

St. Peter's R.C. Primary School

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School Attendance

Individual Attendance Plans are kept in school for pupils who cause absence concern.

1. Absence from school

- Please inform the main office on the first day of absence that your child will be absent from school. Messages can be left by phoning 01254 691745 and pressing option 1.
- Please state the reason for absence and how long your child will be absent from school.
- If parents do not inform school of an absence an unauthorised absence will be placed in the register.
- Parents will be contacted by text/phone on the first day of absence if they fail to inform school of an absence.
- Unauthorised absences will be investigated by the school and the Inclusion Officer.

Our school registers are documents which are regularly inspected by the Educational Welfare Officer.

If a child's absence (authorised or unauthorised) drops below **90%** the school has a responsibility to inform both the Inclusion Officer and the child's parents. This is in the hope that attendance will improve. If attendance at school does not improve it will lead to further action being taken by the school in consultation with the Inclusion Officer.

Regular attendance at school is required by law and essential if pupils are to make the most of their educational opportunities and realise their potential.

2. Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences may lead to a penalty notice.

Unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Please note: There are 2 registered sessions each day (am/pm)

3. Leave of absence during term time.

Please note: All applications must be made in advance. No authorisation will be given in retrospect.

St Peter's RC Primary School will not routinely grant permission for holidays or other leave of absence during term time. We encourage all parents to consider the disruption absence in term time causes. Parents are expected to support school attendance by avoiding pupil absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances.*

***Exceptional Circumstances**

Parents can apply for leave of absence during term time if they feel their request is exceptional.

Under Educational Regulations issued from 19th August 2024 the school cannot consider your request unless the information provided supports the absence as being an exceptional and unique circumstance. In addition the school will consider whether the absence is unavoidable.

An exceptional circumstance is much more likely to be a unique or one-off situation, not an annual holiday.

Holiday timetables are given well in advance of the next academic year. If you are unsure of the dates of school holidays check the school website or ask at the main office

Leave of absence will not be authorised during SATs period (Year 6 pupils).

Parents are informed by letter of the outcome of their application for leave of absence. All cases of unauthorised leave will be reviewed in line with our Child Attendance Policy and may result in a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

From August 2024 the fine for unauthorised absence is per parent per child as follows:

- £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days, if this is not paid then parents will be prosecuted.
- if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.
- Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.
- If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.
- Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

Strategies to improve level of absence.

Unauthorised Absences

- Daily checks by Administration Officer
- First day of absence text message from school.
- Letter to parents regarding unreported absences
- Letter to parents regarding increased unauthorised absences.
- Arranged meetings with Parents, School and EWO
- Referrals to EWO regarding unauthorised absences.

Absences from School

- Daily checks by Administration Officer
- Letters to Parents regarding falling percentage of attendance
- Letters to parents regarding persistent absences
- Referrals to EWO regarding persistent absences.
- Referral to Troubled Families Support
- Improving Attendance Letters to Parents

Other Strategies

- Headteacher/Inclusion Officer monthly meetings
- Termly Attendance Awards

Children Missing in Education

A Child Missing in Education (CME) is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by the LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, SEND

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including;

- They don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the education system
- They are removed by their parents
- Behaviour and/or attendance difficulties
- They cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying
- They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- The family move home regularly
- Problems at home

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

Children missing from education can mean either a child being unenrolled or a child on extended absence. The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem with the School Business Manager and / or the Headteacher. If the situation does not improve, the school will contact the Local Authority who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

School have a legal duty to inform the Local Authority if:

- A child is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave
- A child is absent for 20 consecutive days without approved leave
- A child fails to attend school regularly
- A child is deleted from the register when the next school is not known Parents and carers should be aware that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council reserves the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their child / children to school on a regular basis. With due regard for "Children Missing Education," school will ask for permission from the Local Authority when they wish to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Educational Welfare Officer at the Local Authority.

Safeguarding:

- There are significant risks for children who regularly go missing from education
- All children, regardless of circumstance, are entitled to full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any SEND they may have
- Procedures are in place to identify and respond to this, particularly those who are repeatedly missing or where there is an emerging pattern
- With due regard for Keeping Children Safe in Education, St Peter's RC Primary School acknowledges the importance of information sharing between schools and appropriate Local Authorities to help identify children missing in education and help protect children from potential harm.
- A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect (including CSE, FGM, travelling to conflict zones and forced marriage) and staff must be alert to any possible signs or indicators

School Times

Start of School day:

School doors open at 8.40am

Register at 8.45am

Late bell 8.50am (please note: if a child arrives after the late bell they will receive a late mark in the register).

If a child arrives after 9.05am they will receive an unauthorised absence mark

Lunch - KS2 11.45am to 12.40pm. FS/KS1 12.15pm till 1.10pm

End of School Day: - School closes 3.15pm