



## KNUZDEN St OSWALD'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*Encouraging God's Children with Courage, Compassion and Creativity*

#### OUR CORE VALUES

Kindness, Politeness, Patience, Respect, and Self-Control, all firmly rooted in Agape,  
Love

##### KINDNESS/POLITENESS

To teach our children to be kind and polite to all in good times and in adversity, as one has  
no idea what others are going through #justbenice

##### PATIENCE

To develop a community where God's love and grace can be reflected upon, and a positive  
peace of mind and purpose in life can be found

##### RESPECT

To foster respect for all in our school community, and compassion for those in the local and  
global communities

##### SELF-CONTROL

To teach our children to face challenges, developing resilience and empathy, whilst fostering  
self-confidence and a positive approach to learning

#### Our Vision

*At St Oswald's we learn to develop a strong faith in the Lord our God in the  
knowledge that He has a plan and a purpose for each of us. We learn to reflect God's  
love in everything we do 'Stand firm in the faith and do everything with love'*

*1Corinthians 16:13*

# **Knuzden St Oswald's Church of England Primary School**

## **Attendance Policy**

### ***'Inspiring God's Children through Courage, Compassion and Creativity'***

This policy reflects the school's vision and mission, and should be read in conjunction with the school's aims and policy for teaching and learning.

#### **Introduction**

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

The most vital part of encouraging good attendance is to ensure that the school is a place that pupils want to come to, a place where the children are considered as individuals, where their needs are addressed and their successes celebrated.

#### **Why Regular attendance is so important:**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. At St Oswald's, parents are encouraged to become part of our school so that they can share their child's enthusiasm and care about their continuing education.

#### **Understanding types of absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably occur in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained or warranted
- Children who arrive at school after the register is closed
- Children who leave before the end of the school day

- Shopping or time off for birthdays
- Looking after other children
- Day trips and holidays which have not been agreed
- Days that exceed the amount of leave granted by the headteacher

Parents should be aware that the decision whether to authorise an absence or not rests with the school. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before an absence may be authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription or appointment card or similar.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

### **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses that start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting the vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for your child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 15 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

The school day starts at 9am and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by 9.05am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9.15am the registers will be closed. If your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This means that you could face the possibility of a fixed penalty notice if the problem persists. All late arrivals must report to the school office **before** going to class.

Regular checks are kept on attendance by all class teachers. The attendance register is marked twice each day, once before the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Staff use the symbols outlined in the register for marking to ensure consistency.

Staff are constantly monitoring attendance and encouraging punctuality. No lateness is ever left unacknowledged or remarked upon (except in extenuating circumstances)

If a child is absent from school (usually illness or medical reasons) the parent must inform the school by 9.45am on the first morning of absence. If there is no contact, the school will telephone the child's home. All absences reported are noted in the register. These absences are authorised absences unless the teacher or the Headteacher are unhappy about the reasons given. Other absences, where a valid reason is not given by the end of the week in which your child returns, are unauthorised absences.

You will be required to give detail about your child's absence and discussion will be held with you about any further action that you may have taken, or be taking, ie whether you will be visiting the GP or what medication has already been given. Where repeated minor ailments occur, such as high temperature, sickness and vomiting, support from other agencies such as

our school nurse may be requested, to support parents in ensuring that there is no underlying condition that is undiagnosed, as it is not normal for this to occur repeatedly.

Initially, the class teacher will contact parents of a child who has a poor absence record requesting the reason. It is our policy to be sensitive to the needs of individual parents, pupils and teacher, and if extenuating circumstances exist this can be taken into account. Where necessary, the Headteacher may become involved if support from outside agencies is required.

Where a pupil's attendance or punctuality record is poor, the school will draw the matter to the attention of the parents. Where a child's attendance level falls to 90%, parents will be contacted and targets for improvement set, to prevent the child from becoming a persistent absentee. Parenting contracts may also be used. If a child's attendance falls to 85% and there are no acceptable reasons for this, the school will seek advice and support from School Attendance Service. It is also detailed in the child's records and will be passed onto the child's next school.

### **Leave in Term Time**

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you make by taking a holiday in term time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time.

All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'request for leave of absence' form available from the school office. Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered by the school to be exceptional, based on evidence provided by parents.

In considering the request, we will also look at various factors such as:

- The timing of the request; when a pupil is just starting school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible. Pupils should not be absent immediately before or during assessment periods, for example, SATs
- When a pupil's record already includes any level of unauthorised absence
- Where the reason for absence is likely to recur, for example where parents are not able to take leave during school holidays
- Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as Warning Letters and Penalty Notices.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Readmission cannot be guaranteed. The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

## **Religious Absence**

The school will authorise one day 'leave' (ie, the day set aside by the Religious Body of which the parent is a member) per religious festival, eg, Eid. Parents must request this leave in advance and must be no more than 3 days in any one academic year.

Leave of absence under the Children (Performances) regulation 1968 may be granted, in conjunction with the Licensing Officer. Parents must provide the school with a copy of the licence .

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96% and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the area.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to ensure that their children attend school. All school staff are committed to promoting good attendance and working with parents and pupils, as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

The Governing Body have adopted this policy and review it regularly. The Governors set targets and monitor the consistent implementation of the policy on a regular basis.

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