

ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE

&

PUNCTUALITY

POLICY 2018-2019

“ATTEND TODAY-ACHIEVE TOMORROW”



ATTENDANCE WORKS

POLICY APPROVED JANUARY 2018-TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY



Overall Aims:

- Maintain an attendance rate of 96.4% and above.
- Maintain parents 'and pupils 'awareness of the importance of regular attendance, which impacts on learning.
- Maintain good timekeeping

Policy Statement

Poor attendance and punctuality can have a direct effect on the academic achievement of pupils.

Attendance is a whole school issue and involves all in the broad community. Great effort is made at St John's to involve parents/carers, support agencies, the Governors, church community, all staff and children in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders settle into school more easily.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteacher:

Responsibility for attendance matters have been delegated by the Head to the HSLO who reports regularly through weekly meetings, informal reporting and use of written and computer reports. Poor attendance will lead to formal letters or meetings with parents.

Teachers:

Teachers have a statutory duty to register children at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Accurate marking of the registers is essential. The importance of good attendance is promoted through class discussions. Awards are given for the class and individuals who achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality. Teachers also have a responsibility to bring any concerns regarding punctuality and attendance to the notice of the HSLO.

Pupils:

- Attend school regularly.
- Also, to be on time, before the register is submitted at 9.00am.



Home School Liaison Officer:

The HSLO is responsible for monitoring the attendance registers (Scholar Pack) and monitoring lateness each morning. The school gate opens at 8.45am with the monitoring of any lateness after 9.00am.

Through the monitoring of attendance and punctuality discussions are held between the Headteacher and HSLO regarding cases which need to be referred to the Education Welfare Department. The HSLO then makes formal referrals, liaises with the Education Welfare Department and has monthly meetings with the Education Welfare Officer allocated to the school.

- The HSLO generates communication with parents, carers by telephone, in person and in writing.
- The HSLO also follows up unexplained absences by first day calling followed by letters/emails if necessary-also to remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality by the schools current reward system of house points/tokens/stickers.
- Annual reports with attendance data for your child.
- Inform parent/carers if we have any concerns regarding a child's attendance and punctuality-this may include meeting in school to discuss and offer any support needed.
- Continuation of any concerns will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer for Southwark.
- Report school attendance statistics termly to local authority or as and when required.
- Follow up and monitor any long term absences or persistent absence.

Parents:

- Ensure your child attends the school regularly-Absence should only happen when your child is significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend school, or if there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty in your child attending.
- Telephone (020 7703 4920) or email-office@stjohnswalworth.southwark.sch.uk on the first morning of any absence to give us the reason and to tell us when the child is likely to return to school.
- Arrange all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays wherever possible.
- Frequent absence claimed as illness must be supported by medical evidence.
- Inform staff/office if there is a problem that might lead to any absences.
- Make sure we always have your current contact numbers; this includes all emergency contacts, family/child-minders and carers as well.



Administrative Office:

Registers are set up at the beginning of the school year on the computer. Arrivals after 9.00 a.m. are recorded by the HSLO. Telephone communications are also recorded and passed on to the HSLO. Also, to place children on and off roll-this is done systematically by administrative staff and the HSLO.

Expectations

We expect that pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time
- Let staff know if there is any problem that might prevent them from attending.

We expect that parents and carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly.
- Ensure their child arrives on time for school.
- Contact the school if their child is unable to attend for a valid reason and provide a note or telephone call if that is the school requirements if they wish the absence to be considered for authorisation.
- Ensure their children are prepared with necessary equipment to attend school.
- Support the school in its aim to raise the achievement of their children through full attendance at school.

The school will:

- Make efficient and accurate registration of pupils.
- Make immediate contact with parents if a child fails to attend without a satisfactory explanation.
- Provide regular reports on the schools attendance statistics.
- Promote positive attendance by taking account of pupil's individual needs.
- Have in place clear communication routes to discuss any difficulties which may be preventing pupils from attending school.

Authorised Absence:

Some absences are allowed by law. For example if a child is ill, close family bereavement, religious observance. The Education Act 1996 provides that no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. However, the school should always be alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence as part of normal monitoring procedures.



Unauthorised Absence

There are also times when children are absent for reasons that are not permitted by law. For example a term time holiday/cheap flights. Where there is no explanation for an absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'-this could result in a fixed penalty fine or other legal action.

Reasons for absence, which can or cannot be authorised, can be found at www.dfes.gov/publications/guidanceonthelaw/10.99/register.htm

Note: The presence of a parental note does not automatically lead to the authorisation of an absence.

Penalty Notices (Irregular Attendance and Term Time Leave).

The governors have agreed to follow local authority guidance, full details to be found at: www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200334/behaviour_attendance_and_truancy/3582/

Exceptional Leave:

By law Head Teachers may not authorise leave in term time for pupils unless there are 'Exceptional circumstances'.

- The Head teacher may, on rare occasions, make a judgement that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term time e.g. Death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil or a life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and parent/carers could be liable for a fixed penalty charge or other legal action and in certain cases the child could lose their school place.

Please remember absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly and on time.

- Please note if you are changing schools for your child because of moving or transferring to a new school-we need to know all your forwarding details, also a start date should be noted. If the school does not have all the relevant details and where you have gone then your child will be considered to be a '**Child Missing in Education**'. This means that the local authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children Services, the police and other agencies to try and locate your child.



Punctuality:

- It is important for the children to be on time for school as they will miss valuable learning time.
- The school gate opens at 8.45am –the children go straight up to class for 9.00am registration.
- Arrivals after this time will be classed as late and must come through the school office and receive a late mark.
- Persistent or frequent late arrivals after the morning registers have closed (9.30am) will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U'-which is effectively an absence.
- All lateness is recorded daily, this information is also reviewed at attendance meetings and appropriate action taken.
- Your child should be collected promptly at the end of the school day which is 3:10pm for Infant classes and 3:20pm for the rest of the school.

Where late collections are persistent, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns with other agencies if necessary.

School Attendance and the Law.

Parents and carers are legally bound in ensuring that their children attend school consistently and punctual. Failure to do so would ultimately result in legal action being taken against them by the local authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education Regulation 2006 take a register mark at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions with the appropriate registration code which can be located at the back of this document.

Under the Education Regulation 2006 only the school can authorise any absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised until clarification is provided by the parent/carer as to the reason of absence. The school will then use the appropriate national code accordingly-(See back page of document).

Register Code Description

- / Present AM
- \ Present PM
- L Late (before registers closed)
- C Other Authorised Circumstances
- E Excluded
- F Extended holiday
- H Holiday agreed
- I Illness NOT appointments
- M Appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller Absence
- B Off site Ed. not dual
- J Interview
- P Sports
- V Visit or trip
- W Work experience
- G Holiday NOT agreed
- N No reason Unauthorised absence
- U Late (after registers)
- D Dual registration
- Y Absent due to exceptional circumstances
- # School Closed to all Pupils
- Z Pupil not on roll
- X For Early Years