewards system and House Briefings
- e) challenging unexplained or persistent absence through contact with Parent / Carers and carers

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- f) meeting with Parent / Carers and carers where attendance and/or punctuality are a cause for concern
- g) closely monitoring students with previous attendance concerns and those whose attendance falls below 95% in line with Y7-11 attendance process
- h) co-ordinating the sending of letters to Parent / Carers and carers of those students with attendance concerns
- i) targeting appropriate intervention to secure improvement
- j) putting in place early intervention for students who are at risk of persistently absent (PA)
- k) using knowledge of historical patterns of attendance to identify students at risk of poor attendance and apply early intervention
- l) identifying and reporting children who are missing in education
- m) offering support through external agencies as required

**4.7 The SENDCO is responsible for:**

- a) Work collaboratively with the House Team in supporting high levels of attendance
- b) Share attendance concerns for any students on the SEND register with the DHT/HOH to allow for transfer of relevant information
- c) Be part of reintegration plans for students on SEND register following times of absence as needed
- d) To consult on what reasonable adjustments can be made to support students improve their levels of attendance, in line with guidance with from health professionals and whilst maintaining our statutory attendance responsibilities
- e) Liaise with students and parents/carers as appropriate to support attendance

**4.8 The Attendance Officer is responsible for:**

- a) liaising with Heads of House, the Assistant Heads of House, tutors, Parent / Carers and the EWO on any attendance issues causing concern
- b) monitoring registration marks for morning and afternoon attendance
- c) checking daily messages on the absence line
- d) recording on SIMs the details of messages left by Parent / Carers and carers on the absence line
- e) sending truancy call to Parent / Carers of students with unexplained absence
- f) sending any concerns to the relevant pastoral team for follow up
- g) alerting relevant members of the pastoral team should any student leave the site without permission
- h) monitoring incomplete registers daily and provide the DHT with regular information to act on
- i) completing forms for Fixed Penalty Notices where applicable and maintaining a log
- j) issuing Fixed Penalty Notice requests in line with LA guidance

**4.9 Student Receptionist is responsible for:**

- a) signing students back into site and signing students off of site and ensuring they have appropriate permission to do so
- b) liaising with the house team if students are being monitored for attendance issues before sending home
- c) recording information on SIMs

**5.0 Teachers and Tutors are responsible for:**

- a) ensuring that an accurate register is taken at the designated times
- b) recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes
- c) ensuring that a register is taken for each lesson and following up on any suspicious absenteeism.
- d) challenging lateness and setting high standards of punctuality themselves
- e) emphasising the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment
- f) promoting the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate students to be in the classroom

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- g) applying rewards and sanctions consistently
- h) reviewing the tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early and help set targets
- i) considering the individual needs and vulnerabilities of students
- j) welcoming tutees / students back into school following absence
- k) reinforcing that students are expected to catch up on missed work and reminding them how to do this
- l) promoting and engaging with the attendance policy

5.1 **Parent / Carers and carers** are partners in the education process and their positive involvement is essential. They are responsible for:

- a) ensuring that their child attends school every day and arrives at school punctually, in accordance with their legal obligations. **Students should be on school site for 8.30am. The register closes at 9.00am. The end of the school day is 3.00pm.**
- b) working with the school to ensure that their child has full time attendance planning holidays outside of term time and during the school holidays
- c) completing, in advance, an official leave of absence request form if, in exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence is requested
- d) making every effort to ensure that medical and dental appointments are arranged outside of school hours (please note we will only authorise an AM or PM session without information to support the absence.
- e) contacting the School on the first day of absence and on subsequent days
- f) explaining all absences to the relevant members of the pastoral team
- g) attending SAM meetings and review to discuss absences at a mutually convenient time
- h) Treating staff with respect (verbally and in writing) in all matters including attendance. The school is upholding the legal requirement of good attendance for all children
- i) Parent / Carers and carers will be asked to provide evidence of medical evidence for prolonged or intermittent absence in the case where a student's attendance is classed as persistently absent (less than 90%) and remains or returns to below 90%. This may include a medical appointment card, a prescription or a doctor's note.

5.2 **Students** are expected to attend school unless they are ill or have an authorised absence. In addition, they should be punctual to school every day, arriving on site by 8.30am so that they can start lessons on time at 8.35am. They are also expected to catch up on their studies, including Homework missed through absence.

## 6 Authorisation of Absence

All absence is challenged and the school determines whether to authorise an absence in line with LA and National Guidelines. No holiday absence will be authorised in term time except in compassionate or very exceptional circumstance with consideration also being given to the student's attendance, attainment and public examinations. Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher and where prior permission has been sought. Retrospective requests will be denied as a matter of course.

If a student's attendance is below 90%, St Laurence School will be sufficiently concerned to require medical evidence to authorise future absences. This could include a medical appointment card, a prescription or a doctor's note.

## 7 Monitoring

Termly monitoring of whole school attendance and the attendance of groups of students takes place in senior leadership team meetings and in Community and Ethos Governors' Meetings.

- a. Fortnightly monitoring is conducted in the Behaviour and Attendance Meeting attended by the Deputy Headteacher, the Head of House, Assistant Head of House and Attendance Officer (when necessary).
- b. In addition, the Deputy Headteacher consults with the EWO on a regular basis for guidance, advice and discussion of more complex cases.
- c. Weekly monitoring of the attendance log is undertaken by the Head of House and the Assistant Head of House and appropriate interventions are planned and actioned.
- d. Daily monitoring is undertaken by the House Team and the attendance officer who liaise closely to ensure that all absences are explained; that the correct coding has been used and that contact is made with Parent / Carers and carers as required. As part of the daily monitoring, the House Team will prioritise contact for students with Student Premium status.
- e. Compliance with regulations relating to maintenance of the Admission Register and other procedures (e.g. Children Missing from Education, Meeting the Medical Needs of Students; Exclusion Procedures) is monitored through the Heads of House regular, individual meetings and review with the EWO.
- f. Student level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.
- g. The Governors Community and Ethos Committee monitors progress against annual attendance targets.
- h. The Governing Body ensures that annual absence figures are published and used as benchmark data for school improvement.

## 8. St Laurence School's day to day processes on managing attendance.

Parent / Carers should contact the school absence line on 01225 309500 to report their child's absence from school on the first day of absence and every subsequent absence (including following days). With this Parent / Carers should also provide an explanation for their child's absence. If a Parent / Carer fails to do this, a truancy call / text message (this requests contact to be made to explain absence) will be sent every time there is an absence that has not been explained by the Parent / Carer. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after five days.

Parent / Carers should contact their child's tutor in the first instance if they have any emerging concerns regarding attendance. Please see the school website for staff contact details.

For more detailed support on attendance, Parent / Carers should contact your child's House team. Contact details are available on the school website.

We expect a minimum of 96% attendance. If attendance is below 95% and the school holds concerns, the school may follow up by sending a template letter informing parents of the concerns. We endeavour to intervene as soon as possible to make sure we are maintaining and supporting students to have good attendance in collaboration with Parent / Carers .

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If attendance continues to decline, following our robust and consistent monitoring of attendance, we will invite parents/carer to attend a school attendance meeting (SAM), where we can explore reasons for the absence and try to support in improving the attendance rate. Invitations will be sent to both parents with parental responsibility who we hold details for, regardless of residency. At this meeting targets will be set, to support improved attendance, in conjunction with parent and pupil. Should a child's % attendance rate fall to below 90%, they are classed as persistently absent from school (DFE Working together to improve school attendance – May 2022). Medical evidence will therefore be required to authorise any further absences (this could include a medical appointment card, a prescription or a doctors note) whilst the child remains or returns to an attendance rate below 90%.

If a parent does not attend the SAM and no prior notice is given, the meeting will be held in the absence of parents (and minutes with targets will be sent). If a parent is unable to attend the SAM meeting and communicates this, we are able to offer one further (mutually convenient) meeting or if preferred by the parent, the meeting can be held via the phone or teams. Given the time sensitive nature of a declining attendance pattern, non-attendance at a SAM meeting, cannot have an ongoing delay to our attendance process.

Following the SAM meeting we will continue to monitor attendance and as part of our monitoring complete a review, that will be set at the SAM meeting, or an invitation will be sent following the meeting (this will be two – four weeks after the SAM). If there is an improvement, then we will continue to support the improved attendance. If there is a further decline, the student is below 90% attendance and we have received no medical evidence to enable us to authorise the absence from school, we will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service. The threshold for this referral is ten unauthorised sessions (the equivalent of five days), in a six-week period. The Education Welfare Officer will then arrange a local authority attendance meeting. Parents will be informed of the intention to refer.

There may be times when attendance of a child declines so rapidly and so significantly, that unless school is engaged with, and provided with the opportunity to work collaboratively with Parent / Carers to improve the attendance of our student, then we will send a formal warning letter that will advise of the intention of Wiltshire to issue a penalty notice. This is something we wish to avoid at all costs; however, we are not able to ignore the absence of a student who remains on our school roll and does not attend our school. We will exhaust all options available to ensure St Laurence students are able to receive the education that they are legally entitled to, including requesting a penalty notice.

## **8. How does St Laurence promote and incentivise school attendance?**

- We rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually
- We emphasise the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment
- We promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate students to be in the classroom
- We follow up on absence and lateness with students and parent / carers to identify barriers and reasons for absence
- We contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality
- We review tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early and help set targets
- We periodically review practice and consistency both across and between Houses
- We proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction
- We consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of students
- We expect all staff to promote and engage in the attendance policy

At St Laurence we do not reward students for 100% attendance for the following reasons:

- 1) The use of 100% attendance awards might be considered discriminatory.
- 2) Children with medical conditions must be understood and supported.

Instead, we will use personalised targets and recognise improvement in attendance.

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## **9. Strategies for reducing students who are at risk of being or are persistently absent or are severely absent.**

St Laurence School will:

- welcome students back following an absence and provide catch up support to build confidence and bridge gaps. Students will be expected and supported to access:
  - lesson resources
  - buddy support
  - one to one input from staff or support services
- meet with students to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and identify problems
- establish action plans to remove barriers, provide additional support and set targets. This could include:
  - lunchtime arrangements
  - support with uniform, transport, wake up routines or emotional wellbeing
- lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support
- make regular contact with families to discuss progress
- consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups
- prepare supporting resources to ensure students can access learning when they return
- develop targeted intervention to address gaps and build students' confidence (including considering small group additional support)
- contribute to action plans which attendance staff draw together where appropriate
- provide tailored praise and encouragement when students attend and arrive on time
- Make reasonable adjustments to support the student's attendance at school

## Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance (detailed in section 2 of this policy). They apply to children of compulsory school age (defined in the document as “up to 16 years old up to the last Friday in June”). We make use of these codes for all students at St Laurence.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

## Appendix 2: Requesting leave of absence.

[Our Ref: \(st-laurence.com\)](http://st-laurence.com)

### Absence from School

*This form should be handed in to the main reception for the attention of attendance staff at least 7 days prior to the absence.*

**Taking your son/daughter out of school during term time may harm his/her academic progress.**

Following a change in Department for Education regulations from September 2013 schools may only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. These include:

- **family emergency**
- **funeral of a close family member (please state relationship to you)**
- **wedding of a close family member (please state relationship to you)**

Holidays will **not** count as a reason to authorise absence in term time, with the exception of children of armed forces personnel on leave from active service (when confirmation from a commanding officer will be required).

Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **after** a decision has been made by the Headteacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the exceptional circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Please read the attached Local Authority leaflet which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holidays during term time.

Date of application:					
Student's Name:		Year		Tutor GP	
Student's School:					
Full name of Parent(s) making application in Block Capitals		Title	Forename	Surname	
Full address of applicant					
Post Code:					

PLEASE COMPLETE SEPARATE FORMS FOR EACH STUDENT AT THIS SCHOOL.

Names of sibling(s) at another school requesting the same absence		Name of school	
Date of first day of Absence		Date of last day of Absence	
Date of return to school		Total number of days requested	
Reason for absence to be taken during term time:			
Parent/Guardian signature		Date	

For School Use			
No. sessions H code		No. sessions G code	
% last year's attendance		Total no. unauthorised absence in previous 6 months	
% current attendance to date		Total unauthorised absence this year	

We have noted the dates when your son/daughter will be absent from school. We are **able to authorise** the absence in this case.

We are **unable to authorise** your request for student absence because it does not meet the criteria for "exceptional circumstance".

Yours sincerely

Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_ Dated:.....

Date form returned to parent:	Noted by class teacher/tutor:
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Christ Church CE VC Primary School



Churchfields The Village School



Fitzmaurice Primary School



St Laurence School



Westwood with Iford School



Winsley Primary School

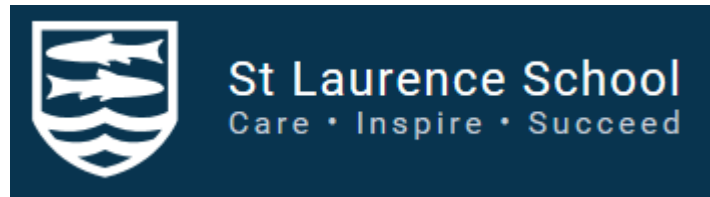
# **PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME**

## ***Important notice to all parents and carers***

**The Local Authority has amended its Local Code of Conduct in respect of Penalty Notices issued for truancy to include unauthorised pupil leave of absence in term time. If a pupil accumulates 10 or more sessions of unauthorised leave of absence within the previous 6 month period of a current academic year, the school must notify the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child where that applies.**

**A penalty of £60 will apply if paid within 21 days or £120 up to 28 days. If after 28 days the penalty has not been paid, legal proceedings will be taken through the magistrates court for the unauthorised absence.**

## Appendix 4 - Parent / Carer Fact Sheet - Term-time leave of absence



### Parent / Carer Fact Sheet - Term-time leave of absence

This information is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

#### **When is my child allowed to miss school?**

You can only allow your child to miss school if:

- They are too ill to attend
- You have advance permission from the school

#### **What if my child can't attend because of coronavirus?**

We don't expect your child to come in if they can't travel to or attend school in line with:

- Guidance from Public Health England (PHE), the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
- Any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus

These are the only situations in which your child can miss school because of coronavirus.

Anxiety around coronavirus is not included – please let us know by contacting your child's Tutor if you or your child are feeling anxious about the situation, and we will be sure to provide additional support to help you both feel safe and comfortable about them attending school.

#### **How can I make an absence request?**

You must submit a request to the school before you arrange for your child to have time away.

If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, you should speak to your child's teacher and submit a formal request to the headteacher via the school office or website Our Ref: (st-laurence.com)

The headteacher will then consider whether to give permission for the absence.

You should refer to the school's attendance policy when considering whether to submit an absence request available online @ [www.st-laurence.com](http://www.st-laurence.com)

#### **Is the school likely to grant absence requests? If so, when?**

The headteacher will consider each absence request individually and decide:

- Whether to grant the absence
- How many days your child can be away from school for (if the absence is granted)

**Absence requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.** It's up to the school to decide which circumstances are 'exceptional' in line with DfE guidance.

Examples of circumstances that are not exceptional include:

- Cheap holidays or holidays that have already been paid for
- Absence that coincides with important school events such as the start of term or exams

As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually only apply to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family and friends are likely to be refused.

### **What if I take my child on unauthorised absence?**

If you take your child out of school without advance permission (except where they're unwell or missing school due to legitimate reasons relating to coronavirus – see above for details), you can be fined or even prosecuted.

This could involve:

- A fine of £60 within 21 days (or, if unpaid, £120 within 28 days)
- A Parent / Caring order, education supervision order or school attendance order

### **Why is it important for my child to attend?**

Missing, for example, 2 weeks of school for a holiday might not seem like very much, but it can have a big effect on your child's education.

For example, if your child misses 2 weeks of school every year, this adds up to more than 2 terms over the child's whole time in school.

Make sure your child attends school as much as possible. This means:

- Your child will have the same education and opportunities as everyone else in the class
- You won't need to worry about catching up on work, or that your child might fall behind because of missing an important lesson
- Your child won't miss out on activities at the start and end of term, which are often fun and a chance to develop friendships

### **My question hasn't been answered here**

Please get in touch with us by contacting your child's House team with any further questions and we'll be happy to discuss them with you.





# Attendance at St Laurence



## A quick guide

What to expect as part of attendance monitoring from St Laurence, this is a guide, there may be differences based on individual circumstances.

If your child has :

**>96% attendance** - Great, thank you for the insistence on good school attendance.

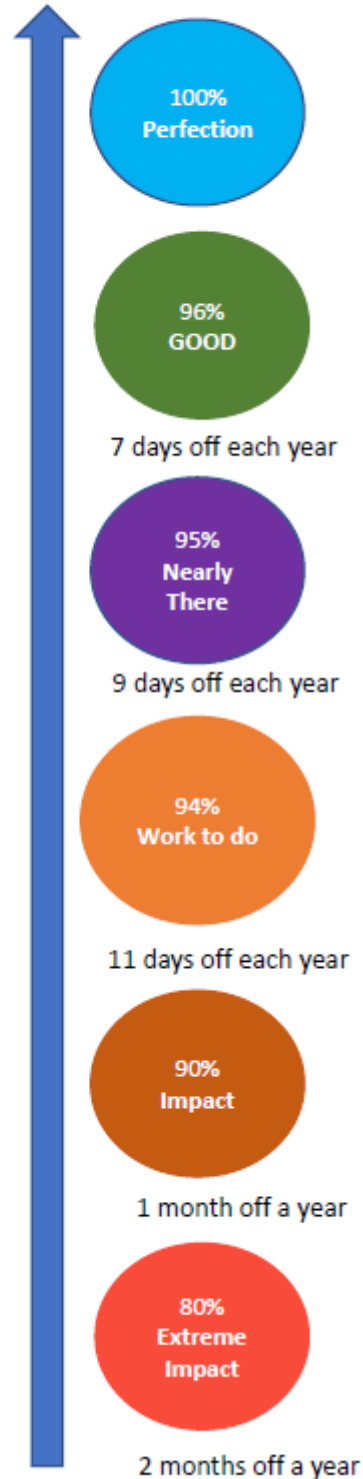
**If attendance is <95%, we will utilise the following support methods with the aim to improve attendance:**

- A letter may be sent home to alert you, no further action required **if** attendance improves or stays stable.
- A **School Attendance Meeting (SAM)** may be called between you and the House Team. You will be invited into school via a letter sent home. This is a chance to discuss attendance with school and raise any concerns. This is a supportive meeting to aim for an improvement in attendance. Targets will be set which will aim to improve attendance.
- A **School Attendance Meeting Review (SAM Review)** is **always** booked a period of time after the SAM meeting. There may have been an improvement in attendance, the meeting is to check to see how/if we are meeting the targets set in the SAM meeting.
- **If attendance falls and remains below 90%**, we will require medical evidence to authorise any absence as we will have sufficient concern of the amount of time the student has had from school. This can be information from the doctor (such as a prescription or an appointment card). For longer absences we will require information from a consultant stating your child is not fit for school. We are happy to work with professionals to support action in school.

We **do not** provide work for students to complete outside of school due to illness. If a student is unwell and not able to attend an in-school provision, we will make a referral to MNERS (Medical Needs Education Reintegration Service) if we have evidence to suggest this need.

### Further action

If a student has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence following a SAM and a SAM Review (5 days) we are required to refer to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) at county. This could and does result in fines and possible prosecution. As a school we will endeavour to work with you to make sure this doesn't happen, but we have a statutory requirement to challenge non-attendance to school.



To be used in conjunction with: [Attendance Policy](#)

## Appendix 6 –

The following letters are template letters send home to explore strategies to support attendance  
“Letter A” – first contact with home if attendance drops.

### (A) Attendance Concerns (below 95%) - «forename» «surname» «year\_reg»

This information is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

In line with the St Laurence School attendance procedures, I am writing to inform you that «forename»’s attendance is currently «percentage\_attendance»% which is below the school’s target.

High levels of attendance are important for students’ progress in order to ensure:

- Your child achieves good exam results (DfE statistics show a typical student with attendance of 91.1% achieves on average one grade lower in each subject at GCSE).
- Help with getting into sixth form college, apprenticeships or university.
- Enhanced prospects of employment.

While it is appreciated that some absence may be due to authorised leave or medical absence, we wanted to bring this matter to your attention. This is further evidenced by the strong link between attendance and progress that we have seen in our GCSE results previous academic year 2022/23.

Attendance	Average GCSE Grade	Average Value Added
Above 95%	5.9	+0.8
90.1-95%	5.2	+0.4
80.1-90%	4.1	-0.1
80-50.1%	3.7	-1.0

While it is appreciated that some absence may be due to authorised leave or medical absence, we wanted to bring this matter to your attention.

#### What happens next?

- Your child should ensure they have caught up with any work missed. If you need support with this, please contact the tutor in the first instance.
- We will continue to monitor «forename»’s attendance. If there is no improvement we will ask you to attend a School Attendance Meeting (SAM) to discuss how we can work with you to support your child to maintain «his\_her» learning (we may ask for medical evidence of absences at this point).
- If attendance continues to drop a referral to the Education Welfare Officer will be made in line with government legislation.

If you have any further concerns about this matter, please contact the tutor or myself.

## Appendix 7 – “Letter A Illness” – May be sent if a child has a period of absence due to illness.

Dear «salutation»

### (A) School Attendance Letter - «forename» «surname» «year\_reg»

This information is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

I am writing to you to share a concern that we have for «forename»’s attendance which is currently: «percentage\_attendance»%. On review of «forename»’s attendance I can see this is for illness. We are keen to see what we can do to make sure that attainment does not suffer due to absence.

This is further evidenced by the strong link between attendance and progress that we have seen in our GCSE results previous academic year 2022/23.

Attendance	Average GCSE Grade	Average Value Added
Above 95%	5.9	+0.8
90.1-95%	5.2	+0.4
80.1-90%	4.1	-0.1
80-50.1%	3.7	-1.0

While it is appreciated that some absence may be due to authorised leave or medical [absence](#) we wanted to bring this matter to your attention. For children with medical conditions any medical evidence that can be supplied would be much appreciated.

#### What happens next?

- Your child should ensure they have caught up with any work missed. If you need support with this, please contact the tutor in the first instance.
- We will continue to monitor «forename»’s attendance. If there is no [improvement](#) we will ask you to attend a School Attendance Meeting (SAM) to discuss how we can work with you to support your child to maintain «his\_her» learning (we may ask for medical evidence of absences at this point).
- If attendance continues to drop a referral to the Education Welfare Officer will be made in line with government legislation. |

If attendance continues to drop a referral to the Education Welfare Officer will be made in line with government legislation.

By working together, I am sure that we will see an improvement in «forename»’s percentage attendance during the academic year.

Thank you in anticipation of your support in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

## Appendix 8 – SAM meeting invite

### **(B) School Attendance Meeting - «*forename*» «*surname*» «*year\_reg*»**

This information is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

Further to previous correspondence we'd like to inform you that «*forename*»'s attendance has now dropped to «*percentage\_attendance*»%. As a result of this we would like to invite you to a School Attendance Meeting.

I feel at this stage that it would be beneficial to have a meeting in school with «*forename*», yourself and the Assistant Head of House/Head of House to discuss whether there are any issues that may be affecting your child's attendance at school.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to authorise any of «*chosen\_forename*»'s absences until we have explored our concerns about «*him\_her*».

If «*forename*»'s attendance continues to fall we may have to refer to the Educational Welfare Officer but we hope that we can avoid this by working in partnership with you at this stage.

Please attend a meeting at school on .....at ..... to discuss this matter further. We would appreciate it if you would confirm your attendance at this meeting by either telephoning or emailing the Assistant Head of House on 01225 309553 or [michow@st-laurence.com](mailto:michow@st-laurence.com)

***Please note that if parents/carers fail to attend the meeting or make appropriate contact prior to the meeting if unable to attend the school may escalate the situation to a safeguarding referral.***

## Appendix 9 – SAM review meeting letter

### **(B) School Attendance Review Meeting - «forename» «surname» «year\_reg»**

This information is based on statutory guidance and therefore some documentation and wording will appear very formal. The school remains committed to making the process as supportive as it can within this framework, and all parents should know that our aim is to ensure the best outcomes for their child.

Further to previous correspondence we'd like to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is now «percentage\_attendance»%. As a result of this we would like to invite you to a School Attendance Review Meeting.

I feel at this stage that it would be beneficial to have a meeting in school with «forename», yourself and the Assistant Head of House/Head of House to discuss whether there are any issues that may be affecting your child's attendance at school.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to authorise any of «chosen\_forename»'s absences until we have explored our concerns about «him\_her».

If «forename»'s attendance continues to fall we may have to refer to the Educational Welfare Officer but we hope that we can avoid this by working in partnership with you at this stage.

Please attend a meeting at school on .....at ..... to discuss this matter further. We would appreciate it if you would confirm your attendance at this meeting by either telephoning or emailing the Assistant Head of House on 01225 309553 or [michow@st-laurence.com](mailto:michow@st-laurence.com)

***Please note that if parents/carers fail to attend the meeting or make appropriate contact prior to the meeting if unable to attend the school may escalate the situation to a safeguarding referral.***