

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS



ST PETER'S ANGLICAN METHODIST VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

RATIONALE

We want to do our best for all our children and believe that regular attendance at school is vital for children as it promotes good learning, positive attitudes and maintains continuity in their education and in their friendships.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by a parent.

STATUTORY DUTY OF SCHOOLS

The Education Act requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive full time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. In addition, schools have a statutory duty to set an annual attendance target.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED OR UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of the absence is always required preferably in writing.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

- Such as illness or other unavoidable causes.
- Medical appointments
- Special circumstances such as bereavement, attending funerals, etc.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

These are morning or afternoons away from school for a reason such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

TERM TIME ABSENCE DUE TO HOLIDAYS

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

Amendments to the legislation makes clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Accordingly all term time holiday requests will be unauthorised and will be recorded as such in the register unless exceptional circumstances can be shown.

If parents do decide to take unauthorised term time absence we ask that they contact the main office to inform the school of the child's absence by letter.

PENALTY NOTICES (FINES)

The school reserves the right to ask the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice in exceptional circumstances for the following:

When might a Penalty Notice be issued?

A Penalty Notice may be issued to a parent where more than 10 sessions of unauthorised absence are recorded in 7 school weeks i.e. 70 sessions. There are 2 sessions per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon:

- where unauthorised absences are recorded
- where more than 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday are recorded and;
 - a) the parent has not informed the school; or
 - b) the leave was not authorised; or
 - c) the child did not return on the agreed date
- where the child is persistently late arriving at school after registers have closed
- where a combination of more than 10 sessions of a) to c) above have been recorded.

How much is the fine?

- The fine is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.
- For example a two - parent family taking 2 children out of school for an unauthorised holiday would be liable for a total of £240 if paid within 21 days or £480 between 21 and 28 days.
- The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.

For more information on this issue please read the South Gloucestershire parental guidance on Penalty Notices at the following link: https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/southglos/directory/files/fixd_penalty_notices_-_parents_carers_leaflet_-_jan_2021-a.pdf

LATENESS

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her own continuity of learning but also that of other pupils.

Pupils who arrive late, (after register closure) should 'sign in' to record their presence in school.

The school will investigate persistent lateness and work with the parents to set targets for improvements.

MONITORING REGISTERS

Attendance registers are monitored on a regular basis, where this falls below 95% and is cause for concern, the school will investigate further. When the attendance falls below 90% we will arrange an attendance meeting with the Headteacher to discuss any issues or barriers to the child's attendance. (School Attendance Meeting)

In accordance with local authority guidance, should attendance fall below 85% and is cause for concern, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) or Early Help Team (Compass) will be contacted to promote attendance in conjunction with the school. Should there be longer persistent absence then the school will continue to liaise with the EWO and an Attendance Panel Meeting will be called. At this meeting the parents, pupil and school will discuss and activate a Parental, Pupil and School contract to enable attendance to improve.

PROCEDURES

Children should be in school at the start of the school day by 8.50am

Any children arriving after this time will need to report to the office to be signed in. these children will be given a late mark in the register.

Those children who arrive after 9.10am, when registers close, will be given an absence mark, unless there has been prior information provided or a medical appointment.

The school day ends at 3.20pm

FIRST DAY CALLS

All parents are asked to call the office to inform the school of an absence of any description. In the event of an absence that the school has not been informed about, the school will call home to ascertain the health, well-being and location of the child. If after 3 days the school is still unsure as to these aspects further investigations may be started to ensure that the school is delivering its duty of care to the child.

MONITORING

The governors will review this policy annually.

Agreed: November 2023

Review Date: October 2024