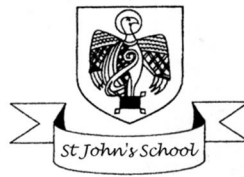


## St John the Evangelist Ce Aided Primary School SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



### Attendance Policy Statement:

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life.

At St Johns we aim to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Children at St John the Evangelist Primary School come into school in order to start work at:- 8.50 a.m.

Registers are taken electronically and remain open for the registration period until 9.00 am.

Any child who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as late.(L)

Pupils who arrive **after** 9.15 will be marked as unauthorised unless for a medical appointment. ( u code)

Registers are marked in accordance with SIMS codes.

Parents or carers are requested to contact school by letter or phone on the first day of absence. The attendance officer will adopt a first day contact to text parents and identify the cause of pupil absence if no message is received.

### Completing the Register

The school uses electronic registers .If a member of staff is not able to access the SIMs system to complete the register they are to use the laminated class list to complete the register and inform the admin staff that the SIMs system was not accessible. All staff are required to note any children absent on the laminated class list as this is used in the event of an emergency such as a fire/fire practice.

- Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school

## Procedure:

- Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence.  
There are two types of absence:
  - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
  - Unauthorised (where the school does not approve absence)
- It is expected that parents will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, text, personally at the office or by appointment
- If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parents or carers, then the school will contact the home by text on the initial day, following this with a phone call after day 2 and a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence.
- **Persistent absence.** The school is expected to tackle persistent absence rigorously. Recent changes by the DFE mean that the definition of persistent absence has changed. **Any child whose attendance is less than 90% could be classed as a persistent absentee.**
  - The Head teacher will regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
  - Children or young people with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the school a sticker at the end of each term and a certificate at the end of the school year.

## Lateness

Children at St John the Evangelist Primary School come into school in order to start work at:- 8.50 a.m.

Any child who arrives after the register has closed at 9.00 will be marked as late.(L)

Pupils who arrive **after** 9.15 will be marked as unauthorised unless for a medical appointment. (U CODE)

Pupils who are consistently late disrupt not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

## Medical Evidence

Pupil illness and occasional medical appointments do happen .However where a child's attendance is cause for concern you may be asked to provide medical evidence of your child's attendance at an appointment . this might include a note from the doctors/dentist or copy of the prescription.

- Identification may be made by the class teacher head teacher or admin officer if they have a cause for concern
- Concerns are passed to the Head teacher/Admin officer who will discuss concerns at the regular attendance meetings.

- The admin officer will contact parents with a letter (letter 1) if concerns are upheld. Reinforcing parental duty to ensure full school attendance
- Following the letter, there will be two weeks monitoring of the child or young person's attendance
- If there is no improvement, at this point, a second letter (attendance letter 2) will be sent and parents will be invited in for a meeting to discuss their child's attendance.
- School may, after two weeks further monitoring, inform parents that they will refer to the Education Welfare Service
- If attendance has improved over the last four weeks, school may continue to monitor attendance
- If attendance has not improved at this point school would refer to Education Welfare Service and a letter will be sent to parents about this (letter 3)
- The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parents and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate

### **Consultation Process:**

1. **School Staff** will be invited to raise any concerns or suggest proposed changes, which are deemed supportive of the aims of the policy.
2. **The Governing Body:**  
The curriculum committee will meet to discuss this policy and make any changes which are deemed supportive of the aims of the policy. The final policy, after consultation will be presented for approval to the whole Governing Body.
3. **The Parents:** Parents will be advised of our policy on attendance:
  - When their children first start at our school
  - Through newsletters
  - On the school website
4. **The Children** .Children will be advised of our policy on attendance:
  - In assemblies
  - In the classroom
  - During appropriate areas of the curriculum.

### **Time schedule for implementation:**

- This policy will be in place by January 2017
- It will be reviewed annually

### **Leave of Absence (holidays) during term time**

Parents are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. **Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a**

**holiday.** Taking your child out of school for a holiday could result in a fine. Only In exceptional circumstances a leave of absence may be granted. (Please see additional information on taking your child on holiday in term time)

### **What can parents do to help?**

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child or young person is away
- Send a note when your child returns to school
- Try to make appointments outside school time
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary

### **If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?**

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple
- Talk to the Head teacher and staff at the school
- Talk to the Education Welfare Service

You may contact the Education Welfare Officer, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation.

The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parents need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Parents also need to be aware that Cheshire East Council in conjunction with the School are operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non attendance.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire East is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community and Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parents and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

Attendance Co-ordinator: Head teacher

Education Welfare Officer: Heather Bowers

Attendance Policy Group members:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Caroline Waites	Head teacher	To monitor the attendance throughout the school
Janette Wood	<i>Admin officer</i>	To monitor the attendance situation of individual children or young people
Caroline Waites	<i>Headteacher</i>	To raise the level of attendance of those children or young people identified as being at risk

/Kerry Locke	<i>Family coordinator</i>	The welfare of children or young people in school
Mr S Raw	Governor <i>EWO</i> <i>Heather Bowers</i>	To keep a check on the general situation To support the school to achieve its objectives by following the Local Authority Guidelines.

## **Appendix A Letter 1**

Dear

### **ATTENDANCE –**

School is required to monitor pupil attendance and in particular persistent absence very closely. Recent changes have meant that the definition of persistent absence has now been changed to less than 90%. As a result, following a recent register check your child has been identified with less than 90% attendance.

Some/all of these absences are unauthorised/authorised, I have enclosed a registration certificate with this letter so that you can see this for yourself.

His/her attendance will be closely monitored over the next two weeks and if it has not improved I will be inviting you to come into school to discuss the reasons why.

If you are experiencing any problems and you feel school is able to help – please call into the school office and ask to see

Yours sincerely

## **Letter 2**

Dear Parents

### **ATTENDANCE – CHILD'S NAME**

You were informed by letter on the \_\_\_\_\_ that there was concern with regard to your child's attendance.

As there has been no improvement, I would like to invite you to meet with me \_\_\_\_\_ (Attendance Support Worker) and \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss this and also to see what help school can offer you.

I have made an appointment for you on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

If this date or time is inconvenient for you, please contact the school office to re-arrange the appointment.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 3**

Dear Parents

ATTENDANCE – CHILD'S NAME

Unfortunately, despite school support your child's attendance has still not improved.

Therefore your case will now be transferred to our Education Welfare Officer,  
\_\_\_\_\_ who will contact you shortly.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 1a**

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent

Your child's punctuality is currently giving cause for concern.

Late arrivals at school result in children or young people missing the beginning of lessons and disturbing the rest of the class when they arrive. All children or young people are expected to arrive in school between 8.50 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. every day. Please make sure that your child arrives at the correct time.

We will continue to monitor punctuality, and hope to see an immediate and sustained improvement. If there are particular problems, which we might help with, please do not hesitate to contact either your child's teacher or myself.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 2a**

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent

Further to my recent letter, continued monitoring shows that there has not been sufficient improvement in your child's punctuality and if your child continues to arrive late for school I will have to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer.

It is important that your child attends school punctually in order to make progress. It is also your legal duty to ensure your child's regular and punctual attendance at school.

Please be aware that unauthorised absences could lead to the involvement of the Education Welfare Service and/or the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice that if remains unpaid could lead to a prosecution.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix B

# TAKING CHILDREN ON HOLIDAY DURING TERM TIME

A guide for parents and carers

### Frequently asked questions

#### **Am I entitled to take my child out of school for a family holiday?**

No. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school or the alternative provision on a regular basis.

The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to "fail to secure their child's regular attendance at the school"

The amendments to the 2006 Regulations remove any reference to family holidays, extended leave and the statutory threshold of ten school days.

The amendments make clear that **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**

The amendments give **parents no entitlement** to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time

The Head Teacher and Governing Body will determine what amounts to exceptional Circumstances

#### **If we decide to take a holiday during term time what should we do?**

The parent/carer with whom the child resides must apply in writing to the school

The letter/application must explain the exceptional circumstance surrounding the request for the leave of absence

#### **What will the school do then?**

The Head Teacher will determine whether the exceptional circumstance ruling applies, if not the application will be declined

o Only the Headteacher (or the Deputy) has the power to approve leave of absence applications. When making the decision the protocols and criteria laid down in the school's attendance policy must be followed.

o Each academic year, schools inform parents/carers via a letter, newsletter or some other communication; that they may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice if their child has unauthorised absences in term time

You will receive a written response from the Headteacher (or the Deputy) letting you know if your application has been approved.

If the holiday goes ahead after the application has been declined the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **What will happen if the absence is unauthorised?**

The school will decide if a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued.

If the school decide that a Fixed Penalty Notice is to be issued you will receive a letter from the school advising that it has referred the matter to the Local Authority and that a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued;

The school will inform the Local Authority that a Fixed Penalty Notice needs to be Issued A Fixed Penalty Notice will be sent to you, accompanied by an explanatory letter. The Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted in the criminal courts

Penalties for unauthorised absence		
Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 Days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per parent
After 28 days	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance

Payments will **not** be accepted after the 28th day and payments **cannot** be paid in part or by instalments

**Each school has a designated Education Welfare Officer who can be contacted through school. You can also telephone the main office.**

**Tel: 01270 375277**

**Website:** [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ews](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ews)

### **Other leaflets are available to support you:**

Taking action to improve attendance – explaining legal action - a guide for parents and carers

Helping your child to attend school. The role of the EWO- a guide for parents and carers

*The expression "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for him/her, or who has care of the child.*