



St. James' Church of England Primary School.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Let Your Light Shine

Matthew: 5:16

Our Vision

At St James, we believe every child has a light, their own light and with support and nourishment they will be able to shine.

Our children are happy to come to school, they feel safe and well cared for. They feel challenged and supported in their learning and are excited by their learning opportunities. With this happiness and love of learning, they attend school every day which in turn brings them academic success and the opportunity to reach their potential. Attending school means that children can make friends, improve their social skills and build positive relationships to prepare them for life.

At St James we are certain that high academic success is linked to high attendance and we have high expectations for all of our children to reach their highest potential.

The school aims to work together with parents and carers to ensure that every child registered at the school attends every day and arrives punctually. It is for this reason that the following policies and procedures have been put in place.

Aims of this policy

- To safeguard pupils and ensure they receive their right to education.
- To raise parents and pupil's awareness of the importance of good attendance and of the impact attendance has upon achievement.
- To improve and maintain levels of attendance consistent with established targets (school, local and national).
- To ensure that there is common understanding and consistent practice amongst different groups of the school community, everyone understands their role in securing high attendance.
- To have a system of incentives and rewards, which encourage individual pupils, and whole classes, to secure high attendance.
- To ensure that pupils are only removed from roll within the safeguarding procedures set out by the local authority.

Expectations

We use the following percentages to classify our attendance:

98 – 100% - Excellent

96 - 98% - Very Good

95 – 96% - Good

94 – 95% - Average

90 – 94% - Concern

Below 90% - High Concern – officially persistently absent

This information is included on pupils' end of year reports.

Procedures

First Day of absence

- Parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on each day of absence. The reason is then recorded by the school admin team.
- If the school is not contacted by 10 am, the Learning Mentor/school office will endeavour to make contact with the parent and identify the reason for absence.
- If no contact is made, then the school will keep trying throughout the day. The office produces a daily print out of pupils who do not attend and no reason is provided. This is also recorded on the school system.
- If the child does not attend school, the following day and no contact is made and there are sufficient concerns for the child then the school office will inform the DSLs/pastoral team. A home visit may be undertaken as well as other emergency contacts will be called as well to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil.
- If by day 5, a child has not attended school and no contact is made, then CME policy is followed with subsequent home visits as part of safeguarding procedures.

Strategies for tackling persistent absence and emerging concerns

- Attendance is tracked and monitored weekly by Senior Office Manager/Deputy Head Teacher and any concerns are highlighted. Data is analysed to identify:
 - The school attendance figure
 - Class attendance trends
 - Persistent absentees/Children vulnerable to becoming persistent absentees

- The DHT will work with the Learning Mentor/pastoral team to address concerns and to target any particular groups of pupils whose attendance is deemed a concern.
- Patterns of absence and lateness are monitored and questions asked of parents to challenge these.
- The school follows the Local Authority's 'Fast Track to Attendance' guidance when addressing instances of poor attendance. Early Help is given in the first instance and then school attendance review meetings take place if attendance does not improve.

Promoting high attendance

The school will employ a wide range of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:

- Teachers will communicate regularly with parents on attendance matters;
- Clear attendance information will be entered in the Parent Handbook, in the "parent speak" Attendance & Punctuality Policy and on the school website;
- Good attendance will be highlighted in the induction for new parents.
- Attendance and punctuality board in the corridor, changed weekly with best attending class in KS1/KS2.
- The school aims to encourage excellent attendance, where the pupils' efforts are acknowledged, and rewarded. Rewards will be various and may include:
 - Termly certificates to individuals with good attendance and 100% attendance
 - Termly prizes for attendance
 - Attendance Teddy/weekly prize awarded to each class each week

The school also promotes excellent attendance by informing parents, pupils, staff and governors on the school newsletter each week.

Leave in Term Time

A key factor reducing the school's attendance figure has been the taking of holidays in term time and extended leave of absence. Staff and Governors are committed to addressing this issue.

DFE and Birmingham guidelines state that Head Teachers may no longer authorise leave during term time except where circumstances are exceptional. For example:

- Death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- Life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- Parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
- leave for armed forces personnel who are prevented by operational duties to take their leave at any other time

Leave of Absence can only be taken after discussion with the Head Teacher.

Parents will be asked to complete a "Leave of Absence" form (available from the school office)

Where the absence is taken and not authorised by the Head Teacher, a penalty notice may be issued, legal action may be taken or a pupil may lose their school place. (For specific guidance, refer to Birmingham City Council "Guidance for Schools and Academies – Term time Leave" September 2019)

Punctuality

We are aware that persistent lateness can have a cumulative effect and deny full access to the National Curriculum. Children will be marked late if they arrive after registration which is 9:00am. If pupils arrive after 9:25am they will be assigned the U code, this is classed as an unauthorised absence.

We discourage lateness by:

- Providing supervision for children from 8.45am
- Keeping a late book every morning and after school.
- Deputy Head Teacher/Pastoral team monitor punctuality on a daily basis and speak to parents where necessary.
- Providing a breakfast club facility.

Summary of Responsibilities

Parents

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children (of compulsory school age) attend on a daily and full-time basis.

Parents should:

- Promote a good attitude to learning, by ensuring that their children arrive at school punctually, (in time for the start of registration, 8.55am) in appropriate dress and willing to work to fulfil the expectations of the school with regard to rules and behaviour, learning and homework.
- Work in partnership with school and other agencies in the best interests of their child: this includes informing school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning and attendance.
- Parents should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness, they should contact the school by 10.00am on the first morning of absence.
- Plan holidays and family visits outside of term time. If the need for leave of absence is absolutely unavoidable, parents should arrange to meet with the Head teacher as far in advance of the period for which leave is to be requested as possible. (Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.)

School

The School will:

- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- Where concerns are identified, consult with parents/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues.
- Use local authority strategies to meet attendance targets including the use of Fast-Track.
- Inform Governors of attendance data through Head teachers reports.
- Inform parents of attendance percentages for their child/ren at parent's evening and with print outs during the year.
- Promote and reward good/improved attendance by pupils.

Governors

- In consultation with HT, set annual targets for attendance and review progress towards these targets termly
- Annually review the attendance policy
- Ensuring that the school and staff meet legal responsibilities in relation to all Pupil Attendance and Registration Regulations.
- Adoption the LBA Admission Policy or if required draw up an Admission Policy for the school and ensure that all Admission Procedures are correctly followed.
- Publishing a School Prospectus, Parent Handbook and "parent speak" Attendance & Punctuality Policy that will give clear statements of the value placed on high levels of attendance and of the school's expectations in this respect.
- Be involved in the development and agreement of this policy, including the monitoring of attendance data at least once a term.
- Ensure that the school is able to provide the necessary resources for the implementation of this policy.

This policy was developed and is reviewed and updated with key staff following Birmingham City Council guidance. To be read in conjunction with the CME policy, Fast Track to Attendance (BCC), Medical needs Policy, SEND Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

Date of Policy: February 2021

Member of Staff Responsible: Jayne Pritchard

Review Date: February 2022