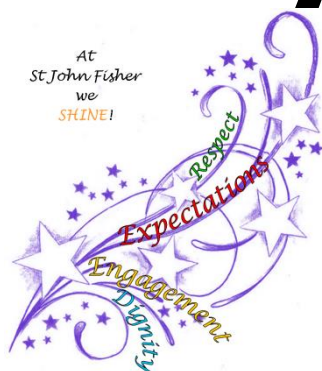


# St John Fisher Catholic Primary School **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**



This policy was adopted on	<b>Date: Autumn 2023</b> <b>Review date: Autumn 2025</b>
<b>By Name:</b>	<b>Claire Lewis</b>
<b>Position:</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Signature:</b>	on behalf of St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

# St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy

### St John Fisher: Our Vision

At St John Fisher, we strive to create a school community where children and adults achieve their full potential and **SHINE!** We will achieve this through *engagement*, *high expectations* and by treating all with *respect* and *dignity*.

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 97% (**In the Green Zone**)  
100%-97% Green Zone  
96.5%-90% Amber Zone  
90%-below Red Zone
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attendees find learning more satisfying
- Regular attendees have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences before 9am with the reason and saying when the child will return 0151 477 8590
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness
- Providing medical evidence for absences of 5 days or more
- Avoiding taking holidays during term time

We:

- Will follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters on the first day of absence. (See first day response policy)
- May issue penalty notices for any absence of 5 days or more and/or continuous absence not covered by medical evidence.
- May issue penalty notice for all “leave of absence” except in exceptional circumstances.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, school website, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement.
- Publish our attendance rate weekly in the school newsletter.
- Acknowledge good attendance.
- Publish your child’s attendance rate on her/his school report
- Will let you know if we have concerns regarding your child’s attendance and/or punctuality
- If we continue to have concerns we will make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters

## Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

## Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Because it is your child’s birthday
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Not attending a school trip/ residential
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Shopping for new school clothes
- Unapproved Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

## Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8:45am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom. School gates and doors will be open from 8.40am and will be closed promptly at 8.45am

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that if their child arrives late to school then they MUST come to the office and be accompanied by a responsible adult and marked into the late register, giving a reason for the lateness.

- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents. We may request that children who are late to school give up some of their lunch time to catch up missed work.
- Arrival at or after the close of registration at 9.15am may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety. If a child is left in school at the end of the school day without the school being informed we will inform Children's Services (formally known as Social Services).

## Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of teaching time pupils miss as a result of absences. **There is no entitlement to time off in term time.** Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the head teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governors

It is our policy:

- That only in very, extreme, exceptional circumstances will leave of absence be granted.
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence in term time need to fill in an application form well in advance of the date and clearly state the reason for the absence. Please ask the school office for a form; the Schools attendance lead / Head Teacher will consider your request and advise you of his/her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) further time than allowed will be unauthorised and you risk your child being taken off the school roll.

If a Term Time Leave of Absence form is not completed and no contact can be made with the parents/carers regarding the child's whereabouts and/or safety, on the 3rd day the pupil will be referred to the Authority as a Missing Pupil (See Children Missing Education- Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities Jan 2015 DfE).

- If the school does not agree and you take your child out of school, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Throughout the school year any pupil with 10 Sessions of unauthorised absence (5 School days) during a ten week period may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice, by the Knowsley School Attendance Service, and this could also lead to prosecution.
- Failure to ask the school for a Leave of absence, prior to a child being off (unless medical proof is shown) may also lead to a Penalty Notice being issued, by the Knowsley School Attendance Service, and this could later lead to prosecution
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A good understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom

## Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, A new school and start date must be stated, and reasons for moving.
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

**Remember:** We cannot take your child off our school roll until your child starts in the next school. Both **you** and the next school must inform us of the start date. Failure for you to inform us of a forwarding school will result in your child being classed as missing and we have to inform the local Authority and Police of their missing status.

## Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations under Safeguarding Procedures, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

## Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Penalty Notice (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards

## Child Protection Statement

At St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child has the right to be safe and therefore to be cared for in a way that ensures her/his safety and meets her/his individual needs. We recognise that all children need protection at all times from anything or anyone that may cause them harm and work together following the schools Safeguarding Policy to ensure this. We respect all members of the school's community and treat information with confidentiality. The above attendance policy is served on conjunction with our role to Safeguard All our Pupils.

### Links to other Policies and Guidance:

- Child Protection Policy
- School Attendance Guidance DfE July 2019
- Children Missing Education DfE Sept 2016
- Parental Responsibility Measure for School Attendance and Behaviour DfE Jan 2015
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy (including Anti-Bullying)
- Admissions policy/criteria
- SEND policy
- Exclusions
- Wellbeing