

Clover Hill V.A. Infant and Nursery and St Michael's V.A. Junior

Attendance Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Body of All Angels' Federation	
On:	October 2021
Chair of Governors:	Rosemary Games
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Whole School Attendance Policy

All Angels' Federation is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. A high level of school attendance is essential if pupils are to reach their full educational achievement. We will work consistently towards the achievement of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to inform pupils, parents and/or carers about the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Employment. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. These will relate to both national and Norfolk attendance targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

At All Angels' Federation, we believe that improved school attendance is a responsibility shared by governors, school staff, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governors of All Angels' Federation will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review the Federation Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body, namely the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with
- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the schools' attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governors' meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager, namely Sarah Clafin (St. Michael's VA Junior School) and Oliver Bennison (Clover Hill VA Infant & Nursery School) to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Senior Management Team at All Angels' Federation will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager, namely Sarah Claflin (St. Michael's VA Junior School) and Oliver Bennison (Clover Hill VA Infant & Nursery School) to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
- Report the schools' attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the Head Teacher or a member of staff, acting on behalf of the Head, can authorise absence.

Lateness

At All Angels' Federation all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year.

At **St. Michael's V.A. Junior School** children should arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.45am. The school gates are opened at 08.30am, after which supervision is provided in classrooms, and gates are locked, for safety reasons, at 9am. Children must enter the school through the main entrance when gates are locked. Registers at St. Michael's are taken between 8.55am and 9.05am. The registers close at **9.05am**. After this, children are deemed to be late or absent. Parents have been informed that if their child arrives at school after 9am they must report to the school office.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless an explanation given is accepted as grounds for authorising the late arrival.

The Lower School afternoon registration will be at 12.45pm. The Upper School afternoon registration will be at 1.30pm. The registers will be open for 15 minutes.

At **Clover Hill V.A. Infant & Nursery School** children should arrive at school between 8.45am and 9am. The classroom doors are opened at 8.45am. The classroom doors are locked at 9am. The school gates are locked, for safety reasons, at 9.15am. Children must enter the school through the main entrance when classroom doors are locked. Registers at Clover Hill are taken between 8.45am and 9am. Children who arrive between 9am and 9.05am will be marked as late. The registers close at **9.05am** and if children arrive after this time, they are deemed to be unauthorised late. Parents have been informed that if their child arrives at the school after 9am, they must report to the school office.

First Day Absence

On the first day of absence and each subsequent day thereafter, parents are asked to contact the school to explain why their child is away. If the school does not receive a message, office staff will make contact by telephone and use the text messaging service to alert parents. Where no such explanation has been provided, this will be considered as an unauthorised absence.

Second Day Absence

The school will continue to attempt to contact the parents until an explanation for the absence is forthcoming.

If any pupil is absent from school for a second consecutive and no contact is received by the school from parents, or any of the other emergency contacts held on file for the pupil reporting the reason for absence by 11am on the second day, then a home visit will be carried out by 2 members of school staff and a standard letter will be sent to parents. request a welfare check to be made by the police.

Sixth Day Absence

If a pupil is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days due to illness, authorised absence will only be agreed if medical evidence is presented to the school in the form of a doctor's appointment card, medicine prescribed with label or a hospital appointment/discharge letter. Where the schools have concerns, the schools reserve the right to request medical evidence.

Ten Days of Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Norfolk Pupil Attendance Service [This is a legal requirement]. The school will include details of action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the school's attendance officer and team to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nursing Team if

The problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases, the school will discuss the problem with the schools' local authority attendance support officer, who meets with the school termly to monitor all pupils' attendance.

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by all parties attending both school and for Fast Track attendance panels. Fast Track Attendance panels will also have local authority representation. Parent(s) and other agencies involved in the support of the family for example parent advisors will be invited to attend panels. At the panel where the action plan will be set it will be inclusive of engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance as well as identifying future attendance targets and review dates.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or full prosecution in the Magistrates' Court. Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

Frequent Medical Absence

The school will discuss with the School's Nursing Team those pupils who frequently miss days for medical reasons and such pupils will be requested to provide medical evidence in the form of appointment card, medicine prescribed with label, hospital appointment letter.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that pupils are helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date with information which may have been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive a full education. The school aims to be proactive with parents and will seek opportunities to discuss the child's attendance when there are growing concerns.

The Home/School agreement and school bulletins are also used to promote good attendance. The schools' termly 'traffic light' letters provide parents with an opportunity to monitor their child's attendance at regular intervals.

The schools recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Parent Support advisor
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- 1 to 1 mentoring
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Engaging the support of other agencies

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the Head teacher will consider the use of legal sanctions following consultation with the Local Authority.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. It is essential that Year 6 pupils achieve full attendance during the KS2 SATs week. Therefore, the dates of these tests are published to parents as soon as possible in the academic year. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

Holidays during term time will not be authorised. The school implements the Local Authority system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention through the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where they have:

1. 10 consecutive sessions¹ of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time (for absences from 1 September 2017); or
2. 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment within 21 days. If a Notice is unpaid within 21 days, the fine will double to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. If a fixed penalty notice fine is not paid in full within the timescale set out above, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against the parent(s) in the local Magistrates' Court for the offence of failing to ensure their child has attended school regularly.

A leave of absence form is available on the school's website under School Info and Policies or can be collected from the school office.

Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

All Angels' Federation acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions; religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Traveller Absence

1. The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.
2. To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, s. 86 of The Education Act 1944 states that a Traveller parent shall be entitled to be acquitted if his or her child accrues 200 attendances (i.e., 200 half days) during the period of twelve months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted, if the family are of no fixed abode.
3. However, it should be noted that this provision applies only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.
4. When trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Norfolk, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

¹Please note that the school day consists of 2 sessions.

5. All Angels' Federation will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended either Clover Hill V.A. Infant & Nursery School or St. Michael's V.A. Junior School in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at either Clover Hill V.A. Infant & Nursery School or St. Michael's V.A. Junior School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.
6. All Angels' Federation can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:
 - Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
 - Inform the school regarding proposed return dates
7. Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:
 - The child is on roll and attending another visited school
 - Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
8. Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Attendance Awards

The schools will reward good attendance with certificates.

The Registration System

The school uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance record using the standard DfE codes to record attendance information.

Registers by law must be kept for at least three years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes as well as preserved as electronic back-ups.

Computerised registers are taken at the start of every morning and afternoon session. Each class teacher inputs a present mark for all pupils in attendance, any pupil who is not in attendance is marked absent. The school's office staff check if the pupil is in school or not, and to ascertain that contact has been made with the parent/carer if absent and that the pupils' records are marked appropriately regarding the reason for non-attendance.

All changes and amendments to the electronic registers are time stamped and logged within the management information system and can be retrieved for review at a later date.

In the event of the electronic registers being unavailable, a backup process is used and it is the school's office staff responsibility to establish attendance or absence for each pupil on roll, together with absence reason. The office staff are responsible for making contact with parents/carers where no contact had been received, and recording the information gathered respectively as soon as the electronic system is online again. The office staff will liaise with the pastoral team when following up absence.

Register Security

The computerised register can only be accessed through a password system known only to the authorised users.

Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

Please see the schools' websites for relevant school policies that have been approved by the Governing Body.

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our schools' websites and is available on request from either school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in October 2021.

Appendix 1: The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day-to-day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll Keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [School Attendance Targets] (England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on Attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Appendix2: Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, All Angels' Federation defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Regular attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

An **“authorised absence”** as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An **“unauthorised absence”** as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

“Parent” as

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- School attendance, DfE (2016)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: statutory guidance, DfE (revised March 2017)
- Norfolk County Council Children Missing Education Practice & Procedures
- ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’, DfE (2021)

Name of School: **St. Michael's V.A.
Junior School**

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Important Information for Parents

- Head teachers comply with the 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (2006) Regulations 2013 which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the Head teacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not
- Head teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed
- If leave of absence is granted, please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time
- Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Full name of child/ren..... Class

Address.....

From (1st day of absence) To (last day of absence)

Total number of school days.....Expected date of return to school.....

Reason for proposed absence - please provide reasons to support the application including evidence:

Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I undertake to make sure my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s): Date:

Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been:

Agreed Days agreed Not agreed

Signature of Head Teacher:

Head Teacher Comment:

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