

# St James Church of England Primary School



Name of Guidance Document	Whole School Attendance
Review Date	January 2024

## **Introduction**

Regular and punctual school attendance is very important. If pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law, they then need to attend school regularly.

Our guidance applies to all children enrolled at this school and the guidance is available to all parents/carers via our website. If you would like a printed copy, please do ask at the office.

This guidance has been written to adhere to the relevant Children's Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department of Education addition to guidance from Southwark Local Authority and the Southwark Diocesan Board for Education.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind in their learning. A child whose attendance drops below 90% each year will miss two terms of learning over their time in primary school.

## **AIMS**

This attendance guidance ensures that all staff and governors in our school are aware of our school attendance and actions necessary to promote good attendance.

St. James' CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all of our pupils. We believe that all pupils benefit from education and from regular and punctual school attendance and good behaviour. To these ends, we will do all we can to ensure that all pupils attend to their fullest and that any problems which impede this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- ☐ attend school regularly; over 96% for the year.
- ☐ arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the school day;
- ☐ tell a member of staff or our Parent Support Adviser about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend school regularly.

### **We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- ☐ encourage their children to attend school every day and on time;
- ☐ ensure that they contact the school by 09.30 AM whenever their child is unable to attend school;
- ☐ ensure that their children arrive in school fully prepared for the school day;
- ☐ provide the school with up-to-date home and emergency contact numbers;
- ☐ not arrange family holidays to take place during the school term; request for absence during term time should be sent to the Headteacher in writing. All requests will be looked at on merit and may be referred to Southwark Council for a Fixed Penalty Fee for any unauthorised absences taken. (See Children's and Adults' Services Early Help Service Penalty Notice Protocol (April 2014))
- ☐ inform the school in confidence about any problems which might affect their child's attendance or behaviour.

**Parents/carers can expect that the school will:**

- ☐ provide an outstanding quality education;
- ☐ record their children's attendance regularly, accurately, and efficiently;
- ☐ make every reasonable effort to contact the parent when their child fails to attend school without good reason;
- ☐ deal discretely and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent;
- ☐ make all efforts to encourage good attendance and behaviour;
- ☐ instigate proper enquiries before removing the child from the school roll.

**PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE****We will encourage good attendance by:**

- ☐ accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session;
- ☐ following-up absence on the first day;
- ☐ undertaking attendance checks at appropriate times;
- ☐ Attendance and absence will be recorded on Child's Annual Report.

Any pupil with attendance below 90% (unless with long term medical reason) will be referred to the Education & Welfare Officer at Southwark Council.

The whole school should aim for an overall percentage of 96% and over.

**Definitions****Authorised Absence**

- ☐ An absence is classed as authorised when a child is absent from school with a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. Eg., Child is unwell and parent/carers telephones school or school contacts the parent/carers for an explanation for the reason for absence.
- ☐ Only the school can authorise absences, parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classed as authorised.

**Unauthorised absence**

- ☐ An absence is classed as unauthorised when a child is away without permission from school, therefore if a child is absent without good reason, even with support from a parent/carers it will be classed as unauthorised.

**Registration**

KS2 gate opens at 8.55 am and children line up in the playground with their teacher. They are accompanied to class for registration to begin. Any child arriving in class after 9.05

will be marked 'L' late and the number of minutes late will be recorded. Any child arriving more than 30 minutes late will be marked 'U' unauthorised absence, late after register closed.

KS1 gate opens at 9.15 am and children meet their teacher and line up with the rest of their class. They are then accompanied to their class with their teacher. Registers will be taken shortly after. Any child arriving after 9.20 will be marked 'L' late and the number of minutes late will be recorded. Any child arriving more than 30 minutes late will be marked 'U' unauthorised absence, late after register closed.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor software. Attendance registers are legal documents and are inspected regularly by the Local Authority.

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning. Often the most important parts of the day are early work every morning and teacher explanations of what the child is expected to achieve.

Where there are persistent absences or late marks parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of concerns and the school will provide opportunities to help support parents and carers with ways to improve. Failure to improve or more persistent absentees will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority.

### **Absences**

Parents/carers should contact school on the first day of absence with details of the absence. All absences are recorded as authorised or unauthorised on Arbor. If there is no contact school will call and text requesting a reason for absence, which will then be recorded. It is important we receive accurate information for the reason for absence so we can determine if it is authorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Any absence over three days the school will request medical evidence in the form of a doctor's appointment card or letter from GP.

Failure to inform school with a reason for absence may result in the absence showing as 'Unauthorised' until such time a reason is supplied.

### **Addressing attendance concerns**

The Headteacher or Parent Support Adviser can help with attendance issues and requests for absence, parents and carers should contact either if they have a problem or would like to discuss any aspects of their child's attendance.