St John's Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

This policy should be taken and used as part of St John's Church of England Primary School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government, aims and values as a Church of England school.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structure which ensures that, through record keeping and monitoring, parents, pupils and staff are able to work together, with the support of the governors, to obtain the regular and prompt attendance of pupils.

Aims:

Through this policy we aim to:

- ensure that parents, governors, pupils and staff are aware of legal requirements.
- ensure that the recording of the pupil's arrival in school has taken place and can be checked in the case of a fire or other emergencies.
- ensure regular attendance, which enhances educational output and social experience.
- identify truanting pupils who are in danger of exposure to situations in which they might:

  > have an accident
  > experiment with dangerous substances
  > become involved in criminal activity
  > be abused or assaulted

- ensure that all parents, governors, staff and the LA are able to take their full share of responsibility for improved school attendance, pupil's social and academic progress and community safety.

Guidelines

a) **Legal Responsibilities of Parents**.

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schooling is thus not compulsory but education is.

b) **Moral obligation of parents:**

Parents have a responsibility beyond the legal requirements to transmit to their children an awareness of the value and importance of their education. They can aid this by:

- ensuring regular attendance and prompt arrival;
- ensuring that their children are well rested, properly clothed and have appropriate equipment;
- not agreeing to absence from school unless their children are genuinely unwell;
- notifying school on the first day of absence;
- avoiding family holidays or other absences unless circumstances are exceptional. In this case school authorisation must be requested;

- consulting and advising staff of any problems which may make their children reluctant to attend school (eg family breakdown, bullying) so that the children can be appropriately supported;
- resolving any problems of this kind either by discussion or through the complaints procedure, but without withdrawing children from school
- informing the school of any changes in address, the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live and the date when the pupil will live at the new address.

c) **Responsibilities of Pupils**
- in the case of very young children, parents should be responsible for establishing habits of regular and punctual attendance.
- All pupils have a responsibility to ensure that they arrive at school promptly, do not leave the school premises without permission and report to the School Secretary if they arrive late.
- they should seek help from parents, teachers or the LA's Children Missing Education Office if they have difficulties with work or their peers.

d) **Responsibilities of the Headteacher and Staff**
The school is required to:
- provide efficient education to meet the needs of all children in the school.
- keep an admission register which contains personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission to the school.
- ensure the admission register is updated to include any new address at which a pupil will be living, the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will be living and any new school which a pupil will be attending along with the corresponding dates;
- inform the local authority within five days each time a pupil is added to the register (not applicable when the child starts at the beginning of the reception year);
- keep an attendance register which must be marked at the beginning of the morning session and at some time during the afternoon session.
- mark the attendance register in a uniform manner as agreed by all staff, which shows whether child is present, absent,engaged in an appropriate activity away from the school site or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- ascertain the reason for an absence and show whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.
- use uniform codes as recommended by the DfE (demonstrated in Appendix 1 of this document).
- inform parents with end of year reports of the number of unauthorised absences (i.e. absences not agreed by the Headteacher) during the year.

The Headteacher and staff will ensure that the following will be adhered to:
- exemplary or improving attendance will be positively recognised.
- pupils will be made aware of the social and academic disadvantages of irregular attendance and/or frequent lateness.
- through the Home-School Agreement, and the school website, parents and pupils will be familiarised with times of the school day, the procedure for notification of absence, how to seek authorisation of absence and the circumstances in which this will be agreed and contact points in school for any discussion about problems in relation to school attendance.

- parents will be contacted as promptly as can be reasonably expected in the case of unexplained absence.
- make arrangements for the effective management of bullying according to the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- report regularly to the Governing Body and the LA, especially where a pupil's attendance falls below 90% (i.e. persistent absentees)
- Pupils will be marked as being late in the register if they arrive at school later than 9.10am.
- regularly review and monitor this document
- the attendance of the following categories of pupils will be monitored with particular care:

  pupils on the CP register
  "looked after pupils"
  Special Educational Needs pupils

- ensure that the LA's Children Missing Education Office is notified when a pupil is removed from the register, in order that no school aged pupils may be "lost" to the educational system. The School will also contact the school to which the pupil is to join to ensure that they arrive on roll as expected.

CONCLUSION:
This policy is intended to support a school ethos in which regular and punctual attendance is recognised, and encouraged, as a key factor in supporting the school to move towards its vision and achieve its agreed goals and targets.

Date Agreed: January 2017
Date of Review:

DFE Recommended Codes

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm
Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed
Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity
An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity
This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment
This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.
The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.
Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is

linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity
This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip
This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience
Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School
Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school
Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made
If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school
Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but

should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments
Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance
Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave
Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.
This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.
To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School
Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided
Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This

code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation
If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed
Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes
The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school
This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
• The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
• The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
• A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
• The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register
This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure
This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils
Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.