



St Francis of Assisi
COLLEGE

Attendance & Punctuality **Handbook** 2024-2025

Visit our website at
www.stfrancis.cc

What if absence is essential?

It is important to get a message to school - it is the responsibility of parents/carers to let the school know the reason for their child's absence as soon as possible, before 9am on the first day of absence. Your child deserves a rigorous education and all the opportunities that St Francis of Assisi has to offer. Coming to school every day is essential for your child's academic, social and personal development.

What are parental/carer responsibilities?

If your child is aged between 5 and 16, you must make sure he/she attends school regularly and stays in school. This is law. You can be taken to court for breaking this law (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Parents should ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn. This means pupils should wear school uniform. They must have their books, pens, pencils, PE kit etc. They must be ready to learn so they should not be too tired, worried or hungry.

Parents must also make sure that pupils complete homework on time and keep to school rules about behaviour.





Attendance Criteria

Why is good attendance important?

- To aid academic progress
- To avoid gaps in learning.
- To help achieve good exam results.
- To help with getting to sixth form, college, an apprenticeship or university.
- To help get a good job.
- To develop a good Progress file
- To prevent court action
- To form and maintain friendships



What is a 'Persistently Absent (PA) Pupil'?

You should not keep your child from school or allow them to be absent:

- Your child becomes a 'persistently absent' (PA) pupil when attendance falls below 90%.
- A PA pupil will be monitored by their HAL and the Attendance Officer. If your child's attendance is under 90%, we will not authorise any absence without medical evidence (e.g. prescriptions, stamped appointment cards).
- As a school we monitor attendance very closely. If your child's attendance drops below 95% they will be monitored closely.

What can I do to improve attendance?

Here are some of the things that your child can do to ensure that they achieve and maintain good attendance and punctuality:

Have an evening and morning routine that allows a minimum of 8 hours sleep.

- Limit digital technology use - e.g. gaming, social media, apps etc. and finish at least one hour before bed.
- Allow enough time in the morning for your child to get ready, have breakfast and travel to school and arrive on time.
- Have their own alarm clock.
- Get a reliable friend to call for them in the morning.
- Get their equipment and bag ready the night before.
- Have a regular study time each evening.
- Not waiting for friends in the morning before school.
- Learn bus timetables in advance and have a contingency plan in place.
- Ensure that the time they leave home allows for them to arrive at school between 8:30-8:45am

It will also help if parents/carers:

Take an interest in school work

Work with and support school

Praise their child's efforts

Check classcharts regularly



What absences are not appropriate?

- To look after the house or other members of the family.
- To go shopping or to visit relatives.
- Because they are menstruating.
- Because they got up late.
- Because they don't want to come to school.
- For family birthdays or to go on family outings.

What about holiday?

The Department of Education has introduced amendments to holidays taken in term time. The Headteacher will **not be able to grant** any leave of absence during term time, for any purpose unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you decide to take a holiday in term time and it has not been authorised by the school you will receive a **fixed penalty**, where the parent/carer will have to **pay £80 for each child removed from school**. This will need to be **paid within 21 days** and, if not paid within this time, the charge **will rise to £160 per child and must be paid within 28 days** to avoid potential prosecution



What is an authorised absence?

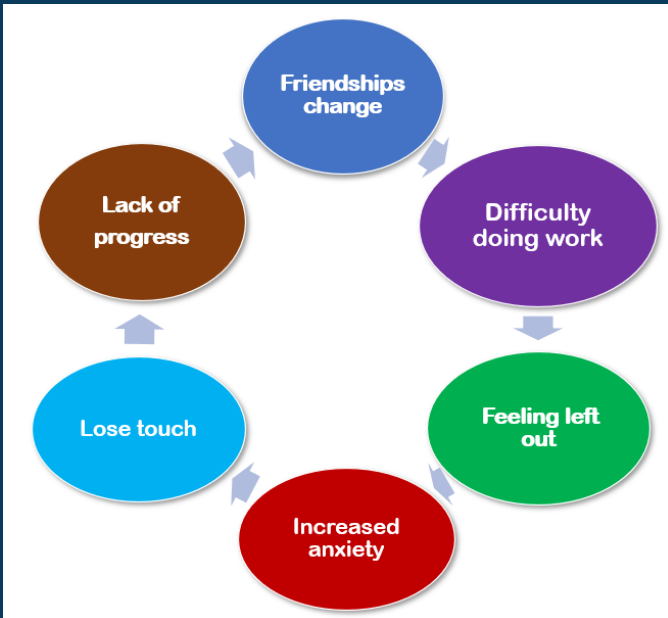
Parents and carers can explain absences but they cannot authorise them. Only the school can decide whether explanations about absences are acceptable and can be authorized. For persistent absence, the school will insist on a doctor's note or that medical evidence is provided.

What about absence for dental/medical treatment?

Your child may have to be absent from school for medical or dental treatment. The school must be informed if the appointment is during school time, but where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours.

What happens if a child misses too much

School? If a child does not attend school everyday, the following can happen:



What rewards are there for excellent attendance and punctuality?

Pupils will receive regular rewards for 100% attendance:

- Classcharts points every ½ term and full term.
- Pupils will be entered into a prize draw every half term with a chance to win a range of prizes.
- All pupils who achieve a whole year of 100% attendance will be recognised in assembly, receive additional points and be entered for the big prize draw.
- Each year group will have an attendance week focus. Competitions will run during this week and aim to improve the attendance of that year group.

Remember

- 7 sessions (3 and a half days) missed in each half term = a persistently absent (PA) pupil.
- Missed lessons = Missed opportunities.
- Being on time shows that pupils are reliable and organised, and know that school matters.
- Employers want good time keepers.
- Excellent attendance (97% and above) = Excellent Progress

What happens if pupils are late?

Your child will be at a disadvantage.

- They may miss important notices during line up
- Pupils should arrive on school site between 8:30 and 8:45am. If they arrive after 8:55am they will be marked as late and receive a late detention.
- If your child arrives after 9:20am, it is an unauthorised absence and will be coded as 'U' (arrived after registration closed).
- If your child has 5 or more late marks during the week they will be placed on a punctuality report card and you will be contacted by their tutor.
- Pupils who arrive late will miss their break time on the same day.

Keeping in Touch Visits

St. Francis of Assisi's Attendance Welfare Officer (EWO) may complete a Keeping in Touch visit for pupils, where they attend the family home. These visits can take place for a range of reasons e.g. the pupil is not in school and the parents/carers have not contacted the school to inform them of the reason. This is a procedure that the school has to follow by law, to ensure that all pupils are safe.

Please remember that parents are expected to provide medical evidence for prolonged periods of absence, otherwise risk being fined by the local authority.

Attendance for ONE term	In ONE term your child will have missed	In a YEAR your child will have missed
90%	1 week 2 days	4 weeks
80%	2 weeks 4 days	8 weeks
70%	4 weeks 1 day	12 weeks
60%	5 weeks 3 days	16 weeks
50%	7 weeks	20 weeks
40%	8 weeks 2 days	24 weeks
30%	9 weeks 1 day	28 weeks



Only the
best
is good
enough



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