

ST PETER'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

For pupils to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the school, they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Attendance and registration arrangements are hugely important and must be seen to be regarded as such by pupils, parents and staff.

AIMS

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support pupils and their parents / carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning.
- Enable pupil to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school.
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities

Being at School

School education lays the vital foundations of child's life. It has been proved that regular non-attendance can severely impede academic and social development. Parents / carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making educational success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all the school has to offer. This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

School Times

- Children are welcome to come into school from 8.30 am and must be in their classrooms ready for the register by 8:50 am.
- School finishes at 3:15 pm.

When a child arrives on time:

- Registration takes place quickly and smoothly
- An activity is put on the board or out around the classroom
- The day gets off to a good start for everyone

- Everyone hears the information given and is included in important explanations and discussions. This ensures that everyone knows what to do and what is expected of them

When a Child Arrives Late:

- It interrupts concentration
- It wastes valuable learning time
- The teacher repeats information / instructions whilst others have to wait
- The late child is at an immediate disadvantage because they may have missed important teaching points, missed discussions where ideas are shared and will be generally unsettled

If the child arrives after 8:50 am they will have to enter school via the front entrance as playground gates are locked. On arrival at school they must be accompanied to the school office by a parent / carer and signed in the school with an explanation as to why they are late. This is monitored by the Headteacher and Parent Support Advisor. If a pattern of lateness arises, parents will be invited in to school to discuss this.

All children **must be picked up at 3.15 pm**; unless they are attending an after school activity. Our staff have a variety of commitments after school – clubs, staff meetings and training, and it should not be assumed that they are available to supervise children after this time.

Taking the Register

By law schools must take a morning register and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.

During school hours the school staff are legally in *loco parentis* and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day. If a pupil has to leave school for any reason during the school day, the parent / carer must contact the school with an explanation. Pupils leaving the school site during the day must sign out at the school office.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded and will be passed on to a future school as necessary.

When Your Child is absent

By law, schools must record absences and the reasons given for the absence.

Only the head teacher can officially authorise an absence, but unless there is a concern, the staff will usually do this on her behalf. Parents / carers provide reasons for absence and the school must decide whether or not they justify authorisation according to government guidelines.

Examples of Authorised Absences:

- Genuine illness of the pupil
- Hospital / dental appointment for the pupil
- Death of a near relative
- Religious observance (Faith of the parent / carer)

Examples of Unauthorised Absence:

- Sickness of a parent or other family member
- Inadequate clothing for school
- Child being used as a carer
- Problems with transport
- Non urgent medical treatment – eg. dental check-up, doctors' appointments for minor ailments (these should be made after 3pm when school finishes).
- School refusal or truancy
- A birthday treat or shopping trip
- Family holiday

Whenever a child is absent from school, the parent / carer should:

- Contact the school before 9:15 am on the first day of absence. If no notification of absence is received, the school office will contact the parent / carer to ascertain the reason
- Where possible let the school know in advance of any planned absences e.g. hospital appointments
- Where possible make medical / dental appointments out of school hours.

Are you aware that . . .

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Holidays

Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are "exceptional" circumstances to warrant the granting of leave.

- Holidays will not be authorised in term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.
- Parents / Carers must complete a Holiday Form, available from the school office.
- All applications for “exceptional circumstance” leave must be made 6 weeks prior to the requested leave.
- Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued for term time holidays exceeding 6 days in a 6 month period.

Sickness Absence

When a child is unwell, it can be hard deciding whether to keep them off school. Not every illness needs a child to stay away from school, if a child is absent then the school must be informed. Common sense needs to be used when deciding whether or not a child is too ill to attend.

Common conditions:-

Cough and cold: a child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by a raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off school, visit the GP and return to school when their symptoms have alleviated and they feel well.

Headache: a child with a minor headache doesn't usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms, such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then a child should be kept off school and the GP consulted.

Skin rashes: rashes on the skin can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses, such as chicken-pox and impetigo. Children with these conditions must follow medical advice.

Vomiting / Diarrhoea: children with vomiting and or diarrhoea must be kept off school until after their symptoms have gone. Diarrhoea and vomiting can have many different causes (including medical conditions, side effects of medications, excessive food/drink etc.) but the cause should be assumed to be an infection until known otherwise. An infection in the gut causing diarrhoea and vomiting (gastroenteritis) can be easily passed to others. Anyone with gastroenteritis should be regarded as very infectious and must be kept away from school until the diarrhoea and vomiting has stopped, this can be up to and including a period of 48 hours.

School Targets

Our school target is 95% attendance; this is the minimum level that we expect. We carefully monitor all absence and all staff are committed to working with parents/carers to ensure a high level of attendance as possible. If your child's attendance is 90% or lower, due to sickness / medical condition, we may request medical evidence to support the absence.