

St John's and Tunstead Primary Federation

Attendance policy

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| Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:- | St. John's and Tunstead Primary Federation |
| On:- | October 13th 2020 |
| Chair of Governors:- | Tim Jermyn |
| Last updated:- | NA |

St. John's and Tunstead Primary Federation is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorize the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence. See appendix 2.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Registers

The class teacher will complete a register in the morning and after lunch. Children will be coded according to Norfolk's guidance.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45 am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00PM.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to inform the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence. If the school does not receive information by 10am on the first day of absence parents will be contacted by the school office.

Third Day Absence

If no contact has been established by the third day of absence, other appropriate follow up school activity will ensue, ie, letter/visit/welfare call to Police or social services

Continuing Absence

If the absence continues school will take action they deem to be appropriate which will include sending a further letter and making daily calls to the family home. If there is a concern about the child the school may make contact with the local police to make a welfare check on the family or with children's services if the school deem it appropriate.

Unauthorised Absence

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

1. 85% attendance or less, with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period; or,
2. 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time

The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any pupil at St John's and Tunstead Primary Federation who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the Headteacher, class teachers, office staff and School inclusion worker to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

In cases where a pupil's attendance falls below 90% a first letter will be sent home inviting the family to attend a meeting with the school. At this meeting problems around attendance will be discussed. An action plan will be completed requiring attendance to improve. After 4 weeks a second meeting will be held to monitor progress. Should no progress have been made at this point, the school will seek support and intervention from other relevant agencies. It is our expectation that no child's attendance should fall below 90% except in exceptional Circumstances.

Termly letters advising parents of their child's attendance will be sent home at the end of every term with a covering letter explaining them.

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the School Secretaries .

The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance, this may include Family Support Process.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils. This will be organized by the class teacher.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

Certificates for improving attendance.

Certificates for 100% attendance presented ½ termly.

Half termly draw for 100% attendance with prize.

Class 'best attendance' awards every two weeks celebrated in assembly and via the school newsletter.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

| CODE | DESCRIPTION | MEANING |
|----------|--|-------------------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) | Approved Education Activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| F | Extended family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorized absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorized absence |
| O | Unauthorized absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorized absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorized absence |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| W | Work experience | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Enforced closure | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Pupil not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | School closed to pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |

Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Computer registers will be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes or preserved as electronic back-ups or microfiche copies and will be available for each month.

Register Security

Registers or attendance marking sheets if used must be safely stored. Weekly Manual Entry Registers are filed and kept in the School Office.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the "Secure Access" system, when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

Our schools targets are: 95.6%

The Teaching and Learning Governors will monitor attendance.

Action Plan

The school will produce an action plan to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets.

Any pupil with attendance below 85% over the school year is known as a persistent absentee, whatever the reason for the absences. The DfE has indicated that the level of absence that defines a child as being classed as PA may be reduced in future years.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
 - [b] To any special needs he may have.
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education (School Attendance Targets)(England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.