

# St Andrew's Church of England Primary School



*With Faith, Hope and Love we can achieve greater things.*

*Attendance and Punctuality Policy  
September 2015 - September 2018*

*L Thompson*

*The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the learning, progress and safeguarding of all pupils. St Andrew's Primary School expects all pupils to have good attendance of at least 95%. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure regular pattern is maintained. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place the appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

### **AIMS**

- To maximise attendance of all pupils, ensuring maximum learning opportunities.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor, communicate and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.
- To improve attendance to a minimum of 96%

### **HOW IS ATTENDANCE DESCRIBED AT ST ANDREW'S?**

100%	Outstanding
97-99%	Good
95-96	Satisfactory
90-94	Cause for Concern
<90	Unacceptable

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## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents will:

- Ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (8.55 a.m.).
- Ensure any child arriving after the start of school accesses school via the main office.
- Contact the school on the first day of any absence before 9.30 am. This may be done by phone, by letter or in person. (Verbal messages on the parent's behalf from an adult relative or representative such as a child-minder or friend may be accepted at the school's discretion on the first day of absence - subsequent absences must be explained by the parent. Verbal messages from children, e.g. siblings, will not be accepted).
- Contact the school in advance if their child will be absent for any reason (e.g. medical appointment).
- Avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
- Ensure family holidays are not booked during term time.
- Notify school in advance if they intend to remove their child permanently from the school for any reason.
- Work with the school and Education Welfare Officer to improve lateness and attendance.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving.
- Talk to their child's class teacher in the first instance.

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## SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon:
  - Rec and KS1  
Morning register; 8:55am  
Afternoon register: 1:00pm
  - KS2  
Morning register; 8:55am  
Afternoon register: 1:15pm
- Consistently record reasons for absence and indicate if absence is authorised or not.
- Contact parents / carers on the first day of any absence if no reason is given by 9.30 am.
- Notify parents/ carers at least annually, of their child's attendance level.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the Education Welfare Officer and support their work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To promote good attendance.

## **GOVERNORS**

- It is the *Governors* responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools.
- Attendance figures are presented to the *Governing Body* on a termly basis.

## **ABSENCE**

- Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence.
- There are two main categories of absences:
  - *Authorised Absence*: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
  - *Unauthorised Absence*: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request. Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

## **ACCEPTABLE REASON FOR ABSENCE**

- Illness (evidence may be asked for)
- Days agreed by school as religious observance

## **UNACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

- Truancy (absence without parents/carers knowledge)
- Minding the house
- Shopping/running errands (eg buying new shoes or clothes)
- Looking after sick relatives
- Looking after brothers or sisters
- School clothing in the wash
- Oversleeping

- Headlice
- Birthday
- Parents illness
- Children at different school not in school
- Last day of term
- Child not wanting to come to school
- Holiday (whole weeks or odd days)
- Any other reason that the Headteacher deems unacceptable.

*If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under the Education Act 1996 and can be served with a penalty notice by an authorised officer.*

#### **APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME (for exceptional circumstances)**

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made as far in advance as possible by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. These may be obtained from the school office. Parents have no entitlement to leave of absence and authorisation will only be given for "Exceptional circumstance"

New legislation introduced in Sept 2013 states that parents do not have the right to take their child/ren out of school during term time, parents can be fined £60 per child, per parent in the first instance for doing so except in exceptional circumstances. By law you must ask permission for your child to miss school. If you don't you risk being served a penalty notice from the local authority.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your family holidays are taken during the school holiday period.

## **LATENESS**

Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.

- Children must be in class by 8.55 am each day. Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time. Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken.
- Children who arrive after the bell at 8.55 must come into the building via the main office, where they will be entered into the late book.
- If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed at 9.30, this may be recorded as an unauthorised absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- Lateness will be monitored. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem.

## **THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

### **ABSENCE MONITORING**

Staff in the school office will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss weekly with the Head Teacher and the Pastoral leader who monitors attendance. Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: When attendance levels fall below 95% a letter will be sent home to parents to advise them that their child's attendance has the potential to become a cause for concern and will be monitored.

Stage 2: If attendance becomes a cause for concern (falls below 90%), a letter will be sent to parents inviting them in to school to complete a parental contract to discuss ways in which attendance can be supported and improved. This will then be reviewed within 4 weeks to see if any improvement has occurred.

Stage 3: If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues. Should concerns persist the EWO will agree action and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action.

### **LATENESS MONITORING**

Stage 1: If a pattern of lateness develops, a letter will be sent home to alert parents to the concern.

Stage 2: If lateness persists a letter will be sent home inviting parents in for a meeting to discuss the concerns.

Stage 3: If concerns persist, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service.

### **PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by

- awarding a trophy to the classes in ks1 and 2 with the highest attendance for the week in Friday's celebration assembly.
- awarding an individual pupil from year 1-6 with a "golden fiver" in assembly - this pupil should have 100% attendance and have been in school on time every day during the week.
- Children who have 100% attendance for the half term will all receive a sticker and be entered into a prize draw for each phase.
- awarding a prize to all individual children who get 100% attendance for the whole academic year (September to July).

- Children in EYFS with 100% attendance will be able to take home "attendance Ted" for the weekend.

This policy was approved by *Governors* on

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First day contact procedures

**1st day of absence:**

1. As soon as the registers are complete, office staff to check absentees against messages received.
2. At 9:30 for pupils for whom no message has been received, staff will send a text message to prompt parents to contact school. (now including Nursery)
3. If following text message no message has been received by 10:30am, then a phone call is to be made.
4. When contact is made, the parent will be asked for the reason for absence. A decision will be made by the school whether the reason provided is sufficient to authorise the absence. If the absence will not be authorised the parent will be informed.
5. In the case of minor ailments, the parent will be encouraged to send the child in with an assurance that school staff will monitor their child closely. (NB—if there has been a pattern of specific symptoms in the school or community, such minor illnesses may be treated as a valid reason for absence.)
6. Reasons for absence will then be added to the register.

**2<sup>nd</sup> day of absence:**

1. If contact was not possible by phone on day 1, a second text message will be sent to prompt parents to contact school.
2. If following text message no message has been received by 10:30am, then a phone call is to be made.
3. If contact was made on day 1, no repeat calls will be made on day 2.

**3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence:**

1. If contact was not possible by phone on day 1 or day 2 and the child continues to be absent the Education Welfare Officer will be contacted.
2. If contact was made on day 1 call parent for update on health and discuss

return to school.

In situations where there are concerns for a child's safety and well-being, the case maybe escalated to the EWO earlier.