



ST PHILIP'S CE PRIMARY ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

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Safeguarding Statement

At St Philip's Primary Academy, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all academy activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at St Philip's Primary Academy. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access the academy and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Vision Statement

Fostering curiosity and a love of learning is at the heart of our teaching. Broadening horizons enables all children to flourish and be fulfilled. Successes are celebrated and failure learned from, allowing us to shine through challenges. Together, we develop qualities of character necessary to be positive future citizens.

Our Guiding Principles

At St Philip's CE Primary Academy we pride ourselves on developing a positive ethos built on the foundations of the Christian faith, whilst taking into consideration that most of our pupils, staff and community follow the faith of Islam. We endeavor to ensure we are always ***'Working together with hope in our hearts'***

This ethos is based on the following principles that, as stakeholders, we all aim to uphold:

Value 1: NURTURING

We demonstrate kindness and caring towards each other so that we can find happiness and fulfilment. We promote and support children's wellbeing to support their growth and development.

Value 2: OPTIMISTIC

We believe that having a positive attitude towards situations enables us to be forward thinking and supports us in our goal of providing a good and better education for all of our pupils.

Value 3: ASPIRATIONAL

We have high aspirations for the futures of the children in our Academy. Through a high-quality curriculum and planning of lessons that are specifically tailored for our pupils, they will have the opportunity to achieve and surpass their potential.

Value 4: HOPEFUL

The value of hope is interwoven into our teaching and is and is an expression of our faith. Hope supports our spirituality, and through that, virtues such as forgiveness, empathy and compassion come to the fore.

Value 5: SINCERE

We are united as a whole to ensure integrity, honesty and trust are maintained. This quality within our academy means that we follow our values to ensure that we always do our best for pupils, staff and community.

Value 6: ASSURED

Our goal is to see our pupils confident, armed with independence and conviction, echoing 'Let your light shine' - Matthew 5:16

Value 7: RESPECTFUL

All members of our academy, including pupils, staff, governors, visitors and the wider community, should be treated with respect. We hold politeness in high regard and we are accepting of each individual's uniqueness.

Value 8: KNOWLEDGEABLE

By fostering resilience, collaboration and risk-taking, we craft an environment where pupils are ready to be lifelong learners.

Policy Statement

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) regards the excellent attendance of children as integral to the success of the pupils and thus the success of their academies. For the purpose of this policy, the term Trust refers to BDAT. The Trust is committed to ensuring that pupils and parents/carers understand the absolute importance of full attendance at our schools.

As part of our focus on diversity and inclusion, BDAT pledges that our policies will seek to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all staff and pupils. Our policies reflect the BDAT values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence. By working closely with a range of stakeholders, such as our school, union, and HR colleagues, we have ensured that BDAT's policies do not unlawfully discriminate against anybody.

Aims of the Policy

This policy is intended to outline the expectations, procedures and key staff in relation to attendance as well as the strategy and support in place to ensure pupils maximise their attendance at school.

We envisage that this policy will act as a 'user manual' for pupils, families and staff when it comes to attendance at school and will keep it under annual review. We will

use our stakeholder voice mechanisms (e.g. pupil surveys, parent surveys, formal and informal meetings etc.) in order to ensure that feedback around this policy is taken on board when the policy is reviewed.

This policy will be published on the St Philip's CE Primary Academy website and will be recirculated to parents at the start of each academic year, as well as when it is updated at any other point.

Introduction

At St Philip's CE Primary Academy, our priorities are that our pupils are safe, healthy and successful, all of which are helped by attending school regularly. We believe that working in partnership with families is the best way to maximise attendance at school in order to achieve these priorities. Our aim is for St Philip's CE Primary Academy to be a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

We know that regular attendance at school is vitally important in helping pupils to reach their academic potential, to help them grow socially and emotionally and to develop a range of life skills which will support them as they transition to secondary school.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular school attendance and educational progress and achievement. Children who frequently miss school can often fall behind which means they may not grasp key concepts that support their learning as they move through Primary education.

When it comes to school attendance, it is easy to think that 90% attendance is at a positive level but the reality is that this is equivalent to one day off school per fortnight or 95 hours of learning missed across a year. Children who have less than 90% attendance are regarded as 'persistent absentees' from school by government standards.

It is our expectation that our pupils should only miss school when it is absolutely necessary and should aim for a minimum of 97% attendance over the course of each year. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

Strong school attendance for every child is in everyone's best interests and it is the responsibility of us all. We are determined to work together with pupils and their families to make this happen.

Key Staff

This section of the policy details key staff and their responsibilities in relation to different aspects of the attendance policy.

Staff Member	Job Title	Role
Name: Charlotte Vincent Charlotte.vincent@stphilips.bdat-academies.org	Attendance Governor	To ensure that the governing body have an accurate view of attendance within school, support escalation procedures where needed and provide an appropriate level of challenge to school leaders to ensure that the attendance strategy is effective.
Name: Michelle Hargreaves michelle.hargreaves@stphilips.bdat-academies.org	Head Teacher	To ensure that there is a strong culture of promoting excellent attendance and a strategy which is led effectively by the senior leader responsible in this area.
Name: Mags Tizard mags.tizard@stphilips.bdat-academies.org	Family Liaison Officer	Operational leadership of attendance including direct work with families, home visits and liaison with Education Welfare around any legal proceedings/fixed penalty notices
	Class Teachers	To support the pupils in their form/class in maintaining excellent attendance through praise, encouragement, intervention and mentoring.
Name: Kash Devi kash.devi@stphilips.bdat-academies.org	Admin	To support with the daily attendance and absence procedures including updating registers and contacting parents via text message, email and phone call.

How Parents can Support their Child's Attendance at School

This section of the policy provides advice and guidance to parents as to how they can support their children in ensuring excellent attendance at school.

Excellent attendance at school is the part of their child's education that parents have the most impact upon. This is why Parental Responsibility Measures are clear that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act also states that:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence".

The following are some ways in which parents can support their child's attendance:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school regularly.
- Ensure that their child arrives to school punctually every day.
- Reinforce to their children the importance of education and how attending regularly leads to higher achievement.
- Contact school in a timely manner (before 9.00am) in the event that their child is going to be absent that day.
- Ensure that any medical appointments are booked outside of school hours wherever possible.
- Ensure that any leave of absence request is only made in the most exceptional of circumstances.
- Support their child's attendance (and therefore achievement) by not taking holidays during term time.
- Notify school immediately if there are any changes to details of named contacts for their child.
- Work in partnership with school staff when there are concerns about their child's attendance.

Daily Attendance Routines

The timings of the school day are outlined below:

Doors Open/School Starts	8.30am
Doors Close/Morning Registration	8.40am
Lunch Begins	12.00pm
Afternoon Begins	1.00pm
Afternoon Registration	1.05pm
End of School Day	3.10pm

St Philip's CE Primary Academy is open to pupils from 8:30am and they will be welcomed by staff at the school gates and classroom doors to support them in being ready for the day. We expect all pupils to be in school by 8.40am at the latest, so as to start lessons promptly and the enable a calm and positive start to the school day.

This period of time (8.30-8.40am) is a time when key information can be shared between teachers/support staff and parents/carers, such as trip information, medical appointments etc.

The official morning register closes at 9.10am. Pupils arriving between 8.40am and 9.10am will receive an 'L' code for late. If pupils arrive after 9.10am without a valid reason (medical appointment) they will be given an unauthorized lateness code 'U'. This counts as an absence mark against their overall attendance.

The official afternoon register is taken at 1.05pm.

Daily Absence Procedures

This section of the policy outlines the procedures that parents should follow to report their child absent from school and the systems in place within school to follow this up.

For safeguarding reasons, it is vital that school and families work in partnership so that we know why each child is absent from school on any given occasion.

When their child is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents should inform us at the earliest opportunity, and certainly by 9.00am, by either:

- Phone call to the school office – 01274 546496.
- Email the school office – office@stphilips.bdat-academies.org

It is important that parents are specific in the reasons that their child is absent from school (e.g. 'vomiting' or 'fever' rather than 'unwell' or 'a bit under the weather') as this enables us to track patterns of absence more effectively with individuals and particular groups of pupils, therefore enabling more effective support (see section on Tracking and Monitoring of Attendance Data).

This information will be processed by Mrs Devi and Mrs Tizard so that registers are accurately recorded for the day for any child who is absent from school (see section on Attendance Register Codes for more details).

After the official morning registers have been taken, we will add any late arrivals to these, so we have an accurate picture of which pupils are present in school.

This will enable us to quickly identify any pupils who are not in school and whose parents have not informed us of the reason why. From here, the following actions will be taken in order to find out the reason why and ensure the safety of the child:

- Initial phone call leaving a message.
- If parents do not make contact by 9.30am, a second phone call will be made.
- If there is still no answer, a home visit will be conducted immediately.
- Where a pupil is absent from school for ten consecutive days and no reason has been provided, this will result in a referral to Bradford Education Welfare for further support as they could be deemed as a Child Missing in Education according to local authority procedures.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the school site during the day. On the rare occasions when this may be necessary (e.g. they have become severely unwell at school or have an emergency appointment), the following will apply:

- Pupils are only allowed to leave the site with parental/carers knowledge and supervision.
- Where a pupil is unwell or there are potential safeguarding concerns, pupils will not be allowed to leave unless accompanied by an adult.

- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time. Only urgent appointments should be attended during the school day and pupils should return to school after them.
- Pupils must be signed out at reception on leaving school and signed back in on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from school, parents should report to reception before the pupil is permitted to leave the site.

These measures are taken in order to promote the safety and welfare of our pupils. It is vital that we have at least two contacts on the school system for every pupil so that we are able to do this effectively. Please contact the school office team (01274 546496) if you would like to add any additional contacts for your child.

We appreciate the support of parents in informing us in a timely manner of any absences of their children so that we can ensure that all of our pupils are safe.

Leave of Absence Requests

This section of the policy details the procedure in relation to leave of absence requests which will only be authorised in the most exceptional of circumstances.

The St Philip's CE Primary Academy term times and school holiday dates are published a year in advance and are published on the academy website (www.stphilipsceacademy.co.uk) in the 'School Office – Holiday Dates' section. Training days are published as soon as we have agreed them but may be subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity.

From 1 September 2013, a change to government laws means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for pupils to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. In line with the government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence from school. Some examples may include compassionate leave, a religious observance or sporting/musical competitions.

Parents/carers should make any such request at least three weeks in advance and in writing by completing the form in Appendix One and returning to the main school office.

All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be taken into account including:

- The time of year the pupil will be absent (e.g. a Year 6 pupil missing SATs would be extremely detrimental to them).
- The previous attendance record of the pupil.
- The number of previous requests for leave of absence.

Parents will be notified via a meeting with Mrs Tizard. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice Fine under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 where a child has ten or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a term.

Please note that from April 2023, in order to tackle unauthorised leave, Bradford Local Authority may consider legal action through the magistrates court rather than issuing a penalty notice. This is because Bradford has double the rate of absences due to unauthorised leave when compared to the national average. Further information can be found here:

<https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/content/education-safeguarding/attendance/penalty-notices>

Attendance Register Codes

This section of the policy outlines the attendance codes that are used on the register. This is not a complete list and further information can be found in the 'DFE School Attendance Guidance' which is linked in the 'Links with Guidance and Other Policies' section.

The attendance register is a compulsory legal document which must be accurately recorded by schools using these attendance codes.

Present Codes

These are used when a pupil is present in school or is at an approved off-site educational activity. They include:

- / = Morning present mark
- \ = Afternoon present mark
- L = Arrived late but before register closed
- B = Present at an approved off-site educational activity (e.g. at alternative provision)
- D = Dual-registered and expected to attend their other provision
- J = Attending an interview (e.g. a Y11 student at a Post-16 college)
- P = Approved sporting activity (e.g. a pupil who plays for the academy of a professional football club)
- V = Educational visit (e.g. where pupils are out on a school trip)
- W = Work experience (e.g. where a Y10/11 student is accessing an approved work experience placement)

Authorised Absence Codes

These are used when a pupil is absent from school but we have authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a pupil's attendance but do not

count against parents when considerations are made around any legal proceedings. They include:

- I = Absent due to illness (please note that in line with Bradford Local Authority guidance, medical evidence may be required to authorise this type of absence if a pupil's attendance is less than 90%)
- M = Absent due to medical appointment (please try to make these outside of school hours wherever possible)
- C = Other authorised absence (e.g. to attend a funeral)
- E = Absent due to being issued with a suspension from school
- R = Absent due to religious observance

Unauthorised Absence Codes

These are used when a pupil is absent from school but we have not authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a pupil's attendance and may inform any legal proceedings against parents (see section on Legal Proceedings for more details). They include:

- N = Absent without a reason being provided. As detailed above, we will make all efforts to contact parents to find out why their child is absent. If we are unable to do so, 'N' marks will be changed to 'O' marks (see below) after five working days.
- = Absent from school without authorisation. Some examples that would fall into this category include:
 - No reason being provided for an absence
 - The child is refusing to come to school
 - Truancy
 - Oversleeping/missing the bus
 - School uniform not clean
 - Birthday treats
 - Looking after younger siblings
- G = Absent due to holiday in term time
- U = Arrival after the closing time of the official morning register.

Monitoring and Tracking of Attendance Data

This section of the policy details how we track, monitor, share and analyse attendance data for individual pupils and cohorts of pupils.

In order for all stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, governors and external agencies) to work in partnership to ensure excellent attendance for pupils at St Philip's CE Primary Academy, it is important that we track the attendance of pupils and share this information.

This will be done by the following means:

- The Family Liaison Officer will make weekly checks on individual pupils' attendance and report this to the Inclusion Team, where support and actions will be discussed and assigned.
- Parents will also be informed about attendance in relation to their child individually, during target meetings via their school report etc. and the school more widely through newsletters, social media platforms and the school website.
- Attendance data by class will be shared with pupils in Collective Worship on a weekly basis. This will feed into competitions (see Rewards and Incentives section).
- Attendance data will be shared with Governors on a half-termly basis so they can fulfil their responsibilities in supporting and challenging senior leaders in relation to the attendance strategy and the impact it is having.
- We will consider local, regional, and national data to help give us context as to the attendance of students at St Philip's CE Primary Academy.
- Where attendance interventions are implemented with pupils to help them improve their school attendance, we will use data to monitor the impact and assess the efficacy of the intervention.

This list may not include everything, but it is intended to ensure that attendance remains at the front of everyone's minds so that we can work together in partnership to secure excellent attendance for all pupils.

Whole School Attendance Strategy

This section of the policy outlines the overall strategy in relation to supporting pupils to maintain excellent school attendance.

Our strategy is based on a tier model in line with best practice as recommended by the Department for Education, with the level of support dependent upon the level of attendance of the pupil.

Pupils whose attendance is below 90% are regarded as 'Persistently Absent Pupils' by the government and pupils whose attendance is below 50% are regarded as 'Severely Absent Pupils'.

The framework below shows the different tiers of the attendance model and the impact this has on their overall attendance.

Attendance Tier	Impact on Student
<u>Tier 1</u> 100%	Pupils in Tier 1 do not miss any days of school per year, and they access all learning opportunities available to them. They have the strongest chance of fulfilling their potential.
<u>Tier 2</u> 97-99%	Pupils in Tier 2 miss up to 7 days of school per year which is up to 35 hours of learning. They access the majority of learning opportunities available to them and have a strong chance of fulfilling their potential.
<u>Tier 3</u> 95%-97%	Pupils in Tier 3 miss up to 10 days of school per year which is around 50 hours of learning. They are at risk of underachievement as a result.
<u>Tier 4</u> 90%-95%	Pupils in Tier 4 miss up to 19 days of school per year. This is approximately 95 hours of learning. They are deemed to be pupils who are at risk of persistent absenteeism and are at high risk of underachievement.
<u>Tier 5</u> 88%-90%	Pupils in Tier 5 miss up to 23 days of school per year. This is approximately 110 hours of learning. They are classed as Persistently Absent pupils by the government and are at severe risk of underachievement.
<u>Tier 6</u> 50%-88%	Pupils in Tier 6 miss between 23 and 95 days of school per year. This is between one and three entire half-terms or 115-475 hours of learning. They are classed as Persistently Absent pupils by the government and are at extreme risk of underachievement.
<u>Tier 7</u> Below 50%	Pupils in Tier 7 miss over 95 days of school per year. This is over 475 hours of learning. They are deemed to be Severely Absent pupils by the government and are at critical risk of underachievement.

In order to motivate and support pupils to maintain excellent attendance or improve their attendance, we will utilise a range of strategies which may include, but aren't limited to:

- A weekly attendance trophy for class attendance.
- Termly individual reward badges (bronze, silver, gold).
- Positive communication home.
- Communication home so parents are aware of concerns and need to improve.
- Student and parental meetings with key staff.
- Attendance panel meeting with Governors.
- Referrals to external agencies (e.g. CAMHS, Education Welfare and Children's Social Care).

Punctuality

This section of the policy outlines the expectations of pupils in relation to their punctuality to school and throughout the school day.

Good punctuality on a morning and to each lesson is crucial. Lateness to school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class, as it leaves teachers having to repeat instructions and breaks the flow of a lesson. It is, therefore, a collective responsibility of all pupils to ensure they are punctual throughout the day.

We expect all pupils to be on school site by 8.40am which will enable their school day to begin in a calm and positive manner rather than having to rush.

The following actions will be taken to tackle poor punctuality:

- Late mark three times or more over a two-week period: parents asked to attend a meeting with our Family Liaison Officer.
- If poor punctuality persists, the FLO will call for a meeting with parents and the Headteacher.

Pupils with Medical Conditions, SEND and Social Workers

This section of the policy outlines the considerations that will be made for pupils with medical needs, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

At St Philip's CE Primary Academy we hold the same level of aspiration and high expectations for all of our pupils. We recognise, however, that some pupils may have additional needs or vulnerabilities that impact upon their attendance at school.

For example, some pupils may have diagnosed medical conditions which require them to attend regular hospital appointments during school hours, or complex situations at home with which Children's Social Care are supporting.

In these circumstances, we will work together with families and other professionals involved to ensure that any necessary reasonable adjustments to this policy are made. This could include referral to the Bradford Medical Needs and Hospital Education Service who are the local authority team responsible for providing education to children who are unable to attend school due to medical needs.

Formalising Support

This section of the policy outlines the more intense and formal support that will be used when informal measures have been tried without success.

We will work with Bradford Local Authority and other local agencies in a joint fashion to share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).

We will have termly targeted support meetings with the local authority's attendance team to work together on the support that is needed for persistently and severely absent pupils. We will also share information from our registers with the local authority in order to support this.

In their 2022 report, 'Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence', Ofsted advise schools to take an approach where they, 'listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate'.

This means that where a pupil's attendance is an ongoing concern, we will work with families and make referrals to external agencies to secure support in removing barriers to attendance and establishing strong attendance routines. These include:

- Parenting Contract – a voluntary agreement between parents and governors which, if unsuccessful, will lead to more formal action
- Penalty Notices – a fine issued by the local authority where a student has repeated unauthorised absence
- Education Supervision Order – where a court mandates the local authority to supervise a child's education for a period of time
- Parenting Order – where a court places a mandatory order on parents to attend guidance sessions and improve their child's attendance at school
- Prosecution – where a court prosecutes a parent who has failed to ensure their child attends school regularly under the Education Act 1996

When implementing more formal support, we will follow the staged intervention approach which is recommended by Bradford Local Authority. Further details of this can be found here:

<https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/content/education-safeguarding/attendance/poor-attendance-interventions>

These formal routes are a last resort once more informal support has been exhausted, however, we feel it is important to be open with parents in stating that we will not shy away from using them where necessary in order to help every pupil access their education.

Links with Guidance and Other Policies

The St Philip's CE Primary Academy Attendance Policy has due regard to the law on areas including:

- Parental Responsibility Measures
- Children Missing Education
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School
- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Alternative Provision
- Safeguarding
- DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance
- DFE Summary Table of Responsibilities to Improve School Attendance
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The SEND Code of Practice
- The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

This policy should also be read in line with the following St Philip's CE Primary Academy policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Accessibility Plan

Review

This policy will be reviewed annual.

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Name of School DfE No.

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Bradford Council expects all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays or leave of absence taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment. **A period of leave of absence which is not authorised by the school could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 per parent, per child being issued by Bradford Children's Services and your child losing their place at school.**

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, please complete this form and return it to school at least two weeks before the intended departure. Thank you.

PARENTS SECTION

Surname of child		First name	
Date of birth		Class	
Surname of parent/guardian		First name of parent/guardian	
Address of child			
Postcode		Telephone number	
Reason for absence			
Length of absence applied for (number of school days)		Destination	
Date of departure		Date due back in school	
Emergency telephone contact in the Bradford district			
Parent's/guardian's signature			Date

SCHOOLS SECTION

Date of meeting with parent/s		Headteacher's signature		Date
Extended leave	Approved for		School days	
	Not approved for		School days	
Ethnic origin of child	White	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Indian
Chinese	Black-Caribbean	Black-African	Black-other	Other
Gender of child	Female	Male		
Number of previous applications granted				
Please give details				

Please Retain for School Records