

# St Andrew's C.E. Primary School

## Attendance Policy



### Mission Statement

*We believe that St. Andrew's C.E. Primary School exists to provide life's main opportunities for our children guided by and learning from the example and teaching of Jesus Christ.*

*These opportunities come from an ethos and curriculum that provide maximum learning experiences for each individual child, no matter what their particular learning abilities may be.*

*We will aspire to a curriculum which results in the enjoyment of learning, children who feel good about themselves and in which everyone can be good at something. We will encourage pupils to show tolerance and respect for each other, set themselves high standards, to take pride in their work and do their best.*

*We will provide curriculum enrichment activities including first hand experiences, creative opportunities, visits and visitors.*

*We will offer every child the chance to achieve as much as they are able.*

*We will achieve high standards for all children, giving them secure foundations for future learning and success in life.*

### ***Growing in Faith Hope and Love***

#### **Rationale**

We believe that there is a strong link between a pupil's school attendance and their attainment. We also believe that good attitudes to attending school all through school life are formed in a child's early years in school. Therefore, we feel we have a responsibility both legally and morally in ensuring all pupils attend school regularly. This policy, therefore, sets out our legal responsibilities and the expectations we have of parents/ carers and staff in meeting our aims. This policy should also be read alongside the school Parental Involvement and Positive Communication Policies

#### **School Attendance and the Law**

Under the **1996 Education Act**, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. The register is a legal document and schools must, under the **Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006** take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see Appendix A).

Under the **Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006**, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an 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. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and 2016**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.

Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School, the governors acknowledge that 'exceptional' circumstances do not occur regularly, by definition.

The following circumstances would generally not be considered as 'exceptional':

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays
- Shopping
- Birthday treats

It would not be expected that 'exceptional' circumstances would occur more than once during a child's time at our school. It is an offence for a parent to allow their child to be absent from school for 10 or more school sessions (1 session being half a school day) during two consecutive school half terms (ie, 5 school days) without permission.

An unauthorised absence is:

- Any absence from school that the school has not permitted or cannot give permission for
- Persistent late arrival at school

In these circumstances a formal letter of warning will be issued advising parents that a Penalty Notice may be issued. This warning letter will also include details of the child's absences. This is an opportunity for the parents to work with the school to improve the child's attendance and avoid the need to issue a Penalty Notice. If there is no improvement then a Penalty Notice will be issued.

A Penalty Notice will be issued without warning for the deliberate taking of holiday in term time without/against school permission, where it can clearly be demonstrated that the parent understood that permission would not have been granted and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence of at least 5 days over two consecutive school half terms. Should it be brought to the attention of the school that a holiday is being taken but the school has been informed that the child is absent for a different reason eg illness, then a Fixed Penalty Fine will be issued and families will be required to provide evidence that the absence is one that should be authorised during the legal process that follows the issue of such a fine.

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and 2016**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. Amendments to 2007 regulations reduced the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Also amendments were made so that parents must, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Under the **Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 (R12)** deletions from the School Roll must be reported to the Local Authority by the school giving reasons for that pupil's removal prior to deletion. In compliance with the **Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6)** the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Key Worker from the Early Intervention and Connexions Service who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

Updates to the DfE School Attendance Guidance due to the Coronavirus Pandemic can be found at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907535/School\\_attendance\\_guidance\\_for\\_2022\\_to\\_2023\\_academic\\_year.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2022_to_2023_academic_year.pdf)

### **Requests for leave of absence other than holidays**

Parents sometimes wish to request leave of absence for their child which would not be classed as a holiday. These may include:

- attendance at weddings or funerals (the child's immediate family – parents, grandparents, siblings i.e. brother/sister; step brother/sister)
- attending graduation ceremonies for immediate (see previous point) family members
- taking part in a recognised sporting competition (e.g. competing for town or county schools sports team) or other extra-curricular activity (e.g. acting or modelling assignments)
- attending special award ceremonies with parents
- attendance at recognised religious events
- celebrating religious events (e.g. Eid)

These will be treated on their individual merits. However, requests must still be made in writing to the head teacher and corroborative evidence should be provided by parents making these requests. Leave of absence for religious observances will always be granted.

### **Roles Responsibilities and Procedures School**

Registers are taken by staff at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Morning registration takes place between 9.00am and 9:05am and afternoon registration is 1pm - 1:05 pm. Lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence when the reason given was avoidable and/ if it has occurred after 9.25 am.

All messages from parents reporting absences are recorded in the school office and marked on the electronic registration system.

If a pupil is absent and no message has been received by a parent/carer then the office staff will attempt to make contact with them after 9.30 am on the first day of absence. Attempts and outcomes of contact will be logged at the office.

The Head teacher/ Deputy are responsible for authorising all holidays applied to be taken in term time. The office staff will supply parents/carers with the appropriate form and ensure they receive a copy of the outcome.

The Head teacher will monitor rates of attendance at least half-termly or earlier if an individual matter has been raised by a member of staff. Where there are any issues/ concerns, the head teacher will arrange to speak to the parent/ carer so that a solution can be found with the school and home working together. If efforts are not successful then the school will refer the matter to the Attendance and Pastoral Manager for advice and support. Following an absence for a significant period, the school will liaise with the parent/ carer to arrange an appropriate re-integration programme which meets the needs of the individual circumstances.

### **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to ensure their child is in school by 8:55am or report their child's absence to the school office by 9.30 am on the first day their child is absent. Where possible all holidays should be taken during the school's designated periods of closure. Where holiday needs to be taken during term time, it must be applied for in advance by letter. When a pupil is delivered late to school parents must sign the pupil in at the school office and record in a designated file the reason the pupil is late. There is an expectation that parents/carers will work with the school to resolve any attendance issues.

### **Pupils**

There is an expectation that pupils attend regularly and are on time for registration and lessons. They need to answer to their names when the register is taken in the morning and afternoon. All pupils arriving after 9:00am and/ or when the doors are closed must report at the school office to register their arrival at school.

**Pupil Illness:** Parents will be contacted, for a number of reasons, if pupils are deemed unfit for learning because they are ill during school time. Parents should seek the appropriate medical advice if school attendance is appropriate when children have symptoms of illness or infection to ensure that the prospect of contagion is minimised. Parents should not send pupils to school for 48 hours if their child has the symptoms of stomach upset (eg. Vomiting / diarrhea).

**Date policy agreed by governors: November 2024**

**Review date: November 2025 or if required sooner**

## Appendix A

### NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

| <b>CODE</b> | <b>CODE DESCRIPTION</b>  | <b>MEANING</b>                      |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>/</b>    | Present (AM)   | Present                             |
| <b>\</b>    | Present (PM)   | Present                             |
| <b>B</b>    | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)  | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>C</b>    | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>D</b>    | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)                         | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>E</b>    | Excluded (no alternative provision made)   | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>G</b>    | Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)                           | Unauthorised absence                |
| <b>H</b>    | Family holiday (agreed)  | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>I</b>    | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)                                    | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>J</b>    | Interview  | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>L</b>    | Late (before registers closed)   | Present                             |
| <b>M</b>    | Medical/Dental appointments  | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>N</b>    | No reason yet provided for absence   | Unauthorised absence                |
| <b>O</b>    | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)                     | Unauthorised absence                |
| <b>P</b>    | Approved sporting activity   | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>R</b>    | Religious observance   | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>S</b>    | Study leave  | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>T</b>    | Traveller absence  | Authorised absence                  |
| <b>U</b>    | Late (after registration closed)   | Unauthorised absence                |
| <b>V</b>    | Educational visit or trip  | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>W</b>    | Work experience  | Approved Education Activity         |
| <b>X</b>    | Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils.                         | Not counted in possible attendances |
| <b>Y</b>    | Enforced closure   | Not counted in possible attendances |
| <b>Z</b>    | Pupil not on roll.   | Not counted in possible attendances |
| <b>#</b>    | School closed to pupils.   | Not counted in possible attendances |