

St Anne's CE (Aided) Primary School



Attendance Policy

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RATIONALE

Parents/carers have a legal duty (Education Act 1996, Section 7) to ensure that all children of statutory school age (5-16 years of age) receive a full-time education.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Education is a vital part of a child's development and as such the child's right to education should be protected. St Anne's CE (Aided) Primary School takes a strong line in this respect and relies on the support of parents to ensure that our attendance statistics are as high as possible.

If a child does not attend school regularly and punctually, parents/carers may be breaking the law.

PURPOSE

To ensure that all children at St Anne's CE (Aided) Primary School have access to the full provision of education without unnecessary or avoidable disruption through poor attendance.

EXPECTATIONS

From pupils:

- They will attend school regularly;
- They will arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day.

From parents:

- They ensure their children to attend school;
- They contact the office between 8.30 & 9.30 whenever their child is unable to attend and send a note to the teacher on return;
- They ensure their child is appropriately dressed, adhering to the school uniform policy;
- They ensure their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day with homework completed;
- Attending any meetings about their child's attendance, that may be necessary.

Pupils and parents can expect the following from the school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping;
- Contact from the school when a pupils fails to attend and no contact is made by parent/carer;
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend without good reason and there is a pattern of absences or an excessive number of absences or lateness;
- Immediate action on any problem notified to us, in confidence if necessary;
- Positive measures to encourage good attendance;
- A high quality education.

POSITIVE MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Registers are completed accurately twice each day (at 9am and at the start of the afternoon session).

- Daily monitoring by class teachers – contact made with the School Attendance Clerk to raise concerns where appropriate.
- Regular monitoring by the School Attendance Clerk and the Headteacher on attendance and punctuality.
- Award to the class of the week with the best attendance record.
- Certificates to pupils with 100% termly attendance records.
- Prizes for 100% attendance each half term.
- Reviews and meetings with parents as required.
- Each child's attendance is reported to parents/carers at the end of each half term with a grade awarded.

TYPES OF ABSENCE

Children 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: The school approves pupil absence
- Unauthorised: The school will *not* approve pupil absence

The school is responsible for children's attendance and only the Headteacher can authorise absences.

Attendance codes used for authorised absences are:

#	planned whole or partial school closure
B	educated off site
C	other authorised circumstances
D	duel registration (attend elsewhere)
E	excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental)
J	interview
L	late (before registers close)
M	medical/dental appointments
P	approved sporting activity
R	religious observance
T	traveller absence
V	educational visit or trip
X	non-compulsory school age absence
Y	unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	pupil not on roll

Attendance codes used for unauthorised absences are:

G	family holiday (not agreed)
N	no reason yet provided for absence
O	unauthorised absence
U	late (after registers close)

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on each day of the absence before 9.30am, stating a reason. A note should be sent to school on the day the child returns explaining the absence. The school will then decide whether to authorise the absence.

If contact explaining the child's absence fails to be made by parents/carers and no satisfactory reason for absence can be obtained, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We may alert the Attendance Officer to do a home visit.

Parents of children with attendance less than 95.09% are requested to provide medical evidence to support subsequent absences. Failure to do so results in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. School makes use of the Local Authority Attendance Support Team and the Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences. Please note that if a Penalty charge notice fine is issued and not paid this will lead to prosecution.

MISS SCHOOL – MISS OUT

We support Oldham Council and believe that any absence from school, for whatever reason, is detrimental to a child's long term life opportunities, so should be avoided if at all possible. Reducing absence from school is a key priority, both nationally and locally, because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and can leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

For these reasons, the powers given under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, 2003, have been adopted by Oldham. This gives an additional strategy to be used as a sanction when parents do not fulfil their responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly.

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any term (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent per pupil if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. The penalty notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for subsequent lessons on their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement.

Parents / carers **do not** have a right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. As a result family holidays should be planned during the school holidays. The school holiday pattern is published well in advance **on the school's website**.

As of September 2013 the School Governors agreed that, in line with the law, **no holidays taken in term time would be authorised**. In accordance with Oldham Council's protocol, school will refer for a Fixed Penalty Notice fine for unauthorised holidays of 5 days or more (10 sessions or more) and (if unpaid) parents will be prosecuted.

LATENESS

Expected arrival time is **9.00am**.

We open school at 8.50am to ensure children can be settled in school for registration at 9.00am. Children arriving after registration will be classed as late. Children arriving after 9.00am, when registers close, will be recorded as an unauthorized late.

10 unauthorised lates in a 13 week period is classed as persistent lateness and this may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by Oldham Council.

Entrances used by children will be closed at 9am for safety reasons. Any child arriving later than 9.00am should enter school via the main entrance reporting to the School Office so they can be registered. All late arrivals will be recorded. The parent/carer should give a reason for the lateness and sign the register. The School Office staff will then send the child to their classroom. Infant parents should also report to the school office to follow this process and staff will take their child to class.

Pupils who are persistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern the following escalation of action will be taken.

1. A warning letter will be sent to the parents as the pupil approaches the threshold for persistent lateness which details the lates recorded and explains the legal consequences of any continuing lateness
2. Parents may be invited to meet the headteacher and/or School Attendance Clerk to discuss any problems that may be contributing to a lack of punctuality.
3. The school contacts other agencies, if appropriate, and draws up an agreement with parents.
4. Referral to Oldham Council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

Late marks adversely affect your child's overall attendance figure.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

As of September 2013 the Government changed legislation so that all medical appointments adversely affect a child's attendance, therefore wherever possible non-urgent medical appointments such as routine optician/dentist/doctors appointments should be made outside of school hours.

If your child has an unavoidable medical appointment please inform the school office before the date of the appointment to limit disruption.

MONITORING OF PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Attendance statistics are generated at least weekly and parents will be notified by letter if their child's attendance is causing concern.

We judge attendance levels as:

Attendance recorded at 96.5% - Excellent.

Attendance recorded at 95.1-96.49% -Good.

Attendance recorded at 94.24-95.09% - Average

Attendance recorded at 94.23% and below – Poor

Regular attendance at our school is 96.5%+.

Attendance statistics which are consistently below 95.09% will result in parents being requested to provide further explanations about their child's attendance. Where children continue to have attendance of less than 95.09%, then authorisation for sickness will require medical evidence for each absence.

You may also be invited for a meeting in school to discuss concerns about attendance. This meeting is nothing to worry about; we arrange these meetings as a positive step for school and parents/carers to work together to secure an improvement in a child's attendance.

In cases where the Headteacher/School Attendance Clerk has concerns about a pupil's absence rate the Attendance Officer will be notified of that child's name and attendance.

Attendance of 90% or less is defined as Persistent Absence in line with the DFE definition.¹

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

We monitor pupils' attendance through the daily register. We will inform the Education Attendance Service of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission.

Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Pupil Tracking Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO HELP?

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child 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 you should...

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple.

¹ The Department for Education will reduce the threshold for Persistent Absence from 15% to 10% from September 2016.

- Talk to the Headteacher and staff at the school to see if there is any support that can be provided in helping your child's attendance to improve.

If it continues...

- The school may refer to the Attendance Service at Oldham Council.
- You may contact the Attendance Officer, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation. (Telephone number available from the School Office).

RESPONSIBILITY

In order for this policy to be successful every member of the school community must make attendance a high priority.

WAYS TO REPORT YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

School email: info@stannesroyton.oldham.sch.uk

School telephone: 0161 624 9885 a message can be left on the answer machine

Text: 0772 592 5681

Absence can now be logged through the Parentmail PMX app

CONCLUSION

A child's education can be adversely affected by poor attendance. At St Anne's CE (Aided) Primary School we place great emphasis on good attendance as a positive step in helping children to have full access to the curriculum and achieve their potential.