

St. Andrew's C.E. (Aided) Primary School ATTENDANCE POLICY

Philosophy

St. Andrew's 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. 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% attendance for all our pupils.

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 used 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.

This policy and these procedures form part of the school's safeguarding processes and so take high priority.

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
- To ensure the safeguarding and well-being of all pupils.

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. 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 in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

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 or he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service 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. Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by school staff and the school governors.

Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

Procedures

Registration:

The school is open for attendance from 8.50am. Registers open at 9am and close at 9.05am. In the afternoon, registers are taken at 1.15pm and close at 1.20pm. If pupils arrive after registers have closed, the school is legally required to record them as being absent for the entire half day session, which would then be an unauthorised absence.

Registers will be completed by school staff using the codes given.

Lates:

Late arrivals at school are carefully monitored. Parents/carers will receive a letter informing them if their child has been late on 10 or more occasions. (Late letter).

Illness:

Parents/carers are required to inform the school office in the morning of the first day of their child's absence. If the school is not informed of an absence, then parents/carers will be contacted.

A letter will be sent to parents/carers of pupils who have been absent from school due to illness for 20 or more half day sessions. This does not include pupils who are known to be suffering from ongoing or chronic conditions. (Absence due to illness letter.)

Absences:

Absences are carefully monitored. Parents/carers will receive a letter if their child's attendance falls below the Government's recommended attendance rate of 93%. (Absence letter 1.)

A 'fast track' letter will be sent to parents/carers if their child's attendance falls below 85%. (Absence letter 2.)

For safeguarding and educational reasons, schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner, such as through "First Day Calling" procedures.

Holidays and other requests for absence:

Parents/carers are required to complete an Absence Request Form (S2) prior to making any holiday plans. The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their children out of school, although the Education Regulations allows a request for 'leave of absence' for a maximum of 10 days in any school year, providing the child has at least 93% attendance in the preceding year.

In agreement with the schools in the Tavistock Area Learning Community (TALC), no absence requests will be authorised in the first month of the autumn term or the first two weeks of the spring and summer terms.

Target setting process:

The Curriculum and Admissions sub-committee of the school's Governing Body and the Headteacher will review attendance rates and will set school attendance targets annually in conjunction with the LA's Education Welfare officer.

The school's attendance targets are set higher than the Government's recommendation of 93%.

St. Andrew's attendance targets for 2011-2012:

Attendance: 97%

Authorised absences: <3%

Unauthorised absences <1%

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 and to ensure the safeguarding of all our pupils. Therefore, responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

This policy and the Absence Request form (S2) are available on the school's website.

Policy review:

This policy was adopted on 21st November 2011

This policy will be reviewed annually.