

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy



## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

*Together through Christ we grow and learn*

## 1. Aims

- To ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- To act early to address patterns of absence
- To improve punctuality throughout the school
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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 parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [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 (currently 90% attendance).

## 2. Implementation

### Organisation of Curriculum Time

**Planning** We acknowledge that for a child to have the best education they deserve they must attend school every day full time.

**Teaching** Children will be taught about the importance and benefits of good attendance and punctuality in assemblies.

### Recording

- Electronic registers are used.
- The school has a statutory duty to keep detailed records of lateness and absence. Electronic registers are marked twice daily, by 9:05 a.m., and by 1:35 p.m.
- Children are marked with late/ present /absent by the teacher.
- If the absence is 'authorised' (See section on absence below) the code for the reason for absence is entered by the administrator. The codes used are according to LA guidance.
- Children who arrive after 8:55 will be recorded in the late book. They will be marked as absent by the class teacher and the office will use the Late book to update the register.
- Children who arrive after 9:10 will be recorded as absent for the morning session (unauthorised)
- Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).
- Authorised absence refers to sickness, visits to the doctor, dentist or absence for any other valid reason, such as a secondary transfer interview, when the school has been notified by a letter, a phone call or in person by a relative/carer. Attendance will not be authorised if a child explains his/her own absence

- Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. However if the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this. This will be the case for all children who are classed as Persistent Absentees i.e. their attendance is lower than 90%, who will be required to produce medical evidence for all absences.
- If the absence is anticipated in advance we would expect notification of its reason and predicted duration, at least 48 hours before the anticipated absence.
- On the first day of absence without notification from the parent or carer, the administrator will try to contact the family by telephone. If there is no response a letter is sent, as generated by SIMS. If there is no contact within a week of the first day of absence the LA is notified.
- Any absence that is not explained/ accepted by the Head Teacher is classified as an **unauthorised** absence.
- If a child is persistently absent for medical reasons written verification will be requested from a medical professional on each occasion that they miss school.
- Parents are allowed to request an absence during term time if there are **exceptional circumstances** though school policy would not recommend this and will rarely authorise this. Parents must write to the Head Teacher to request this time off in advance and written permission will be given at the discretion of the Head Teacher. If a child's attendance is less than 90% no holidays during term time will be authorised, however exceptional the circumstance.
- Unfortunately, a number of children are often missing at either side of the school holidays and the school is aware that the child/ren had been away on holiday. These absences will only be authorised if we see the flight booking to confirm that the holidays were originally booked for dates within the official school holiday and not during term time. If these documents are not produced the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

#### *Punctuality*

- On occasions, exceptional circumstances will mean that children arrive late at school. However, regular lateness due to poor timekeeping is not acceptable and the school takes steps to remedy this as detailed below.
- All new families joining the school are given a Punctuality leaflet. This is also given to families who are regularly late to remind them of expectations.
- Parents are reminded regularly in Newsletters about the importance of punctuality and the negative effect of lateness.
- SLT keeps a record in the Late Book of the time any late-comers arrive. Children who arrive late twice or more in a week have their arrival times recorded on the letter shown in Appendix A which is sent home
- If a child is late they will miss their playtime to catch up on learning they have missed. Letters are also sent to parents whose children are persistently late at the end of each term, as shown in Appendix B. All letters offer support and the opportunity to discuss any difficulties with the Head Teacher.
- A number of rewards are used to encourage good punctuality. A graph is displayed at assembly every Monday to celebrate the class with the lowest number of lates. At the end of each term the class with the least number of lates is rewarded with £10 to spend on classroom resources. Classes with zero lates in a week are rewarded by their classteacher e.g. with golden time. Certificates are also given to individual children with outstanding punctuality and attendance at the end of the year. When individual children are being targeted for punctuality, stickers may be given to encourage good time keeping and to reward punctuality.
- A number of children are regularly collected late at the end of the day. If children have not been collected by 3:25 they will be entered into After School Club where they will be cared for. A charge of £5 will be made for the use of this facility. If the payment is not made the child will no longer have the privilege of attending after school clubs. After 5:15p.m. parents will be charged £10 per fifteen minutes to cover the cost of staff overtime and keeping the school open.

### **Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' for example to attend the wedding or funeral of a close family member.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments parents must show the appointment card/ text /letter
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Cheaper travel cost will never be an acceptable reason for an authorised holiday during term time

### **Legal sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

#### **The Governing Body will:**

- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### **The Headteacher will:**

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently across the school,
- Monitor school-level absence data and report it to governors.
- Support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

#### **The Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Monitor attendance and punctuality
- Display the weekly punctuality graph at whole school assembly
- Give out termly certificates and trophy to most punctual class and half termly cash reward/ termly certificates to punctual children.
- Distribute the Punctuality leaflet to families who are regularly late.
- Complete the Late Book accurately and remind families who are entered in it of the expectations.
- Offer support to parents and children

#### **The administration officer will:**

- Enter data electronically, ensuring accurate codes are used.
- Print hard copies of the daily register in case of school evacuation e.g. Fire Drill.

- Generate letters for parents.
- Generate weekly punctuality graph and email to the Senior Leadership Team
- Report on attendance and punctuality to the LA as requested.
- Complete attendance returns.
- Electronically enter information from the late book into the registers.
- Send home letters with a reply slip if a written reason for an absence has not been received on the day the child returns to school (as generated by SIMs).
- Complete the appropriate documentation when a child is removed from the school register.
- Phone families on the first day of absence without the school being notified. Follow up with regular phones call if the child's attendance is prolonged, to check on the wellbeing of the child.
- Send letters to parents re punctuality
- Inform the SLT immediately of any attendance or punctuality concerns.

#### **Class teachers will:**

- Be models of good attendance and punctuality. Staff procedures for absence are detailed in the Staff Handbook.
- Complete the electronic register according to the policy.
- Encourage all children to attend school regularly and on time.

#### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The Headteacher monitors pupil absence on a half termly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-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.

Attendance figures will be reported termly in the Head Teacher's Report to Governors. Data returns to the LA and DfE will be completed as requested.

#### **5. Opportunities for Spiritual and Moral Development**

In Catholic education, we are aware that all knowledge and understanding comes from God. Children need to be present at school to experience the full range of opportunities for Spiritual and Moral Development

#### **6. Equal opportunities**

We should ensure that the specified aims are implemented for all children regardless of race, religion, gender, ability and disability.

#### **Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

# St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School



## APPLICATION FOR LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

Parents/guardians must ask permission, where the situation is exceptional or urgent, for their child to be absent during term time, and it is at the Head teacher's discretion to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. If leave is taken without permission, or no application is made, parents risk being issued with a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted on their return. Parents wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation at least two weeks before the proposed leave.

<b>PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)</b>				
<b>Child's Name:</b>				
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		
<b>Full Name of Parent/Carer:</b>				
<b>Address of child (including postcode)</b>				
<b>Telephone Number Contact 1:</b>				
<b>Telephone Number Contact 2:</b>	<b>Name of second contact:</b> <b>Relationship:</b> <b>Telephone number:</b>			
<b>Reason for Request:</b>				
<b>Departure Date</b>	<b>First Day of Absence</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Final Day of Absence</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Has your child had leave since he/she started school?</b>				

<b>SCHOOL SECTION (to be completed by school)</b>				
<b>Child's Attendance</b>	<b>Current Term</b>		<b>Current Year</b>	
<b>Authorised</b>	<b>YES</b>		<b>NO</b>	
<b>Reasons:</b>				
<b>Date of Meeting with parent:</b>				
<b>Headteacher Signature:</b>				



## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman

Tel: 020 7641 6110

email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

### **Date**

Dear **Name of Parent**,

Thank you for your letter regarding permission to take xx out of school for the purposes of ..... from xx to xx.

I have considered your application for leave for xx days and this absence will be authorised for the following reasons:

Whilst I have authorised this leave for a period of xx days please note that any absence beyond the xx days will be considered unauthorised and you may be subject to a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority on your return, incurring a fine of £60 per child. I have included a leaflet about this which has been issued by the Local Authority in response to parents who take their children out of school during term time.

I hope you enjoy your leave and look forward to seeing xx back in school on xx.

Yours sincerely,

Miss M.Coleman

Headteacher



# St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman

Tel: 020 7641 6110

email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

**Date**

Dear **Name of Parent**,

Thank you for your letter regarding your permission to take xx out of school for the purposes  
..... From xx to xx.

I have considered your application and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted for the following reasons:

☐ Your child's/children's attendance is below 96% this academic year.

☐ It is in the school's attendance policy not to authorise leave during term time except in **exceptional circumstances**. I am unable to authorise this leave as the reasons stated on your application form are not deemed as exceptional.

☐ Your child has already taken leave during their time at this school.

☐ Your request is for an important time of the academic year where students in your child's year group will be preparing for / sitting exams.

I must warn you if you decide to take your children out of school for this period the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and you may be issued with a Penalty Notice.

- £60.00 – if paid within 21 days of issue,
- £120.00 – if paid within 28 days of issue

I have included a leaflet about this which has been issued by the Local Authority in response to parents who take their children out of school during term time.

Yours sincerely,

Miss M. Coleman

Headteacher





## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman

Tel: 020 7641 6110

email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

**Date**

Dear **Name of Parent**,

I write regarding your child's recent unauthorised absence from xx to xx. As you are aware, leave in term time is not permitted without the permission of the Head teacher as taking children out of school during term time disrupts their school routine and learning.

Despite being informed of the school's policy and consequences for doing so you chose to continue to take xx on leave during term time without authorisation. As such you are now being referred for a Penalty Notice under Sec. 444a. of the Education Act (1996) for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child(ren).

The Penalty Notice is being requested in line with the Code of Conduct administered by (name of Council). If accepted, the notice will be sent to you in due course at which time details regarding the payment will be explained.

We thank you for your support in ensuring that your child is not absent from school during term time in future.

Yours sincerely,

Miss M.Coleman

Headteacher



## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman

Tel: 020 7641 6110

email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

### **Date**

Dear **Name of Parent**,

The Registers at St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School show that your child has missed more than a day of school each week on average, without good reason, over the last half term. You, as parent, are legally responsible under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. As such you are now being referred for a Penalty Notice under Sec. 444 of the Education Act (1996) for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child(ren).

The Penalty Notice is being requested in line with the Code of Conduct administered by the Local Authority. If accepted, a warning letter will be sent, whereby a 15-day monitoring period would be set in order to give you an opportunity to improve your child's attendance and avoid a subsequent fine. Should your child have **4 or more sessions** of unauthorised absence during the 15-day monitoring period, a Penalty Notice will be issued. Once issued, a PN incurs a fine of £60.00 rising to £120.00 per child if not paid within 21 days.

Please take steps to make sure your child gets to school on time every day, and to obtain a Medical Certificate if he/she is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with the school and it is the School's decision whether to authorise any absence that is not covered by medical evidence.

We thank you for your support in ensuring that your child is not absent from school during term time.

Yours sincerely,

Yours sincerely,

Miss M.Coleman

Headteacher



## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman

Tel: 020 7641 6110 FAX: 020 7641 6116 email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

*Date*

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Re: Punctuality

Our records show that your child **Child's Name** has arrived late **Number** times for school this week. They have therefore missed **Number** break times to catch up on the work they missed by being late.

Children who arrive late disrupt the class. Lateness can also disadvantage your child and have an impact on their education by missing the beginning of the teaching session.

It is vitally important that children are trained to be punctual from a very young age. The starting point in their lives should be establishing a pattern of arriving punctually at school every morning.

I look forward to your support in ensuring that, in future, your child arrives punctually every morning for school.

Yours sincerely,

M. Coleman  
Headteacher



# St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

*Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman*

Tel: 020 7641 6110 FAX: 020 7641 6116 email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

*Date*

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **Re: Punctuality**

I am writing to you again about your child's lateness to school. Our records show that your child **Child's Name** has arrived late **Number** times for school this term. This is unacceptable.

As I pointed out in previous letters to you, regular lateness has a negative impact on your child's education and is also disruptive to their peers. The children, teacher and teaching session are disrupted by lateness to class. Your child will most likely be anxious as a result and this will further the negative impact on learning.

This is a very serious situation which cannot continue.

I will continue to monitor **Child's Name** punctuality and look forward to an improvement.

Yours sincerely,

M. Coleman  
Headteacher



## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St. Vincent Street, Marylebone W1U 4DF

*Headteacher: Miss M. Coleman*

Tel: 020 7641 6110

email: [office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

web: [www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk](http://www.stvincentsprimary.org.uk)

Date

To whom it may concern,

### Attendance at G.P Clinic, Dentist or Hospital

The school requires children who have persistent absence due to absence due to illness, medical reasons etc to obtain confirmation of their illness and subsequent appointment from the clinic.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that this pupil has attended an appointment by stamping this letter with your official stamp and entering the date of the appointment, with a signature to confirm that this medical condition required absence from school.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

M.Coleman  
Headteacher

Child's Name.....

Current Attendance: .....

Date of Appointment.....

Signature to validate that this condition necessitated absence from school.....

Official stamp