

# *St James' Church of England Primary School*

---

*www.stjamesce@sthelens.org.uk*

---

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

---

*Learn, laugh and live with the love of God*

Presented to Governors:

Review date due:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

\_\_\_\_\_ Head teacher

St James' C.E. Primary School,  
Lyme Street,  
Haydock,  
St Helens,  
WA11 9NL  
Telephone: 01744 678545  
Facsimile: 01744 678546

POLICY

## Rationale

At St James' C.E. Primary School we believe in promoting good attendance to develop positive attitudes towards school and learning. Research has proven there is a strong link between attendance and attainment.

## Purposes

- To ensure the overall percentage of pupils' attendance at school is consistently good or better.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- To ensure there is a support, advice and guidance system in place for parents and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To promote a system of rewards for attendance and punctuality.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## Broad Guidelines

1. School doors open at 8.50 am. Registration is at 9.00 am. If a child arrives after the register has been taken he/she must report to the school office and will be marked as 'late' (L code) and recorded in the late book.
2. Registers must be uploaded to the school office by 9.30 am to be officially "closed". Arrival after 9.30 am is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U code), these children will also be recorded in the late book.
3. The current symbols for lateness and absence can be found on SIMS. The school has adopted SIMS registration procedures.
4. The school will follow late procedures (see guidance).
5. The school requires first day contact for a child's absence, with a letter of explanation on their return to school. All other absences will be marked as unauthorised unless prior arrangement has been agreed with the Head teacher. The school uses a first day contact system via telephone.
6. Reasons for non-attendance should always be supplied. If this is not the case the school will continue to contact parent/carer for 2 weeks. If no response is forthcoming the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
7. Following amendments to the 2006 regulations in September 2013 the Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents should submit requests to the Head teacher, in writing, detailing why it is an exceptional circumstance. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school (P.3 Guidance for Head teachers regarding Leave of absence during term time)
8. All medical / dental appointments require evidence to be brought into the school prior to the appointment to show it could not be made outside of the school day.
9. The Governing Body have agreed to adopt the Local Authority's system of 'Fixed Penalty Notices' for unauthorised absences.

## ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

Attendance can be summarised as:

100 – 98%	<b>Excellent</b>	Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
97.9 – 95%	<b>Very Good</b>	Well done, strive to build on this.
94.9 – 90%	<b>Need for improvement</b>	Absence at this level may be affecting attainment and progress at school.
89.9 – 85%	<b>Concern</b>	Number of absences is affecting attainment and disrupting your child's learning. School will offer and action plan of support to improve attendance. A penalty notice may be issued.
Below 85%	<b>Major Concern</b>	Become a Persistently Absent Pupil (PA). A referral will be made to the EWO and legal action could be taken.

## Late Procedures

1. 3 Lates in a week generates a Late Letter requesting punctuality etc.
2. 6 Lates, in a three week period, will generate a second letter discussing EWO involvement
3. Anything above 6 lates will result in a phone call on the day.
4. After 2 phone calls have been made, the EWO will request an interview with parents / carers to develop an action plan.

## Communication

All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence should be stored on the child's file after they have been initialled by the admin team.

If a pupil returns to school after an absence without a note, then school will use the SIMS Attendance package to generate letters to the parents.

## Strategies for promoting Attendance / Punctuality

- The school will award termly certificates **and pencils** to all pupils whose attendance is either excellent or much improved. Parents are kept informed of attendance via the school newsletter.
- Trophies are presented each week to the highest attending class in school
- **Class with the most trophies at the end of each term is allowed a non uniform day**
- **Weekly tracking of pupils round 90% with phone calls and letters as per procedure**
- Regular meetings will be held with the school's Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance / punctuality is a source of concern.
- Parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 85% will be invited to an attendance meeting within school, with the EWO and head teacher.
- School will also monitor those pupils whose attendance falls between 80% - 95% and involve the EWO when appropriate.
- Attendance leaflet given out at parents' evenings and attendance on all pupil reports to parents
- Pupils are constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance. All issues that may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by the form teacher / SLT.

## Registration

- Whilst school opens at 8.50am to allow children to settle into classes registers will only open at 9.00.
- Registration is an important part of the day legally and socially. It complies with 'pupils attendance records' regulations and allows the teacher to greet each pupil individually and ensure they are ready for learning.
- Registers must be uploaded to the office immediately after completion to allow first day calls to be made.
- In the event of a fire the registers will be taken out by a member of the admin team or head teacher.

## Parental Information / Responsibility

- It is a parents responsibility to ensure their child attends school daily and arrives on time to receive an education. This responsibility is outlined in the Education Act 1996.
- If your child is not being suitably educated due to poor attendance, you are breaking the law and you could be prosecuted.
- If a pupil is absent through illness, you as a parent need to contact the school before 9.30 am to inform the school of the reason for absence **this can be done by phone call or by the school app.**
- If the school have not been informed with a reason for absence, the school or our EWO will contact you. If we are unable to establish a reason for absence, further actions could be taken e.g. referral to safeguarding.
- You may be requested to provide medical evidence when your child is absent.
- Where possible medical / dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours. For those that have to be taken in school hours an appointment card must be produced at school before the appointment.

- Any requests for leave of absence must be submitted to the headteacher in writing detailing the exceptional circumstances why your child will be absent
- A penalty notice can be issued to parents of pupils who have repeated unauthorised absences or poor punctuality. The fine is £60 for each parent. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, it will increase to £120. Fines that are not paid after 28 days will be referred to EWS to instigate legal proceedings for non-school attendance.

## **FIRST DAY RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

**Parents to contact school with reason for absence by 9.30 am on first day of absence.**



**Clerical Officer to phone / text unexplained absences between 9.30 – 9.50 am. Reasons to be recorded in absence book and on SIMS**



**If no written / verbal response is provided the EWO will visit within 5 school days. Reasons to be shared with office staff and recorded on SIMS.**



**Letter 1 will be sent by clerical officer requesting reason for absence.**



**If no response after following the above procedure, the absence will be unauthorised.**

## **PUNCTUALITY**

**8.40 am Gates open  
8.50 am doors open  
9.00 am Register taken in class**



**Pupils arriving after 9 am enter through main entrance to sign in. Time and reason to be recorded in late book by parents and on SIMs by admin staff.**



**Pupils arriving between 9 am and 9.30 am will be recorded as 'L' (late).**



**Pupils arriving after 9.30 am will be recorded as 'U' (late after register closed). This is an unauthorised absence**



**Education Welfare Officer to conduct regular 'Late Gates'.**



**Punctuality to be reviewed each half term by EWO and school staff, unless identified during the term as a concern.**



**Clerical officer to send letters to parents sharing concerns regarding pupil's poor punctuality.**



**If no improvement seen parents will be invited to an Attendance Action Plan meeting. A penalty notice may be issued**

## **MEDICAL / DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

**All Medical appointments should be arranged outside of the school day. If this is not possible the below procedure is to be followed**



**Parents to inform Office staff of the reason, date and time of medical appointments.**



**Parents to provide appointment card / letter for all medical appointments prior to leaving school.**



**Parents of pupils arriving at school from a medical appointment must sign in at the main office**



**Pupils being taken from school to attend a medical appointment during the school day must sign out at the main office.**



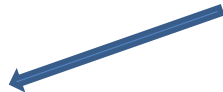
**Medical appointments will be recorded as 'M' (authorised absence) in the school register by admin staff.**

## CHALLENGING ABSENCES

Attendance of 95% - 90% letter 1 will be sent to parents to share current attendance



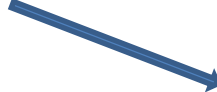
Attendance below 90%



Letter 2 will be sent to parents.



EWO may visit your home to discuss concerns and identify barriers to regular school attendance



A penalty Notice can be issued.



Attendance between 90 % and 85% - parents will be invited to attend an Attendance Action Plan meeting with EWO and school staff to devise a plan of support to improve attendance.



Attendance 85% and below – EWO may instigate legal proceedings