



# **ST. JOHN'S MOSLEY COMMON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL** **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**Date issued: January 2019**  
**Date of next review: January 2020**

## **Introduction**

We expect all children to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

St John's CE Mosley Common Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance and punctuality of all its pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance and punctuality: -

- seriously disrupts continuity of learning
- undermines educational progress
- can lead to underachievement and low attainment
- Impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the school.

Under the Education Act 1996, Parents and Carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If Parents or Carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted. (\* Please see Appendix 1)

## **Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality**

The register will record who is present and absent from school at 8.55am and 1.15pm. The child's attendance is recorded via SIMS system within the classroom. Pupils who arrive at school late, must then report to the school office. Office staff will record the lateness and the reason on the Late Arrivals List.

All staff, Parents and Carers need to be aware that any pupil arriving late must register at the office and give a reason for lateness and for purpose of fire regulations.

The register closes at 9.15am and any pupil arriving after this will be marked absent for the session. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence.

Parents are requested to telephone school on the first day of absence. If no contact is made on the first day, school will attempt to call the parents to ascertain the reason for absence. If parents are unobtainable, then the absence is recorded as 'unauthorised'.

If a Parent/Carer fails to contact school to provide a reason for their child's absence, a home visit/welfare call may be undertaken by the Family Welfare & Attendance Officer.

## **Definitions**

### **Authorised absence**

The 1996 Education Act identifies the following as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence:-

- the pupil is ill or is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- the pupil lives over a certain distance from school and either the LA has failed to make suitable arrangements to register the pupil at a nearer school or the LA has failed to make suitable transport arrangements
- the pupil is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith
- the pupil is absent 'with leave'. This refers to leave being granted by the school, not the parent

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents/Carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

### **Requests for leave of absence**

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time.

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. The Wigan Council Attendance Service within the Local Authority, may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy and for seeing that it is carried out. The termly head teacher's report informs the governors of any issues. The governors examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as possible.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every year, or earlier if considered necessary.

# APPENDIX 1

Dear Parent/Carer

## EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICE WARNING FOR NON-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Under the Education Act 1996, Parents and Carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If Parents or Carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a Penalty Notice to Parents or Carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period

- 10 Sessions (5 days) of Unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance.
- 20 Sessions (10 days) of Unauthorised absence
- Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child)

In law, an offence is committed if a Parent/Carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with Schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of 'unauthorised' absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstance:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

## APPENDIX 2

### Attendance monitoring procedure

Attendance falls to 93% - letter/phone call to Parent/Carer
Little or no improvement
Attendance Meeting to discuss target setting/Early Help support
Little or no improvement
Referral to LA Start Well Service
Little or no improvement
Referral to Wigan Council Attendance Service

What does my child's school attendance mean?

**100% – Excellent**

**96 to 99.9% – Good**

**93 to 95.99% – Room for improvement**

**90.01% to 92.99% – Danger Zone**

**90% and below – Persistent absence/Potential legal action**