

# St John's Primary School, Nursery and Children's Centre

## Draft Attendance Policy

Policy Reviewed: March 2014

Approved by Governors: April 2014

*Aiming High; Proud to learn together.*

### Philosophy

St John's Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a School we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our School will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- to ensure a consistent approach throughout the School

### Statutory Duty

The Education Act 1996 Section 7 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

**“By law, all children of compulsory school age must get a proper full-time education. Parents are responsible for making this happen, either by registering the child at school or by making other arrangements which provide an effective education”.**

If a child who is of statutory age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

The attendance officer for St John's Primary School is: Mrs Lucy Morris.  
The attendance lead is; Mr Darren Barrow, Head teacher

## **Principles**

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

- We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.
- We will consult with all members of the Attendance Compliance and Enforcement Team (ACE) where necessary in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
- We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.
- Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.
- We will promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.
- We will ensure regular evaluation of the attendance policy and procedures by Senior Managers and the School governors.
- Attendance will be an important feature of the Learning Improvement Plan.
- Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place

## **Procedures**

- Registration- morning registration opens at 8.45am and closes at 9.15am. If a child arrives between this time they will be marked as (L) Late.
- If a child arrives after 9.15am this will be marked as unauthorised late (U).
- First stage calling will be used if a child has not arrived in school by 9.15am. The office will call the parents if a message has not been left explaining the absence.
- If a child is sick and cannot attend school, the parents must call the school office and leave a message explaining the reason and expected duration of absence.
- The only other absence that will be authorised is a valid medical appointment, substantiated with a copy of the appointment letter or card.
- Attendance reports are prepared fortnightly by the attendance officer and submitted to the attendance lead for follow up.
- The school has a clear three stage approach to attendance that falls below 90% and 85%. This is in appendix 2 of this policy and summarised as:
  1. Stage One letter; informing parents of attendance issue.
  2. Stage Two letter; requesting an informal meeting.

- 3. Stage Three letter; offering support to improve attendance.
- If after the three stages attendance has not improved significantly, a referral to the A.C.E Service will be made.
- Punctuality is monitored in the same way. The S.I.M.S (School information management system) report "Minutes late" will also be produced and submitted to the attendance lead. They will then follow this up with contact to parents in writing.
- We monitor and record attendance in Nursery in the same way to promote good attendance patterns early on in children's education.

## Leave of Absence

The government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) ( England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any applications for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted and any additional leave will not be authorised.
- Applications for Leave of absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Councils' Legal services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.
- Applications for leave can only be made by the resident parent. The resident parent/carers AND the non-resident parent/carer can be prosecuted if the non-resident parent/carer is taking the pupil on leave of absence.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**

### **100% Attendance**

It is the policy of our School to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our School will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils. Pupils who achieve 100% are awarded certificates at the end of every term.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is important to set realistic targets; these targets will be set in consultation with the LA. The school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

When evaluating success the Senior Management Team and governors will monitor attendance termly and consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved.
- Punctuality has improved.
- Parental response to absence has improved.
- Re-integration plans have been successful.
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community.
- Pupils/students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school.
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal and Social Education (PHSE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons.

### **Practice**

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers regularly analyzing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Recording carefully, all telephone messages and retaining these, E Mail messages and parental letters of explanation for a minimum period of one year

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole School

# St John's Primary School

## APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

### Important Information For Parents/Carers

- Head teachers are no longer permitted to authorise leave for holidays.
- Head teachers may grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised.
- Requests for leave of absence should be made before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed and sent to the school **no less than** 6 weeks prior to the start of the holiday
- This form **must** be completed by the resident parent/carer (s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a leave of absence form for each child.

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child..... Class.....

Dates of Proposed Absence: From..... To:.....201....

Reason for Proposed Absence – *please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (they can only be exceptional circumstances)*

.....  
.....  
.....

Total School Days Requested On This Occasion

Total days Taken Last Academic Year

Signature of Parent/Carer.....

### For School Use Only

Previous absence checked: None/ ..... days

Consistent with school policy/regulations: Y/N

Attendance last year = ..... % This year to date.....%

## St John's Primary School

### **Attendance compliance enforcement service policy extract based on The Education (Pupil regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.**

- Head teachers **shall not** grant any leave of absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for leave of absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for leave of absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed penalty notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed penalty notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Date

Name

Address

Dear ,

**Informal Stage One Absence Notification**

We have been completing our absence return form for the last half term and we have noticed that xxx was absent on a number of occasions. This may have been due to illness or a planned holiday and, if you have notified us of the reason, please accept our thanks.

The purpose of this first letter is to make you aware that ???'s attendance currently stands at just ??%.

We monitor all children's attendance closely and work hard to ensure that our pupils attend school for at least 95% of the school year. We have to report any continued attendance below 85% to our assigned Education Welfare Officer.

Please could you make every effort to ensure that ??? attends school? I fully understand that illness is unavoidable, and letters are sent to all parents and carers according to their child's individual attendance. Hopefully, we will see an improvement during this half term. If not, a formal Stage Two notification letter will be sent.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr D Barrow**  
Head Teacher

March 2014

Date

Name

Address

Dear ,

**Formal Stage Two Absence Notification**

Further to my previous letter it has come to my attention that ????'s attendance has not improved.

Currently his/her attendance is ??%, which is the same as at the last attendance check. It is usual that if attendance has not improved or continues below 85%, then a referral will be made to Warwickshire Education Social Work Service.

This is the second stage in our attendance procedure, so I would like to ask you to make an appointment to discuss this further with me to try and avoid a referral to Warwickshire Education Social Work Service. We will work with you to try to resolve this matter and improve the situation, but we do need your help.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

**Mr D Barrow**  
Head Teacher

March 2014

Date

Name

Address

Dear ,

**Formal Final Stage Absence Notification**

Further to my letter dated xx/xx/xx, it has come to my attention that xxxxxxxxx's attendance has not improved, currently standing at ??%.

We are working hard as a school to promote good attendance; the average attendance for the county is 95%. Therefore, we now need to work with you to put appropriate support into place. **Please contact the school office to arrange an appointment with me to discuss the measures that will now be introduced to help improve ??????'s overall attendance.**

It is worth noting that if these measures prove unsuccessful and ??????'s attendance does not improve, a referral would then be made to the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) Service.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr D Barrow**

Headteacher & Head of Children's Centre

March 2014