

St Giles' C of E Primary School **Attendance Policy**

DATE:

RATIFIED:

REVIEW DATE:

Christian Ethos

As a Church of England School, all of our policies take into consideration and reflect the Christian ethos of our school.

Main ECM Outcome: Enjoy and achieve, stay safe

1 Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, who will contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

Registers close at 9am. Children arriving after this time are signed in and marked as late. The parents of children who are repeatedly late will be spoken to by the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and support offered to rectify the situation. The Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) will be informed of persistent late comers when they visit.

4 Requests for leave of absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance.

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

5 Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance and punctuality

A weekly reward is given to the class with the best attendance or punctuality record for the previous week. Certificates are given at the end of each year to children who have excellent attendance for the year or who have made a 'special achievement' with their attendance in some way.

8 Attendance targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the SIP as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The Head Teacher will be responsible for monitoring attendance in school and for ensuring that absences are followed up in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, the school office will contact the parents or guardians immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported by the Head Teacher to the AIO.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.