

# St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary School



## Attendance Policy and Procedures

### Mission Statement

*St. John's is a place where we meet Jesus. Everyone is enabled to fulfil their unique potential and together we celebrate being part of God's creation in all we think, say and do. In our school everyone is respected and cherished and differences are valued. Each member of our community is supported to truly reflect the person of Jesus*

### **Rationale:**

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be overestimated and it is essential that each child attends school as often as possible. Clear guidelines are outlined in the school prospectus regarding illness and we also use the local authority guide to childhood illness for advice. The school encourages all parents and carers to ensure that their child(ren) attend(s) school everyday unless unable to attend through illness.

The CSP are giving a consistent message that 'Every Day Counts' and that high attendance is essential in order to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters. The partnership have agreed to follow similar guidelines so that families and young people have a clear, consistent message from all schools regarding:

- Absence and attendance codes
- Extended leave
- School Holiday patterns
- Medical Matters
- Lateness

Attendance is regularly monitored each half term and parents are informed if their child's attendance falls below 96%.

### **Aims:**

- To secure high attendance against our school agreed target of 96%
- To implement common policies and procedures to support the achievement of Every Child Matters outcomes and to promote safeguarding for all
- To work together as a partnership to deliver a clear, consistent message which supports young people and families
- To raise standards for the young people of our locality
- To promote good relationships between home and school and to foster effective community cohesion
- To reward good attendance

### **Absence and attendance codes**

Our school will consistently apply the DFE Absence and Attendance Codes guidance from January 2009 and ensure that staff who are responsible for inputting the codes will be adequately trained. This document is available from [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk)

## Holidays in Term Time

Extended absence from schools can have a huge impact on a child's education. We believe that a common policy across schools in our partnership is necessary, so that parents receive a consistent message and there is no incentive to play one school off against another.

If a parent wishes to take a child on holiday during term time they must first request a Holiday Request Form in writing, outlining the reasons for the request and the dates and length of absence. Holidays should not be booked in term time without the prior agreement of the school to authorise leave.

Our school will

- Agree to follow Children's Services Holiday in Term Time Policy which is available from Bradford Schools Online. <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=370>
- Only authorise holidays in term time if attendance is above 96%, i.e. pupils over the previous three terms have not missed 7 school days.
- Remove from roll pupils who do not return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date and there is no reason for the non-return. Parents will need to reapply for school places through Children's Services Admissions Department.
- Request that Children's Services issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act if parents take extended leave/holiday in term time without the permission of the school OR take additional days in excess of the agreed number of days. The penalty notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after but within 42 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
- Promote the positive impact of not taking extended leave in term time.
- NOT authorise any holidays during the months of May and September under any circumstances as these are important times of assessment and induction.
- NOT authorise any illness directly before or after a school holiday without receiving medical evidence.

## Medical Matters:

The school actively encourages parents to make all routine, non urgent medical and dental appointments out of school time. If a child is not attending school due to having a medical or dental appointment, evidence MUST be seen to support this. Without this any absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'. In ALL circumstances school will only authorise a 'reasonable' leave of absence for appointments which takes into account travelling time – school will not authorise a full day's absence for a mid morning appointment.

Our school will

- Follow medical guidance regarding number of days absence for specific conditions - [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)
- Regularly monitor levels of absence due to illness for individual pupils.
- Consult with the School Health Service to assess the reasons given for illness absence and provide guidance to parents.

## Lateness:

Schools in our partnership recognise that lateness is not acceptable as it disrupts lessons and may lead to more serious absence. Punctuality is a life skill which must be taught and encouraged.

School asks parents to advise school before 8.55am if their child is not attending due to illness.

Our school will:

- Follow DFE guidance which states that schools should close the register to pupils 30 minutes after the start of the session.
- Apply the following coding:
  - L is used if a child arrives after the register has been called at 9.00am, but before 9.30am

- U is used for children arriving after 9.30am **with no exceptions.**
- In an afternoon, L is used if a child arrives after 1.00pm but before 1.30pm.
- In an afternoon, U is used if a child arrives after 1.30pm **with no exceptions.**

The time we record is from the clock outside the office.

- Ask parents of children arriving consistently late to meet with our Learning Mentor.
- Monitor punctuality each half term and advise parents if there is are more than 2 latenesses.

**Unauthorised Absences:**

There are many absences that are not for an acceptable reason. The Headteacher will decide whether an absence is authorised or not.

Our school will:

- Not authorise absences for pupils with less than 85% attendance unless a doctor’s note is provided.
- Not authorise absences for unacceptable reasons, such as:
  - My brother/sister was ill
  - We went shopping or I had my hair cut
  - We took my grandparents to the airport
  - We were moving house or we went on holiday without authorisation
  - It was my birthday
  - We went to visit relatives
  - I was late so I stayed at home
  - We went to visit someone in hospital
- Contact the parents of pupils who regularly have unauthorised absence in an attempt to improve attendance. If the school are unable to achieve this the child and family will be referred to the Education Social Work Service who may use legal interventions to improve attendance.

When a pupil has more than 10 sessions unauthorised absence in a six week period, this may result in a warning being given by Childrens’ Services of the possible issue of a fixed Penalty Notice. Any unauthorised absence in the following 4 weeks will result in a Penalty Notice being issued. The Penalty Notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 28days but within 42 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

**Procedures:**

Attendance and punctuality are monitored on a half term basis. Letters are sent out if a child’s attendance falls below 96% in any half term (see attached). If a child’s attendance continues to give cause for concern we will involve our Learning Mentor.

**Rewards:**

- We feel it is essential to reward children for regular school attendance to highlight the importance of attending school everyday. Class attendance is monitored weekly and the class with the highest attendance is presented with a trophy each week.
- Children receive certificates at celebration assembly for 100% attendance during a school term.
- 100% attendance for the whole school year is rewarded with a special attendance certificate and prize in the final celebration assembly of the school year.

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body.....

Date.....