



St. John's C. of E.

Blackpool's First Free School 1817

Attendance Policy

Last updated: February 2023

Person responsible for this Policy: Mrs. N. Galloway

Next review due: February 2025

At St John's School we are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all our pupils. Regular attendance and punctuality will ensure maximum benefit is derived from the school's curriculum both in academic and personal development.

We aim:

- To create a calm, positive and welcoming environment where pupils feel happy and secure, and where the whole school community feels valued whatever their gender, race or ability so that we all develop a sense of pride in both ourselves and the school.
- To enable each child to achieve their full potential through a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, which motivates and stimulates them, allowing pupils to become effective and independent learners.
- To ensure that parents and children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

We will avoid unauthorised absences by:

- Developing a close liaison with parents
- Providing effective pastoral care
- Showing staff commitment to full attendance
- Monitoring attendance
- Working closely with the Pupil Welfare Officer (PWO) and relevant agencies.
- Praising good attendance and punctuality.

Expectations of Pupils

- They attend school regularly
- They arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- They will tell a member of staff about any problems or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

Expectations from parents

- Ensure children attend regularly and punctually.
- Ensure they contact school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever a child is unable to attend.
- Ensure their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check they have done their homework.
- Contact school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

Parents and Pupils can expect from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the student or their parent, unless it is an issue of child protection)
- Recognition and reward for good attendance
- A quality education.

Recording Attendance

Manuel registers are maintained in each class whereby the teacher marks a pupil's attendance with a straight line (-) for the morning and afternoon session in the column identified as 'P'.

Children who are not present at the time the register is called should be marked absent with a straight line (-) in the column identified as 'A'.

The register is closed at 9:00 for the morning session, and 1pm for the afternoon sessions.

The register should be returned to the office.

Any child who arrives after these times will be recorded as late up to 9:30, 1:15.

The office manager transfers all attendance data to the school's electronic system.

Authorised Absences

All parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible explaining the reason for their child's absence. If a child is absent from school after the register has closed and the school has not been informed of the reason for the absence, then every attempt will be made to contact the child's family and ascertain the reason for the absence.

The Head Teacher is responsible for authorising absences and it may be that a reason given for the absence is not acceptable.

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness – parents will be requested to provide medical evidence where possible
- Family bereavements
- Family holiday (see note below)
- Medical and dental appointments
- Fixed term suspension
- Permanent suspension until removed from roll or re-instated
- Educated off site
- Approved sporting activity
- Religious observance
- Educational visit
- Other authorised circumstances

Family Holidays

Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday during the school term though schools are able to exercise their discretion when granting parental requests. However, each request should be considered individually taking into account the age of the child, previous attendance patterns, parental views and the educational progress of the child. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence should not be authorised. If a request is granted the absence would not normally be for more than two weeks in any school year. If the holiday goes on for longer than agreed, the extra days absence should be unauthorised.

School holidays are not authorised unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Procedures for following up absences

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone or by text.
- Where there is no response, a second text will be sent after 2 days of unexplained absence, or there may be a visit from a member of the school staff or the Pupil Welfare Officer where the service is already involved.

- Where non-attendance continues, the case will be discussed with the Pupil Welfare Officer for the school and further action planned. This may, in appropriate cases, result in a referral to the PWO.
- After 10 days, unless action is planned, the parents will be invited to attend a meeting in school. The meeting will include appropriate staff, PWO, parent and pupil and will identify and solve the problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school.
- If there is no improvement, then the case will be discussed again with the PWO to discuss any action needed.

Reintegration

- The return to school for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning. For example, a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) may be appropriate.
- Designated staff (Inclusion Team) will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- Staff are aware that this could be a difficult process that may require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part time re-entry with support in class as appropriate.

The success of the PSP will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the young person and parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

St John's 4 Stages in managing absences from schools and lateness

St John's CE Primary School has a 4 stage approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all of these stages or even carry them out in the order listed. Parents are informed about school session times in the school on admission and on the website.

Stage 1

- Issuing and checking registers on a weekly basis, ensuring parental letters informing about absence and lateness are brought in.,
- Lateness is recorded on the Inventory system
- School to discuss absence and 'lates' with targeted group of children highlighted at register screenings with PWO and senior management.
- School will contact the family about issues related to absence and lateness.

Stage 2

- The PWO/ school will make further contact with the parent through home visit or a meeting arranged at the school to discuss the absence or lateness. Notes of the meeting to be kept.
- If lateness or absence continues, the school will issue a reminder letter to the parents on behalf of the Head Teacher.
- A second letter will be sent for further absences or lateness. This will warn the parents that the school is concerned and if attendance falls below 95%, then a referral may be made to the Pupil Welfare Service.

Stage 3

- The Pupil Welfare Officer will contact the parents and arrange a meeting to discuss the absence and attempt to mediate between school and the parents to encourage the parents to send the child to school.
- The Pupil Welfare Officer will issue warning letters if the absence has approached the critical stage, ie.10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a term.

Stage 4

- The Pupil Welfare Officer working alongside the school will proceed to Court Action.

Children Missing from School

St John's C E Primary School follows Blackpool Council "Children Missing from Education Provision Policy and Procedures".

All agencies share information for the purpose of identifying children and young people missing from education, and child protection procedures are triggered where there are any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or suffering harm.

- Data is collected from schools, managed centrally by the Management Information Team (MIT) and recorded within the CAPITA EMS database. The system supports the Out of School Register (OOSR) and enables management information and reporting to be speedily accessed by designated officers within the CSA.
- Regular audits of school registers by the Pupil Welfare Service are carried out, identifying pupils who have been removed from roll, or non-attendeeds, with actions taken to follow up
- Truancy sweeps between the Police, Pupil Welfare Service and partner Agencies.
- Referrals to the Pupil Welfare Service for support in re-engaging children who have been out of school for sometime, and referrals to the Blackpool Exclusions, Out of School Register, and Admissions Panel (BERA) for additional support through the primary and secondary Integration Centres, (Illuminate for primary age and Stepping Stones for secondary age) These centres cater for children and young people who are new to Blackpool and have a history of transience, and gaps in their education.

If a child fails to attend school, and is deemed to be "missing", they are NOT removed from their roll without reasonable enquiries having taken place over a period of no less than four weeks, which should include a referral to the Pupil Welfare Service.