

St Paul's CE Primary School

Headteacher: Ms Wendy Budsworth

ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date: October 2018

Updated: September 2019

Review Date: October 2020



Our Aim

St Paul's CE Primary School is determined to raise the level of attendance at our school as we believe that good school attendance is an important factor in helping pupils to achieve the five desired outcomes for children:

Compassion – which enables us to be gentle, kind, patient as we understand and treat others as we would wish to be treated.

Forgiveness - which enables us to let go of negative feelings towards others.

Respect - which enables us to be tolerant of all people, regardless of their age, culture, gender or ethnicity, and of their belongings and property.

Trust – which enables us to establish the close relationships essential to a joyful and peaceful community.

Justice – which enables us to develop an understanding of what is right and wrong and what is fair.

Children are expected to be in school for 190 days a year. That leaves 175 non-school days a year to go on holiday, have days out, spend time with the family, make routine appointments, go shopping etc. Ensuring good attendance and punctuality is jointly the responsibility of parents/carers and the school and the school hopes to work in partnership with parents to secure good attendance and punctuality.

There are strong links between attendance at school and achievement in later life. As a school, we will work with families to ensure that all children achieve their best possible level of attendance at school. Any family experiencing difficulties in getting their children into school can see Ms Budsworth (Headteacher) or Miss Robinson (Learning Mentor).

St Paul's CE creates a welcoming atmosphere where children enjoy coming to school, are engaged with their learning and feel valued members of the school community who are healthy, safe, and secure whilst having opportunities to thrive to the best of their abilities.

Introduction

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use Legal enforcement.

Allowing a child to be absent from school for no good reason is an offence, which can result in prosecution or a penalty notice being issued.

If there is a good reason for a child to be absent from school, parents/carers should inform the school as soon possible on the first day of absence. On the child's return to school a note should be sent to confirm the reason for absence

The school is required to keep two registers:

- An admission register
- An attendance register

The attendance register must be called twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon, **therefore each child gets 2 session marks for 1 full day in school.** Absence must be authorised by the school and recorded in the register. If a satisfactory explanation for the absence is not given the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

School procedure for absences & lateness

Lateness

School opens at 8.45am, the bell rings at 8:55am and school gates and classroom doors close at 9:00am prompt.

Registers are open from 8:45am and close at 9:05am. Latecomers (arriving after 9.05am) must arrive via the main entrance to collect a late mark (L) and be brought into assembly or class by the office staff. Arriving to school after 9:30am will result in an unauthorised late mark (U). Punctuality is extremely important. Poor punctuality has a disruptive effect on other pupils and on the child's education. Lateness can lead to:

- Disruption to assembly or the class
- Developing bad time keeping habits
- Missing and falling being in parts of their education
- Embarrassment at arriving late and entering via the front door.

Absence and Illness

As a school we understand that children may need to take occasional days off school through illness or exceptional circumstances.

- Parents / Carers are expected to contact school before 9.00am on the first day of absence.
- The Admin Assistant will contact families via the phone on the first day of absence to find out why a child is not in school, if school has not already been contacted this will be done by 10am.
- Failure to provide school with an acceptable reason for absence will mean that an unauthorised mark is entered into the register. Your child gets two register marks a day; 10 session unauthorised marks [5 days] in a school year could result in a Penalty Notice being issued. Please be aware an unauthorised late (U) mark, will also be considered when issuing a penalty notice.
 - Parents / Carers of children who accumulate 2 days (4 sessions) of medical absence will be asked to provide medical evidence e.g. an appointment card, medication being seen/brought in etc before any further absence can be authorised. 10 days absence accumulated over the school year due to medical reasons will result in a referral to the school nurse.
- Parents of children with an attendance of less than 96% will be notified regarding their absences. School will send out weekly letters to families that are late or have any unauthorised absences that week which could lead to a meeting in school to discuss this further. These discussions are used to help school, parents / carers and pupils solve these difficulties together and bring about an improvement in a child's school attendance. Parents are asked to make every effort to attend meetings about school attendance. A failure to discuss or address school attendance problems could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued

Taking holidays in term-time.

If you are going on holiday during term time you still need a Holiday Request form, these must be returned to school. Only the Head Teacher or Learning Mentor can authorise or unauthorise a holiday.

Special consideration will be given to the following situations;

- Recommendation from a GP in relation to improvement after a period of illness (pupil related)
- Parents can demonstrate that annual leave is dictated by employers, this will need to be on letter headed paper and school are able to contact your employer if necessary.

All holiday requests will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted, the letter should state:

- The conditions of leave granted
- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

There are 175 non-school days a year and parents are encouraged to take family holidays in the school holidays. Holidays taken without authorisation from the Headteacher or Learning Mentor could result in a penalty fine.

Religious Observance

This school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods on weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parents' religious body.

Rewards

St Pauls C of E Primary School, aims to recognise good attendance through rewards which will vary from time to time but may include e.g.;

- A class cup for the class with the best weekly attendance
- Class who wins attendance cup most in a half term, gets an extra playtime
- Each class who get 96% or above get a roll of the dice to move round the board for a prize
- All classes receive points based on their percentages for the week. Points are shown in a league table and class with the most at the end of the year get a treat!
- Children who achieve 100% from Friday- Thursday get a raffle ticket in class, this raffle ticket are entered into a box in the hall. At the end of each half term in assembly, seven tickets will be chosen at random, from the box and they will gain a prize.
- Whole school treat if the whole school records 100% attendance in any one week.

Communication

As a school that is striving for better attendance, we feel it is important to share the attendance with the pupils of St Pauls C of E. All our pupils know, we are aiming for each class to be above the national average (96%). Therefore, each classroom has their attendance displayed on the classroom door, this helps the children to see that any absences or late marks they have impacts their class percentage.

During our weekly celebration assemblies we announce who has the highest attendance for the week, winning the attendance cup. This is then recorded on our attendance display board in the assembly hall and the class who wins that week, gets to move up the reward chart.

Alongside this, we announce the winner via our school Twitter page and school notice boards. This enables us to communicate with the parents/carers and celebrate our attendance winners.