



Ashton St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Attendance Policy

Attendance Target for 2025/2026: 96.7%

Ratified: March 2026

Review Date: March 2026

1. Policy Statement and Rationale

Ashton St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils attend school regularly and punctually so that they can fully benefit from the educational opportunities provided. Regular attendance is essential for pupils' learning, wellbeing and safeguarding, and is a key factor in enabling pupils to achieve positive outcomes.

We recognise that attendance is influenced by a range of factors and that barriers to attendance can be complex. The school therefore adopts a **support-first approach**, working in close partnership with parents, carers, pupils and external agencies to identify concerns early and provide timely, proportionate support to improve attendance.

This policy reflects the school's commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and safeguarding, and recognises that persistent absence may be a sign that a child is at risk of harm or disengagement from education.

2. Legal Framework and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been written with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- **Education Act 1996**
- **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**, as amended
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**
- **Working together to improve school attendance** (DfE, statutory guidance, August 2024)
- **Children Missing Education** (DfE statutory guidance)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (DfE)
- Local Authority guidance, including the **National Framework for Penalty Notices**

The policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

3. Promoting Good Attendance

Ashton St. Peter's promotes good attendance by:

- Creating a welcoming, inclusive and supportive school environment

- Building strong relationships with pupils and families
- Communicating clear expectations about attendance and punctuality
- Recognising and celebrating good and improved attendance
- Ensuring pupils feel safe, supported and motivated to attend school

Attendance is embedded within the school's culture and is viewed as a shared responsibility.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a clear, effective attendance policy
- Holding leaders to account for attendance outcomes
- Reviewing attendance data and trends

4.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance and will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently
- Promote a whole-school culture of good attendance
- Ensure statutory duties relating to attendance are fulfilled

4.3 Attendance Leaders

The Attendance leaders (Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, supported by the Family support worker) are responsible for:

- Day-to-day leadership of attendance
- Monitoring attendance data regularly
- Identifying pupils or groups at risk of poor attendance
- Coordinating early help and targeted interventions
- Liaising with the Local Authority, Access and Inclusion Service and other agencies
- Reporting attendance information to senior leaders and governors

4.4 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting high expectations for attendance and punctuality
- Completing registers accurately and on time
- Following up absence in line with this policy
- Identifying and raising concerns where attendance may be a safeguarding issue

4.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day the school is open

- Contact the school promptly on the first day of absence
- Provide explanations for absence when requested
- Avoid arranging holidays or appointments during term time wherever possible
- Engage with the school to address any attendance concerns

5. Registration Procedures

The school day is divided into two sessions: morning and afternoon.

- Morning registers open at **8:45am** and close at **9:00am**
- Afternoon registers open at **1:10pm** and close at **1:20pm**

Registers are completed in accordance with statutory requirements and using the appropriate **DfE attendance and absence codes**.

- Pupils arriving after the register has opened but before it closes will be marked as **late (L)**
- Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as **unauthorised absence (U)** for that session

Pupils arriving late must report to the school office and be signed in.

In exceptional circumstances an agreement may be made between parents and the school, with agreement of the attendance officer, that pupils will be marked as **late (L)** up until 9:30am.

The school uses its Management Information System (MIS) to record attendance and will share daily attendance data with the Department for Education and the Local Authority as required.

6. Absence Procedures

6.1 Reporting Absence

Parents and carers must inform the school on the **first day of absence**, preferably in the morning, by:

- Using the Studybugs app
- Emailing the school office
- Phoning the school office

Where a pupil is absent unexpectedly and no contact has been received, the school will attempt to contact parents or carers on the same day as part of its safeguarding duty.

If there is any doubt about a pupil's whereabouts, immediate action will be taken to establish contact and ensure the child's safety.

7. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

7.1 Authorised Absence

Only the school can authorise absence. Absence may be authorised where the school is satisfied that there is a genuine and unavoidable reason, such as:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments (where unavoidable during school hours)
- Exceptional family circumstances

7.2 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be recorded as unauthorised where:

- No explanation is provided
- The explanation is not considered acceptable
- A pupil is absent without permission, even if supported by a parent

8. Persistent and Long-Term Absence

The school defines persistent absence in line with national thresholds (10 sessions, equivalent to 5 full days).

Attendance data is reviewed regularly to identify patterns or concerns. Where attendance falls below expected levels:

- Early support will be offered to the family
- Barriers to attendance will be explored
- Individual attendance support plans may be put in place

For long-term (up to four consecutive days) or recurring absence due to illness, medical evidence may be requested. Where appropriate, the school will work with external agencies to ensure continuity of education.

9. Leave of Absence in Term Time

The school follows the statutory regulations regarding leave of absence in term time.

Headteachers may only grant leave in **exceptional circumstances** and each request will be considered on an individual basis.

The following are **not** considered exceptional circumstances:

- Family holidays
- Availability of cheaper travel or accommodation
- Poor weather during school holidays
- Overlap with the start or end of term

Unauthorised leave may result in a **Penalty Notice** being issued in line with the **National Framework for Penalty Notices** and Local Authority procedures.

10. Legal Intervention

Where attendance does not improve despite support and intervention, the school may:

- Refer the case to the Local Authority
- Request formal attendance action
- Support the Local Authority in legal proceedings where necessary

Legal intervention will always be used proportionately and as a last resort.

11. Safeguarding

Attendance is closely linked to safeguarding. Poor attendance, unexplained absence or patterns of lateness may indicate that a child is at risk.

The school will follow safeguarding procedures where attendance concerns raise welfare or protection issues and will work with relevant agencies as required.

12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Attendance data is monitored regularly by school leaders and reviewed by governors. The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated through:

- Attendance and persistent absence data
- Case reviews and interventions
- Feedback from pupils, parents and staff

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes to legislation or guidance.

Ratified by: *D. Bower*
Headteacher

Date: February 2026