

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. St Ann's School is committed to working with parents, carers and pupils to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, social and personal opportunities available to them during their years with us.

Young children, however, are dependent upon the adults in their lives to ensure they get to school on time. Therefore, the focus in Foundation and KS1 stage programmes is to establish good habits and work with parents to start to develop self responsibility in the children. The school operates within a framework of local schools, including the linked secondary school. We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents.

### ***The Law. The 1996 Education Act requires that:***

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The LEA must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the LEA pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than 10 days without explanation.
- The LEA has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

This policy also responds to the updated guidance issued from DfE which states:

**Term Time Holiday:** The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten days. The amendments make 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 in which a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave but they should only do so in exceptional circumstances. If a Headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for them to determine the length of time that a child can be away from school. This leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

### ***What the school expects of parents:***

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day.

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- To contact school on the first day of their child's absence for any reason.
- To arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times, whenever possible. Further guidance is offered under the section: 'Request for Authorised Absence'.
- To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school.
- To provide a note, signed by the parent, when the child returns to school, explaining the reason for absence. This will be filed and may be produced if requested by officers of the Attendance and Inclusion Service.

***What parents and pupils can expect from the school:***

- A broad, balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school and regular encouragement and rewards.
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance.
- First day contact with parents when absence is unexplained.
- Liaison with officers from the LA to assist and support families where needed.
- Prompt action when a problem has been identified.
- Regular communication with parents.

***Registration.***

Registration takes place each morning at 8.50am and each afternoon at 12.50pm (KS1) and 1pm (KS2).

Class teachers will enter a 'present' mark (\) in ink in the register for each pupil present and an 'absent' mark (O) for any pupil who is absent. Any notes received will be placed in the register for checking by office staff. All notes will be kept in a file until the end of term and will be made available to officers from the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) where appropriate.

***Late Arrival.***

- Pupils arriving in class after the registers have been returned to the office are deemed to be late. The pupil should be sent to the office, where the 'O' mark is amended to 'L'. At 9.15am and 1.10pm, the pupil is deemed to be absent/late. Any pupil arriving in school after these times will be marked 'u'. In case of emergency, the register shows the pupil is on the premises. However, the pupil will not receive a 'present' mark towards overall attendance.
- Parents will be contacted by school if a child is persistently late.

***Types of Absence.***

Each half day absence is recorded by the school and classified 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. That is why a cause of absence is always required to be provided by parents.

- 1) Authorised Absence: Mornings or afternoons away from school will be recorded in line with Sheffield Council's 'Exceptional Leave During Term Time Policy 2013'. This policy will, in future, be referred to as the 'ELTT Policy'. Parents are asked to make medical and dental appointments during school holidays unless this is unavoidable.
- 2) Unauthorised Absence: Please refer to Sheffield Council's ELTT Policy as above.

***Responding to absence: Criteria for Referral to Multi Agency Support Team (MAST).***

- Home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance.
- Patterns of absence.
- Poor overall attendance (below 92.5%).
- Each half term, a review of individual pupil attendance takes place. Any pupil showing an attendance of below 92.5% for the last half term is discussed and, if appropriate, a referral form is completed by the school and passed to the MAST team. MAST and school will then closely monitor the pupil's attendance and make contact with the parent in an attempt to resolve any issues.
- If attendance continues to give cause for concern, strategies will be considered and steps taken to attempt to improve attendance and punctuality. This could include working with members of staff, the MAST team and other professionals where appropriate.
- When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days, the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the MAST team, in line with the ELTT Policy.

***Reporting Absences.***

If a child is absent, parents are asked to:

- Contact school before 9am on the first day of absence.
- Call in to the office and report to staff when the child returns to school.

If a child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or send a SMS message if parents have not contacted school.
- If absence persists, ask parents to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the situation.
- Contact MAST for referral if attendance falls below 92.5%.

***Children Missing from Education (CME).***

The school administrator, Geraldine Bebb, is the member of school staff to liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate CME team. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing.

The CME team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with LA procedures (see policy: Children Missing from Education).

***Children in Public Care.***

- The Headteacher, Sarah Eady, is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children team. Looked After children will be set up as an attendance group in SIMS and their individual attendance will be checked each half term.

***Awards and Rewards.***

- Attendance assemblies are held regularly to celebrate the individual pupil's attendance, class attendance and whole school attendance.
- Improved attendance is recognised and rewarded.

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- Yearly certificates will be awarded to pupils with 100% attendance.
- Extra play time for the class with the highest attendance each week.

***Partnership with Parents.***

It is vital that parents are involved in promoting good attendance and punctuality:

- Regular attendance information is given to parents by individual letter and parents' evenings. When attendance is of serious concern, contact may be made by the MAST team.
- Parents are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Any concerns raised by parents will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.
- Parents are invited to attendance assemblies to share the success of their child and the school.

***Late Collection.***

A number of children are regularly collected late at the end of the day, which can be distressing for them. If children are collected late (ie after 3.10pm), more than twice in a week, parents will be sent a letter from school.

***Roles and Responsibilities.***

***a) Governors.***

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Headteacher and LA via the Headteacher's Report.
- Attend school attendance panels as necessary.

***b) Headteacher.***

- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of children Looked After by the LEA.
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are missing from education.
- Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school.
- Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues.
- Liaises with MAST to set targets and implement attendance strategies.
- Works with the Inclusions Co-Ordinator to implement targets, review statistics and amend the Policy as necessary.
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster.

***c) Classteachers.***

- Mark registers accurately, using appropriate codes and return to school office promptly following registration (in line with Education Pupil Registration Regs 2001).

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- Attach any notes received to the register for the attention of office.
- Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school.

**d) Administrative Officer.**

- Maintain SIMS attendance database and update on a weekly basis.
- Provide reports from SIMS to Governors, Headteacher and other school staff and LA officers as requested.
- Provide relevant information to LA officers, making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality.

**e)MAST.**

- Liaise with the Headteacher, school staff and officers of the LA to promote good attendance and punctuality within school, cluster and wider community.
- Support the Headteacher to produce, review and action the school's Attendance Policy, as well as producing a Parent Policy for clear guidance and information.
- Support the school to develop whole school strategies relating to attendance and inclusion. Offer advice, analysis and monitoring of attendance issues.
- Work closely with school staff regarding the pupil concerns list. Discuss and agree appropriate courses of action, including prosecution procedures as appropriate.
- Attend meetings eg School Attendance panel, half term review.
- Take an active part in attendance assemblies and other initiatives aimed at promoting attendance and punctuality.
- Maintain, review and analyse attendance information, statistics and reports. Provide reports to appropriate bodies eg Governors and officers of the LA.

***This Policy was reviewed November 2013.***

***Next Review November 2014.***