



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

## Aims

St John's and St Clement's CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective education for all our pupils. We believe that all pupils benefit from education and from regular and punctual school attendance and good behaviour. We will do all we can to ensure that all pupils attend fully and we aim:

1. To maintain or improve the overall percentage of pupils' attendance at school in line with the school target.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, staff and governors.
3. To have agreed roles and responsibilities for school staff and to be consistent in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
5. To have a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance and punctuality data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To promote effective partnerships with the Southwark Early Help Service and with other services and agencies.
8. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## Expectations of Pupils:

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day (when possible)
- arrive on time and will be appropriately prepared for the school day
- tell a member of staff about any problem which is making it difficult for them to attend school or to be punctual
- if they are late, report to the school office before going to their classroom

## Expectations of parents/carers

We expect that all parents and carers will:

- ensure that their children attend school every day and on time whenever possible
- ensure that they contact the school by telephone, writing, email or in person to inform the school in confidence of the reasons for any absence. This contact should always be made on the first day of absence and should indicate the length of absence where appropriate or contact should be made daily thereafter.
- ensure that their children are prepared with the necessary equipment they need for the school day.
- provide the school with up-to-date home, work and emergency contact numbers.
- support the school in its aims to raise achievement of their children through excellent attendance and punctuality at school.
- arrange for their children to be collected punctually at the end of the school day, unless they have permission to travel home independently (age 10 years and over only).
- work alongside the Education Welfare Officer and the Deputy Headteacher where appropriate.
- take family holidays outside of term time.

## Expectations of the school

Parents/carers can expect that the school will:

- record their children's attendance regularly, accurately and efficiently.
- make every reasonable effort to contact the parent when their child fails to attend school without a good reason on the first day of absence.

- deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent.
- regularly work alongside and take advice from the Education Welfare Officer (Marija Abbott) to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality.
- make all efforts to encourage good attendance and behaviour.
- instigate proper enquiries before removing the child from school roll.
- analyse attendance data to identify trends or areas which require support or improvement.
- provide reports on the school's attendance statistics.

### **Promoting and Managing Good Attendance and Punctuality**

We will encourage good attendance by:

- accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- undertaking regular attendance and punctuality checks.
- recording attendance on pupils' records of achievement.
- following up unauthorised absences by telephone or letter.
- arranging consultations with parents/carers who may experience difficulties in ensuring that their child is punctual and has good attendance.
- sending certificates to celebrate good attendance/punctuality.

### **Authorising Absence**

Absences are only authorised by, and at the discretion of, the Headteacher, based on previous attendance.

An absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- sickness covered by a note, phone call, doctor's certificate or an explanation in person by the parent or carer
- dental or hospital appointment
- bereavement
- secondary school visits
- performance at non-school related events
- external examinations eg. music, ballet etc
- discretion may be used for other circumstances eg. moving house

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 provides that no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. If we are satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness, the absence will be treated as authorised. Where we doubt the validity of an absence attributed to an illness we can consult with the School Health Service and/or the Education Welfare Officer. Any patterns of authorised/unauthorised absences which may emerge during our monitoring will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. (DFE). As a rule, family holidays will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. This decision will be taken at the discretion of the headteacher.

### **Responding to non-attendance and lateness**

When a pupil fails to attend school without a satisfactory explanation by 10am, we will contact the parent /carer via telephone on the day of absence.

### Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence will be monitored by the Deputy Headteacher and reported to and followed up by the Education Welfare Officer. A formal referral to the Early Help Service will be made for all persistent unauthorised absence.

**Persistent absence**

All attendance below 93% will be monitored by the Education Welfare Officer on a pre-referral basis. Parents/carers will be invited to meet with the Deputy Headteacher and the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss absence and establish ways forward.

All attendance below 90% will be referred formally to the Education Welfare and Attendance Service.

Any child returning to school after a lengthy absence will be reintegrated after consultation with the Education Welfare Officer, Deputy Headteacher and/or Inclusion Coordinator.

**Poor punctuality**

Poor punctuality will be monitored closely. The Deputy Headteacher will meet with parents/carers in the first instance. If a child continues to be late, parents will be invited to a pre-referral meeting with the Education Welfare Officer. If lateness still continues, a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service.

**Registration procedures:**

The electronic register is taken at 8.55am and closes at 9am. Afternoon registers are taken by 1.40pm. Late arrivals have to report to the office where they are given a pink late slip. The time of arrival is recorded in the register by the teacher or office. Lateness after 9.25am or 1.40pm is marked as unauthorised absence.

**Late collection:**

Children collected after 3.30pm have their names entered into the late collection register. If a child is not collected by 3.45pm a member of the office team will attempt to contact the parent/carer by telephone. Parents/carers collecting children who have been entered into the late register need to sign for the child and the time of collection is recorded. If a child has not been collected by 4.00pm and the teacher on duty has been unable to contact the parent/carer, the teacher on duty may telephone Southwark Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) previously known as social services, after discussion with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and will remain with the child until their arrival. Once the child has been collected by Social Services, he/she ceases to be the school's responsibility. If the teacher on duty is unable to contact Southwark MASH, the police will then need to be contacted to collect the child.

The Deputy Headteacher will monitor the late register twice per half term. If a child is collected late more than three times in a three week period, a letter will be sent to the parents/carers recording relevant dates and times. Parents and carers will be given an opportunity to make an appointment with the school to discuss the situation. If late collection persists, the school will refer the matter to Social Services.

**ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES**

Authorised absence	Unauthorised Absence
/ - Present AM	G – Unauthorised holiday
\ - Present PM	N – No reason given
B – Off site activity	O – Absent without authorisation
C - Other circumstances	U – Arrived after register closed
E – Excluded	
I – Illness	
L – Late	
M – Medical appointments	
R - Religious observance day	

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X – Not required in school (under 5s)	
Y – School closure eg snow/No LA transport	
# - Planned school closure (half term/INSET days/Bank holidays)	

## **APPENDIX**

### **Attendance information**

- Southwark MASH telephone number: 0207 525 1921
- Camberwell Police Child Protection Team: 0207 232 6355/6/7
- Education Welfare Officer: Alison Pickersgill 02075254808
- Deputy Head responsible for attendance : Anna Harding
- Peckham and East Dulwich Police telephone number: 101
- The Lane Safer neighbourhood Team: PC Jamie Keate (Dedicated Ward Officer) 020 8721 2769

**In an emergency dial 999.  
In a non-emergency dial 101.**