

# Attendance Policy

## St Helena's C. of E. Primary School

*It is our responsibility to learn and achieve our dreams as a family.  
Opening minds, widening horizons and developing a better world.*

**Valuing Community, Compassion, Endurance, Friendship, Hope, Respect, Thankfulness, Wisdom**

### 1. MISSION STATEMENT

We are committed to providing a full, enjoyable and effective education for all pupils. The school sincerely believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore daily school attendance is required. To this end the school will do as much as they can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible. The government does expect children to attend for at least 94% of the academic year.

### 2. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors.

### 3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

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

- (a) To their age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) To any special educational needs they may have,

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

### 4. AIMS:

It is recognised that

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil is to be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents and their children to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

## **5. EXPECTATIONS:**

### **We expect the following from all our pupils:**

- That they attend school daily.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

### **We expect the following from parents:**

- To ensure their children attend school daily and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their home learning.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.
- To fully engage with the school or agency when support is offered to enable the parent/carer to get their child to school.

### **Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording and reporting of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us.
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education
- To receive a warning letter at least 2 days prior to an unauthorised holiday being taken. This will regard a fine being issued. Parents will be invited in to discuss this. (In line with LA guidance)

## **6. TERM TIME "LEAVE OF ABSENCE"**

In line with the D.F.E. 2013 Attendance Regulations "headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances."

If a parent feels they have **exceptional circumstances** as a reason for absence, they must write or request a meeting with the head teacher who will seek advice from the Governing Board and/or the Department for Education. This should be at least four weeks before the requested leave of absence.

Consideration will be given in the case of:

- Bereavement/critical illness of immediate family member
- Family events/celebrations
- One-off educational/cultural opportunities
- Children with Education, Health, Care Plans
- Children with Medical, well-being Plans

In exceptional circumstances up to two weeks can be authorised.

The child's current unauthorised absence record will be taken into account.

Absence would never be authorised during critical assessment weeks. The decision is final.

#### **AUTHORISED OR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:**

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

- Illness – evidence may be requested
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- Days of religious observance
- Fixed term suspension
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.

All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised.

### **7. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH GOOD PRACTICE AND REWARDS**

**Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:**

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- Attendance checks each term.
- A 'Gold' Award, using the Lincolnshire County Council's Certificate, for 100% attendance achieved throughout the year. (Attendance is 100% if there has been no absence).
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This should include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.

### **8. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS:**

**When a pupil does not attend or is persistently late, the school will respond effectively.**

If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone.

The head teacher will be informed of any absence which:

- Is 94% or below
- Shows regular patterns e.g. repeated absence on the same day(s) of each week or random days every week
- Is unexplained (unauthorised)

The head teacher will meet with the Governors on a regular basis and discuss issues such as the above which may be causing concern. Attendance letters will be sent to families when a child's attendance is hitting 90% or lower and Attendance Panel meetings may be held to discuss concerns.

## **9. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION**

The Schools will follow the Lincolnshire County Council policy regarding Children Missing Education, a copy of which is available on request from the schools or Lincolnshire County Council.

### **Definition of a child missing education:**

"Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (practice nationally is four weeks or more)"

### **Definition of Children at Risk of Missing Education**

Children and young people with poor school attendance are often the most vulnerable and are more likely to become children missing from education.

The Authority recognises that the duty to identify children not receiving education does not apply in relation to children who are registered at school who are not attending regularly. The Authority's CME strategy does however, include the reinforcement of duties that already exist for schools and therefore supports the monitoring of children at risk of missing education in the future.

The monitoring of children at risk of missing education is carried out in partnership with schools where attendance of individual pupils gives cause for concern with the aim of reducing the risk in the future.

For the purpose of this document (agreed locally) a Child at Risk of Missing Education is defined as:

Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is on roll of a school but has less than 50% attendance in a school term  
Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is subject to a modified/reduced timetable for more than one school term

## **10. LIAISING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

Poor school attendance may be a symptom of a wide range of circumstances. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school or the EWO. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people.

**Other Agencies** to be used where appropriate in individual cases.

- Educational Behavioural and Support Services.

- Educational Psychologists.
- Pastoral Support Adviser
- Special Educational Needs Service.
- Healthy Minds team
- CAMHs
- Social Services.
- Early Help
- Connexions
- Youth Service.
- Local police

### **Data Protection Act**

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

### **Staff responsible for Attendance in school are:**

Mr E. Anderson, Headteacher

Mrs J. Brown, Administration Assistant

Mrs M Fulwood, Governor.

### **Codes used for recording absences:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| / | Present                                      |
| B | Educated Off Site                            |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstance                |
| D | Dual Registration                            |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision)          |
| G | Family Holiday (NOT agreed)                  |
| H | Family Holiday (agreed)                      |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointments) |
| J | Interview                                    |
| L | Late (before registration closes)            |
| M | Medical/Dental Appointments                  |
| N | No reason yet given                          |
| O | Unauthorised Absence                         |
| P | Approved Sporting Activity                   |
| R | Religious Observance                         |
| S | Study Leave                                  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| T | Traveller Absence   |
| U | Late (after registers close)  |
| V | Educational Visit   |
| W | Work Experience   |
| X | Non-Compulsory School Age Absence   |
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (used on snow closure days) |
| Z | Pupil Not on Roll   |

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors.