



# ST. JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Part of the Christ Church C.E. Multi-Academy Trust

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A journey of **PRIDE** with God by our side

## St. John's CE Primary School

'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' John 13:34

'A journey of PRIDE with God by our side' reflects our drive to create a loving community, rooted in our four key Christian values of Love, Kindness, Honesty and Forgiveness - ensuring St John's genuinely is a place to Love, Learn and Grow.

## Whole School Attendance Policy

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 1).

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.

### 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).

### Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.55am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.



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 Head or Deputy Head will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered. The afternoon registration will be at 1.10pm. 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).

### **First Day Absence**

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school by 9.30am on the first day stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence. If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day the school will text to ask parents to contact school immediately to explain the reason for absence. If school is unable to get a response, a letter will be sent. If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write again. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 2 weeks if no explanation can be obtained. Regular register checks are carried out by the school's attendance officer (SAO). If attendance falls below 96% a letter will be sent home by the Head Teacher requesting an improvement and offering support. If attendance rate does not improve the Head Teacher will liaise with the EWO who may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

Persistent Absence (defined in legislation as 15% or more absences) Either authorised or unauthorised. A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment. Onward referral to support services (School Attendance Team, etc) Any pupil who is absent without an explanation on a regular basis will be discussed with the school's School Attendance Officer. The EWO visits the school on a regular basis to address any attendance issues. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

### **Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of the pastoral manager 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 parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health Advisor, School Nurse, etc, if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases, the school will seek advice from the EWO.

### **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence that 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.

### **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Promoting Attendance**

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

### **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 Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Head Teachers 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. Parents are



urged to seek approval for absences before making any bookings. 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 in to 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 at £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of date of issue, rising to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days of date of issue. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice fine may result in the Local Authority taking legal action against parents/carers.

Attendance Awards At the end of each term, the school will award bronze attendance certificates to those pupils who have achieved 100% attendance during that term. Pupils who go on to achieve 100% attendance over two consecutive terms will receive silver certificates. 100% attendance over the whole academic year will be rewarded by awarding a gold certificate and a gift voucher.

### **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

The registration system The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:

### ***Teaching staff must mark***

- / present
- N not known
- I illness (cold, flu, measles, stomach upset etc)

### ***Office Codes are to be completed by the Office Staff Only***

- F Family Holiday (H if the Holiday is for 2 weeks G if the family stays longer than 4 weeks)
- R Religious Observance up to 2 days a year
- L Late
- O Non-Authorised Absence Headteacher must be informed
- M Medical or Dental This code is used for medical appointments and should not be used regularly unless the child is having known ongoing medical care

### **Register Security**

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years. The registers must be safely stored. The school's computerized registration system ensures registers are stored safely and securely.



## Appendices

### 1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and [b] To any special needs he 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.

### 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 where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.
2. 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. 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

