

# St Andrew's CE Primary School



## Attendance Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2023  
Next review: Summer 2024

## ***Every Child A Champion in Their Own Right. Matthew 5.16 - "Let Your Light Shine."***

### **AIM:**

At St Andrew's CE Primary School, the Governors, Headteacher and Staff are keen to ensure that all our children attend school regularly and punctually so that they receive the best education possible in order that they fulfil their potential. To this purpose, parents will be informed of the school policy and encouraged to understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Regular and punctual school attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the opportunities which this school offers them. It is an established fact that children who develop poor patterns of attendance and punctuality at Primary school tend to continue in this pattern throughout their school life and beyond.

This school is committed to regular attendance as we feel it is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. We will therefore follow up any unexplained absences or patterns of absence by telephone calls, letters and home visits. If concerns continue the school will liaise with other services including Early Years, Health Visitor, Children's Centres, Children's Social Care and Educational Welfare Service.

St. Andrew's Mission Statement clearly expresses our aims to involve parents in their child's education and expresses our endeavour to raise standards. In order to encourage maximum attendance levels, both staff and pupils need to work within a framework of good practice that both supports and helps to motivate students, and is consistent across the school. The role of the parent/guardian in supporting the school's efforts in securing high levels of attendance is critical. At St Andrew's we intend to maintain close, effective and positive links with our parents and ensure that they are contacted at an early stage to deal with unexplained absences of their child.

Early identification and effective follow up of non-attendance rely on efficient communication both within the school and between the school and its support services. Prompt action on non-attendance is an important area of Child Protection/Safeguarding.

Important factors affecting children's attendance include:

- The ethos of the school.
- Positive attitude of adults and children in wanting to be involved and expressing a wish to raise standards.

A school which is caring, well structured, well disciplined, stimulating and secure has a far greater chance of improving attitudes towards schooling and have good attendance figures.

We will aim to develop pupil, parent self esteem whenever possible.

### **PROCEDURE**

- The school is required to ensure that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved



educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

At St. Andrew's we accept that there will be occasions that through serious illness, accidents, family problems, very special events or genuine unforeseen circumstances some pupils will not be able to attend school. Our need to be compassionate, understanding and supportive is important.

- Parents are required to notify the school immediately in the likelihood of their child being absent. If this is not possible then a letter of explanation must be sent on the child's return to school also in such cases staff are expected to monitor the situation and contact parents to offer help, advice.
- All absences should be noted initially on the absence/late sheet attached to the class attendance register.
- Admin Staff will ring parents/carers on the first day of any unexpected/unexplained absence.
- If no immediate contact is made a member of the Admin Staff will continue to ring the supplied contact numbers each day. A standard letter is sent asking for an explanation of unexplained absences.
- A letter must be sent in to the school, asking permission to take child(ren) out of school for a holiday;
- Parent may request absence for pupils from school due to a family holiday, but we cannot agree to any holiday to be taken in the school term. If no request is made, it will be classed as unauthorised and a fine may be imposed.
- It is important that a child's absence could be due to severe family difficulties. We must be vigilant in our monitoring duties. If contact is not possible, any child absent for more than a week should be brought to the attention of Head.
- If a child is taken ill at school we must only consider sending a child home if the ailment is genuine and of a serious nature. Immediate contact with the parent is important, but we must encourage the child to stay if at all possible - staff must not encourage pupils to go home if suffering from very minor ailments.
- Children being collected from school must be 'signed out' at the School Office by the parent/carer.

## **Family Holidays**

Parents may request absence for pupils from school due to a family holiday. It is for the school to determine whether or not we agree to a family holiday during term time. In most cases leave will **not** be granted, however in exceptional circumstances the school may agree, but this is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. We may authorise absence for this purpose for up to 10 school days in any school year. In exceptional cases, eg for special or compassionate reasons, the school may agree to a lengthier period.

In considering any request for holiday absence, the school will look at individual circumstances and take account of:

- the age of the pupil;

- the time of year proposed for the trip;
- its nature and parents' wishes;
- the overall attendance pattern of the pupil;
- the pupil's stage of education and progre

Pupil attendance is monitored by a member of the Admin Staff. A monthly report is passed on to the Head and SLT in order to monitor any patterns emerging between classes, gender, certain days etc.

Punctuality is monitored in the same way.

Class teachers hold important responsibilities for the general welfare of pupils in their classes; attendance and punctuality is an important feature of their responsibility and is part of good primary practice. An Attendance Register is a legal document and must be completed accurately and in time. Teachers are responsible for marking the register twice a day. This must be done at the beginning of each session.

The marking of registers must be accurate and up to date. Symbols used for pupil absence must be consistent across the school. See staff file for Registration Procedures.

N.B. All corrections must be visible. Red ink must be used for attendance, Black for absence. Tippex and pencil must not be used.

The school register will remain open until 9.15.

### **Authorised or Unauthorised Absence?**

*Authorised absence* is absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (eg illness). These will include:

- genuine illness;
- family bereavement;
- family crisis (each case on its own merits) special cases (each case on its own merits) religious observations.

*Unauthorised absence* is absence without permission from the Head Teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly

Good attendance is imperative in our quest to raise achievement. Developing a positive attitude to schooling is central in this. **Strategies will include:**

- A standard letter asking for an explanation will be sent to families showing concern (re: attendance or poor punctuality). A letter of concern is sent to the families of those children who are absent for more than 14 sessions in a term.

Where poor attendance/punctuality persists the Head will seek an interview with the parents. However, it is expected that with regular contact, encouragement from the start class teachers can alleviate any potential escalating problems.

- Regular newsletters expressing this will be sent to parents. Updates of our 'Targets' eg for homework will also be sent to parents on a regular basis if necessary.
- Parents will be encouraged to come into school: coffee mornings, parent workshops, helping in class, on trips, to share experiences, skills, class assemblies, award ceremonies.

- Attendance figure will be published annually in child's report.
- Punctuality figure will be published annually in child's report.
- Those pupils who achieve 100% attendance in a term (or a whole year) will be rewarded with a certificate which will be presented in a celebration assembly.
- Central to improving attitudes towards schooling and raising achievement is the quality of teaching.
- A colourful, vibrant orderly environment matched with quality teaching is vital in encouraging pupils to want to come to school, eager to participate and keen to give their best.
- Lessons must be well planned, adequately resourced, relevant, differentiated to suit pupils needs, have pace, challenge and to be of real purpose. Staff self evaluation and attention to assessment of outcomes are paramount to good planning.

It is our duty to inspire children: to attract them and encourage them towards learning for enjoyment and not for education to be seen as a 'chore'.

### **Staff Attendance**

1. All staff must notify the Headteacher/School Secretary of illness, as soon as they know they will not be able to attend work.
  - a. For teaching staff this means contacting either the Head Teacher, a Senior Leader or their Phase Leader, by telephone or text the night before, or by 7.00 am on the morning they become unfit for work.
  - b. For support staff, the school should be contacted as early as possible, certainly before 8.30 am.
2. All staff must let the school know how long they will be off work for, and when they will be able to return to work. This is most important, as all staff absence must be accounted for, and reported to the LA, so that staff are paid correctly. Absence without notification could result in unpaid leave of absence.
3. Staff are able to self-certification absence for the first week, thereafter a 'sick note'/letter from the G.P. must be sent in to the school.
4. Permission from the Headteacher must be obtained beforehand to seek time off work for visits to the Dentist, Doctor, Hospital etc. and evidence of the appointment must be produced.
 

Unless in an emergency, all appointments should be made outside school hours, or during school holidays.
5. All leave of absence must be approved in advance by the Headteacher and/or School Governors.
6. All staff must be punctual, and ready to begin work at the appropriate time.

### **ST. ANDREW'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL SUMMARY OF OUR INTENTIONS .**

Notes: Registered pupils of compulsory age are required by law to be in school.

Registers are an important record of attendance - adherence to school policy on accuracy and consistency is important.

The aim of St. Andrew's is to expect regular attendance, even when school recognise the problems of individual families and children.

Lateness will be discouraged.

When a pupil is absent without prior permission an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming - or if there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of the explanation - the absence must be treated as unauthorised.

Only the school can formally authorise an absence.

Parents should not expect, as a right that school will agree to family holidays in term time.

Even where absence is authorised we must be alert to emerging patterns of absence which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning.

We will aim to provide a vibrant, stimulating environment.

Our Attendance Policy will have raising achievement, compassion and support central to its aims.

*This policy will be reviewed annually*

**St Andrew's CE Primary School**  
**Guidance for the completion of registers**

**Register period**

- Register monitors will deliver registers to classrooms before 8.30 am and 12.30 pm.
- It is important that registers are filled in accurately and neatly each session.
- If an emergency occurs and it proves necessary to evacuate the buildings, the register is the only record of which children are in school.
- Furthermore, accurate record keeping of this nature is vital in monitoring children's progress at school.
- From entering school from 8.30 am or 12.30/12.45 pm each class should have its own procedures and classroom rules to ensure that children start the day in a quiet, orderly fashion.
- Registration activities need to be planned so that pupils know exactly what to do and where to collect equipment from.
- A well organised, calm class will mean more time for staff to complete registration tasks
- Obviously procedures will differ in individual classrooms depending on the age/ability of the children concerned.

**Golden rule:** No child should ever see this period as an opportunity to waste time or be noisy. A well organised registration period can set the tone for the whole day - Appropriate Early Morning Activities will be key in this.

**Notes for completion of registers**

**Dinner register**

The dinner register should be completed with the following symbols

Red tick = hot dinners

Red F = free hot dinners

Black P = packed lunch

Black H = home dinner Black A = absent

Money should be only collected in for hot dinners on Mondays. It must be checked and change given.

The amount the child has given on Monday should then be written into the matrix between the day of the week and the child's name.

The numbers staying hot dinners, free hot dinners and packed lunch and the total money received should then be totalled and put in the bottom totals section.

After registering children on a Monday morning, it is necessary to add up the total money received for the week and so complete the total box.

**Attendance registers - daily guidance**

Registers should be marked using **red ink** by putting a red diagonal line through the box to show that a child is present, or by putting an 'empty' **black circle** in the box to indicated absence. Absences should not be recorded in the register until the official end of the registration period at 9.15 am or at 1.15 pm.



Each class teacher must ensure that all absences are authorised and that the relevant code is inserted into black circles. The following letters should then be placed in the black circle using black ink:

I = authorised absence

H = holiday

V = educational visit

M = doctors/hospital/dentist etc appointment

R = religious observances

Attendance registers should be taken by monitors either to the Office (Upper School) or the Small Hall. (Younger School)

### **Late comers/medical etc appointments**

Any child arriving after the registration period ie. after 9.00 am or 1.05 pm, should be marked in the register as late. To do this a black circle is inserted into the attendance register to indicate their absence and **L** marked in the circle. This must be recorded on the late list (kept in the Register) indicating the time of arrival and if appropriate the reason for lateness.

Any child arriving at school after the register has been sent, should register at the office. The teacher should check with the child that they have done this and if not the class teacher should send him or her immediately to the office. The administrative staff will then mark the child present in the register. This will be kept to ensure that if there is a fire, we have easy access to the names of children who have arrived late as well as being a useful tool for our records.

If a child has to leave school for any reason, eg illness or an appointment, they will be collected by a member of the Admin Staff or taken by a lunch time supervisor to the office where they will be signed out by their parent/carer. Again this provides us with a list of which children are on the school premises. If a parent is contacted due to the illness of a child, please ensure that the office is notified so that parents can be dealt with appropriately.

# St Andrew's CE Primary School



Congratulations to \_\_\_\_\_ and family,

on 100% attendance

for \_\_\_\_\_ term \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# St Andrew's CE Primary School



Congratulations to

\_\_\_\_\_

and family,

on 100% attendance

for the School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Head teacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

