



We are a Christian School committed to working together to be a welcoming, caring community where everyone reaches high levels of achievement, feels valued and has confidence in their abilities and acts responsibly towards others.

## INTRODUCTION

If children are to derive the maximum benefit from their education they must attend school regularly and on time. This policy identifies the specific approach and measures to be taken at St Stephen's C of E Primary School and Children's Centre.

## AIMS

We aim to raise pupil attainment and self-esteem by ensuring every child attends school regularly and on time.

We aim to help parents and the school community understand the importance of attendance and punctuality so that they can play an active part in ensuring it happens.

We aim to assist parents in maintaining their child's attendance and punctuality in any way that is feasible and will result in the raising of that child's attainment.

## TARGETS

The Governing Body sets and agrees targets for attendance and punctuality over a four year period. These are reviewed each year. At St Stephen's C of E Primary School and Children's Centre, the Governing Body usually sets a narrower margin than the National Average as we have high expectations for our pupils.

A target is set for the following:

Authorised Absence

Unauthorised Absence (Truancy – with or without parental consent)

Persistent Absence at 15% and 20%

Exclusions

## REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

The school gates open at 8.45am and the bell is rung at 8.55am for the main school. Nursery starts at 8.50am. Children line up in classes and their class teacher leads them into

school. Any child entering school after 9.10 is marked as late. The school day ends at 3.20pm for the Nursery, 3.25pm for KS1 and 3.30pm for KS2.

The school operates a computerised registration system in order to reduce staff workload. The registers are printed out once each month for monitoring and scrutiny purposes so that appropriate action can be taken

All school registers should be marked at the beginning of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session. Morning registration closes at 9.15am, the afternoon registration closes at 1.15pm for KS1 and Foundation Stage and 1.45pm for KS2. They are then returned to the office.

The teacher marks present or absent. If the child is present, the teacher marks only whether they will require a school lunch or if they are bringing a packed lunch.

If a child is absent and the reason is known it should be marked accordingly and the reason written alongside. Reasons for absence should be accompanied by a letter from the parent. If the reason is unknown then nothing should be written alongside the absent mark.

If a mistake is made at the time of registration it must be altered by the teacher. If a mistake is realised after the register is sent to the office it must be altered by the administrative staff "in such a manner that the original entry and the correction are both clearly distinguishable" (Pupils Registration Regulations 1995).

All children who are late must report to the school administrative office where the reason will be recorded and given a red registration card to show the teacher they have reported to the office.

When the registers are received by the office they are entered in by office staff and reasons for absence or lateness are recorded manually. The system automatically calculates lateness, absence and punctuality percentages.

### FOLLOW-UP IN CASES OF NON ATTENDANCE

The school office telephones home or texts parents on the first day of absence where no explanation has been given.

Only the Headteacher can decide whether an absence should be deemed 'un-authorised'.

## GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH ILLNESS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

The school actively discourages appointments during school time. This is made clear at parents meetings at the beginning of the school year.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 means that illness is recorded as 'authorised absence'. Patterns of non-attendance through illness are monitored each month by the Headteacher and Clerical Officer and parental meetings set, in order to ascertain reasons and seek to help the parent in improving the situation. The school Learning Mentor is often involved at this point. A referral to the Education Welfare Officer is made if the Headteacher doubts the reasons given.

## HELP WITH GETTING YOUR CHILD TO GO TO SCHOOL

If you are having trouble getting your child to go to school, the school can help.

The school will discuss attendance problems with you and should agree a plan with you to improve your child's attendance.

Forms of help could include:

- Support to reduce the burden on children where families are in difficulty (eg if a child is spending a lot of time caring for someone)
- Working with families to overcome bullying and other serious problems
- A parenting contract

## PARENTING CONTRACT

This is a voluntary written agreement between the parent and the school's governing body. Between the school and the parent, an agreement is reached to find ways to improve their child's attendance.

If a parent refuses to make a contract or the parent does not stick to it, it can be used as evidence if the local council decides to prosecute the parent.

## LEGAL ACTION TO ENFORCE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Local councils and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason:

- School Attendance Order
- Penalty notice

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ORDERS

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This is through “regular” attendance at school. Regular attendance is defined as any child who has at least a 95% attendance rate. Any child who falls below a 95% attendance rate must meet with the Headteacher in the first instance. If it appears to the local authority, through communication with the school, that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education through regular attendance at school, the local authority must begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order.

You will have 15 days to provide evidence that you have registered your child with a school or that you are giving them home education.

The order will require you to send your child to a specific school. If you fail to comply with the Order, you may be prosecuted.

## PENALTY NOTICE

Instead of being prosecuted, you may be given a penalty notice. The penalty is £60, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If you do not pay the fine you may be prosecuted.

## PROSECUTION

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court may also give you a Parenting Order.

## GUIDELINES FOR EXTENDED HOLIDAYS AND VISITS OVERSEAS

The school cannot give permission for parents to take children on holiday during term time.

Parents who take their children on holiday during term time will receive a penalty notice from the Local Authority.

## PROCEDURES FOR PHASING IN RETURNING ABSENTEES

If the parents and Headteacher feel it is necessary, a child who has been absent for more than two weeks may be given a session or two with the Primary Learning Mentor to ensure lowered self-esteem or worry about missed work will not be detrimental to their future attainment.

## GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTING AND REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE

Data on attendance is published regularly throughout the year. The Headteacher's report to the Governing Body gives details of progress towards targets.

Classes with the highest attendance are recognised each week during assembly. The class with the highest attendance for the year receives a choice of reward, such as a trip or class party.

Rewards and certificates are given to all pupils with 100% attendance on an annual basis.

Agreed by Governors  
(Chair Signature):

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Policy Due for Review:

March 2016