

St. James' RC Primary School

Attendance Policy

This policy was adopted by the Governing Board of St. James' RC Primary School in the Spring Term of 2017 and will be reviewed Autumn 2019 or earlier if appropriate

Context

This policy is written in line with 'Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice' as set out by the Department for Education in November 2016. This guidance can be accessed via the DFE website.

The DFE referred to the following legislation when preparing its guidance:-

- The Education Act 1996 – section 551 (1);
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, 2010,2011,2013,2016;
- The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011;
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations and amendments;
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.

Introduction

At St. James' we recognise the importance of daily school attendance in order to ensure that pupils learn effectively. The school is required by law to educate the children for at least 380 sessions or 190 days per year. As an Academy, St. James' has the freedom to change the length of the school year and the length of the school day but is mindful of the impact this would have on parents with children attending different schools; the school currently chooses to keep in line with schools locally.

The DFE guidance states:-

‘Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less both in Primary and Secondary School.’ DFE November 2016

The Government expects schools to:-

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence;
- Ensure every child has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence

The Government expects parents to:-

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring that their children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school attend regularly;
- Ensure that their children are punctual for their lessons.

Attendance Guidance

96%-100% - outstanding

95% + - good

Below 95%- poor

Reception Pupils

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their 5th birthday. At St. James’ we admit all Reception pupils full time from the beginning of the Autumn Term with mornings only for the first few weeks. If a child is not ready to attend full time or a parent requests that they start later, the school will be happy to discuss this and put together a personal attendance plan for the child that is tailored to their development; the child must however attend full time from the term after they are five.

Attendance Procedures

At St. James’ we:-

- Ask parents to ring the school and inform us of any absence as soon as possible on the morning of the absence;
- Call the home if no explanation has been received by the time the register has been called;

- Ask parents to send a letter with the child upon return to explain the absence in writing;
- Actively discourage parents from taking children out of school during term time via correspondence, newsletters and when requested;
- Publish 100% attendees in the school newsletter;
- Authorise sickness, emergency medical appointments and exceptional absences only (eg.bereavements, agreed attendance at another educational establishment);
- Have access to the EWO should a visit be necessary.

If families feel they have an exceptional request it will be heard but there is no guarantee of authorisation. Requests must be put in writing.

Absence and lateness codes follow the national system outline in School Attendance guidance November 2016. Absences both authorised and unauthorised are published in the end of year report.

Lateness Procedures

KS1 pupils arrive between 8.45am and 8.55am which is the start of the school day. KS2 pupils start school at 8.55am. Any pupil arriving after the aforementioned times is deemed to be late.

At St. James' we:-

- Shut the outer doors at 8.55 am;
- Require the late children to report to the office for a late slip which logs the time of arrival;
- Expect the late children to hand the slip to the teacher so that they know the child has registered with the office.

Late marks are published in the children's end of year reports. Weekly attendance and punctuality % are published in the weekly newsletter to parents. Certificates are awarded to the class with the highest attendance. Punctuality certificates are only awarded for 100% punctuality because this is expected.

Penalty notices

In the event of persistent or prolonged unauthorised absence, the Head Teacher is authorised to issue penalty notices and these are sent to the Local Authority as evidence for possible future prosecution. As an alternative to prosecution the Penalty Notice initially imposes a fine upon the parents of between £60/£120, after which it is intended that the non-attendance

will stop. Parents can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made.

Home/School Agreement

At St. James' every pupil enters into a home school agreement which is signed by the parents when they enter the Reception class.

The School agrees to:-

‘Strive to educate every child to his/her potential.’

Parents agree to ensure that their child:-

‘..attends school in good health, regularly and punctually.’

The Governing Board fully endorses the home school agreement.