



## **Whole School Attendance Policy 2025-2026**

St John's Church of England Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For children to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws, and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (see Appendix). We share daily attendance data with the Local Authority (Bury Council) and the Department for Education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Bury attendance targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets. The Headteacher, Tracey Cansdale is the senior member of School Leadership Team responsible for monitoring and promoting good attendance.

### **1. School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised, using the code N (no reason yet provided for absence).

### **2. Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.55am. The registers will remain open until 9.05am. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as Late (before registers close).

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Family Liaison Officer will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered. The afternoon registration will be at 1.00pm.

### **3. Absences**

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school by 9.30am on the first day stating the specific reason for the absence. If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day, the school will phone followed by a text, to ask parents to contact school immediately to explain the reason for absence.

If the school is unable to get a response, attendance procedures will be followed (Annex A). Half termly attendance data will be shared with parents and carers to ensure they are aware if their child has good attendance or has fallen below 96%. More information is on our attendance page on the school website.

Johnson Street, Radcliffe M26 1AW

0161 723 1078

stjohns@thesycamoretrust.co.uk

www.stjohnsradcliffe.co.uk



### **3.1 Persistent Absence**

A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment. Persistent Absence is less than 90% attendance. Class staff will be included in discussions and contact will be made with any families where attendance is a concern to discuss potential barriers and reasons for absence. The Family Liaison Officer and Pastoral Lead will discuss with the class teacher and create a plan to support individual needs.

### **3.2 Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of the Family Liaison Officer to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. Concerns are to be brought to the attention of the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the family and seek further support where necessary.

### **3.3 Return to school following absence**

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

This will be done primarily by the class teacher unless it is felt necessary for the pastoral lead to conduct EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) questionnaire.

### **3.4 Absence notes**

Notes will be made on Arbor (attendance recording system) with reasons for absence against every day of absence. Generic terms such as 'illness' or 'sickness' should not be used.

## **4. Promoting Attendance**

Every year the school attendance team (made up of a member of SLT, Family Liaison officer, Pastoral lead and Office staff) will create an action plan of annual strategies to promote good attendance. We will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance, highlighting any amount of time missed and the impact on learning and to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. This will be done via text; parents can access their child's attendance via the parent portal. Information will also be shared on the school website. Good attendance and improved attendance will be celebrated and shared with parents.

## **5. Requests for absences in term time**

The law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Headteachers are not expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional. Parents/carers must complete an Exceptional Leave request form at least 2 weeks before a planned absence, seeking permission to take their child out of school during term time. If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned absence it will be taken as an unauthorised absence and may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice. No requests for absence will be authorised for Year 6 pupils during SATs week or the two preceding weeks.

Penalty Notices Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority officers, Head teachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004. A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

- Overt Truancy
  - Parentally-condoned absences
  - Excessive holidays in term-time
  - Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
  - Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 8.55am)
- Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority - First offence: **£160** (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days)
  - Second offence within 3 years: **£160** (no reduction)
  - Third offence: escalated to **Magistrates' Court**

## **6. Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. Attendance data will be monitored carefully and fully interrogated on a regular basis. This data will be used during the monthly attendance meetings.

## **7. Register Codes**

The school uses Arbor for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:

### **7.1 Teaching staff**

- / present
- N-No reason for absence
- I - illness (cold, flu, measles, stomach upset etc will be added to the notes section on Arbor)

### **7.2 Office Codes are to be completed by the Family Liaison Officer or Office Staff Only**

- G –Holiday not agreed
- R-Religious Observance up to 2 days per year
- L-Late
- U-Late after register closed
- M-Medical or Dental (notes with more detail can be added on Arbor)
- I-Illness (cold, flu, measles, stomach upset etc will be added to the notes section on Arbor)
- O- Non authorised absence

### **7.3 Register Security**

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years. Arbor system ensures registers are stored safely and securely.

## **8. Part-Time Timetables**

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, the school may implement a temporary part-time timetable. This will only be considered following consultation with parents/carers and, where applicable, the SEND team, Virtual School, or Social Worker.

Pupils with SEND, including those with EHCPs, will not be placed on a reduced timetable unless agreed through a formal review process. A risk assessment and reintegration plan will be completed, and the arrangement will be reviewed regularly to ensure the pupil returns to full-time education as soon as possible.

## **9. Review**

The policy is reviewed annually and updated in line with statutory changes.

## **Appendix**

## **A. Attendance Procedures.**

1. Answer phone checked by 8.50am and notes made on any pupils not in school.
2. Attendance marks for pupils added to Arbor where a message has been received with added note explaining reason for absence.
3. School gate closes at 8.55am.
4. Classroom doors close by 9am at latest.
5. Any pupils arriving after the gate has closed will enter through the office and will be brought down to class and will be marked as late.
6. Registers close by 9.05am at the latest – any child arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late.
7. Class teachers mark on doors any children who are absent and put total number of children present out of total in class – eg 27/29.
8. Children brought down to class should have their name wiped from the door and the total adjusted on the door.
9. Registers checked by office by 9.15am and phone calls started.
10. Parents/carers of pupils absent to be contacted by phone – all numbers should be tried. Note made of reason for absence on Arbor. Please note that detail should be used here and generic terms such as 'illness' or 'sickness' should not be used.
11. If parents/carers do not answer, then a text and an email should be sent asking them to contact school.
12. If parents/carers do not answer, then a note should also be added to Arbor that contact has been attempted and text and an email have been sent.
13. At this point absence should be marked as unauthorised. If parents, contact school later in the day then this can be changed to a different code as necessary, and detail added about the reason for absence.
14. Office to inform Family Liaison officer and Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher of any vulnerable children absent from school. Notes made where home visits are to be taken place.
15. Any child on vulnerable list DSL to make phone call / home visit by 10.30am.
16. First day with no response office to make phone call, send text and email as outlined above.
17. Second day of absence then phone calls and texts to be made as on day one – if still no response, then office to inform Family Liaison Officer and Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher who will make a decision about whether a home visit is to be made. If reason is known for absence – e.g. 48 hours out of school due to sickness, then a phone call does not need to be made but the reason for absence must be recorded on the second day as well as the first.
18. Third day of absence, then phone calls and texts to be made as on day one and two if still no response office to inform Family Liaison Officer and home visit will be made either by school or by the police.
19. Each day of absence must have a reason next to it in the register – even if it is a repeated reason such as chicken pox. Contact should be made with parents/carers every three days when a child has a prolonged illness to check in and offer support.

## **B. The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

### **C. Register and Admission Roll keeping.**

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006 Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. **Unauthorised absence** This is for those pupils for whom no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.
2. **Authorised absence** This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. **Approved Educational Activity.** This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration