



St Faith's

Church of England
Infant and Nursery School

Attendance Policy Summary 2026-27

As you will now be aware, we have adopted a new Attendance Policy that has been written by Lincolnshire County Council. It is a long document with a lot of information in it.

Please ensure that you read the full policy.

However, these key notes provide a summary of the policy for your reference.

Good school attendance is essential for all children to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

We ask that you:

- Contact the school on 01522 888988 or enquires@st-faiths.lincs.sch.uk if your child is absent, providing a reason why. This should be done each day of the absence, and you should ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Ask the school for help if your child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork, or home and family life, so that we can offer support at the earliest opportunity, including informing us of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Avoid unnecessary absences, for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.

Understanding types of absence

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- 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 taken during term-time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Any other absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Levels of Absence

95% +	Good attendance , keep it up!
90-95%	At risk of persistent absence , needs to improve, we are monitoring this closely.
80-90%	Persistent absence , support will be put in place
50-80%	At risk of severe absence , Attendance meetings will be held
50% -	Severe absence , attendance panels with governors and the local authority.

When attendance drops below 90%, and no exceptional circumstances are recognised, you will receive a letter or be invited to meeting as a notice to improve this. This will be very supportive. A timescale will be agreed and if your child's attendance does not improve further action will need to be taken. This may include further meetings of support and legal proceedings with the local authority. This may lead to prosecution.

Requesting Leave of absence

A request for the leave of absence must be submitted prior to the absence. An absence form from the office needs to be completed (with the exception of certain medical appointments). The leave is only granted at the discretion of the Head Teacher. All applications for leave will be responded to by email or in writing. There are some exceptional circumstances when a leave of absence will be authorised. When leave is not granted, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may lead to legal action.

Common Absence Requests:

- **Medical appointments** wherever possible should be made outside of school time. Where this is not possible, your child should not miss the whole day for an appointment. Evidence of this appointment will be required.
- **Religious observances** may be considered as special leave. Please request this in advance.
- **Family Holidays** cannot be authorised by the school unless we deem them to be exceptional circumstances. Where your child / children are absent from school for more than 4.5 days a fixed term penalty will be issued. In the first instance this is currently £80 per child and per parent. The cost of this increases each time a holiday is taken.
Where a request to the school is not made and a holiday is still taken, a fine may still be issued. The fine is issued following your child's return to school.
- **Visiting a new school** will be authorised.
- **Other Absences** will be considered on an individual basis e.g. a family wedding or funeral or to participate in an agreed sporting event.

Parents will **not** be able to request leave of absence for a family holiday, unless they can demonstrate that there are **exceptional circumstances** involved with this. Where a parent or carer feels there are exceptional circumstances, requests for authorised holidays must be made in advance (4 weeks' notice) in writing to the Headteacher for consideration. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If leave is not authorised, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Fixed Penalty Notices for holidays in term time

Where families choose to take holidays during term time, and it is not due to exceptional circumstances, as a school we are required by law to issue a fixed penalty notice. These are then issued by the local authority and families are fined per parent per child. The current fine is £80 per parent per child if it is paid within 21 days of receipt. This increases to £160 per parent per child if it is paid within 28 days. If the fine is still not paid further legal action may be taken and this can lead to you being taken to court for your child's non-attendance.

A Penalty Notice can be issued under the following legislation:

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act
- In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.

As detailed on the Lincolnshire County Council Website,

'From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. There is no option for a reduction for a second fine, and a third fine cannot be issued within 3 years, we must consider prosecution instead.

If you do not pay a fine within 28 days, have received the maximum number of fines, or we feel that a fine would not be effective, we may prosecute you for non-attendance.

After 28 days we may prosecute you.'

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school by email or come and chat to us. We are here to help and to work with you and your family to achieve great attendance.

Thank you for your continued support, The Attendance Team.

Amanda Konrath (Head teacher), Lisa Kingston (Attendance Champion) and Kerry Lower (Administrator)