



St John Fisher

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2018-2019

St John Fisher Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

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

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, St John Fisher believes a high level of school attendance is essential. We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity is used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance, and the link this has to achievement and attainment.

St John Fisher School promotes early intervention and prevention of poor 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 examine its attendance figures and 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.

School Procedures

Absence

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. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. On the first day of absence parents should telephone the school to inform them why their child is unable to attend and how long they are expected to be absent. The school is then able to mark the register appropriately as either an authorised or unauthorised absence. The decision to authorise or unauthorise absence rests with the school.

If a child is absent from school, he/she should not be on the school site during the day of the absence.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am. Any pupil arriving after registers close (9am) will be marked as late. If they arrive after 9.30, without an acceptable reason they will be marked as having an absence. Pupils who arrive late following an early morning appointment should bring evidence of this, e.g. an appointment card.

The afternoon registration will be at 1pm. (Reception and KS1)

1.30pm (KS2)

Nursery afternoon registration 12.30pm

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 days in a term will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Education Welfare Officer. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

Registers are monitored regularly by the head teacher, the attendance officer and the Education Welfare Officer to identify any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem, depending on severity, using strategies such as:

- Headteacher talking to parent/child
- A letter from the Headteacher
- A meeting with the Headteacher
- A referral to the Education Welfare Officer

Where attendance falls below 90%, the school may request medical evidence (and provide parents with guidance on acceptable examples of medical evidence) for all future illness absences. The school will also refer the child to the School Nurse or the Specialist nurse in the Education Welfare Service if there is a high level of absence for medical reasons. If medical evidence as requested is not provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. A high level of unauthorised absence will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer who may issue a Penalty Notice warning.

A monitoring period will then follow, and if attendance does not improve within the monitoring period, a Penalty Notice may be issued which carries a fine of £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

For pupils with appropriately evidenced illness, the school will follow appropriate protocols to offer support.

Returning to School

On return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This may include a discussion about the best way for the child to catch up on missed work (where appropriate) or be brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

The school will retain notes from parents explaining absence as per current protocol/legislation.

Promoting/improving attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. Regular communication will inform parents about strategies being used in school to raise attendance. The weekly school newsletter will also be used to promote attendance/punctuality.

Leave of absence

The Governors of St John Fisher Primary School believe that leave of absence should be avoided if at all possible as it can have a damaging effect on a pupil education and overall achievement. Only in exceptional circumstances, where sufficient evidence is provided to substantiate the circumstances, will any absence from school be authorised.

The school policy is as follows:

- 1) Parents must request leave of absence in writing to the Headteacher (via the office) as far in advance as possible. Verbal requests will be recorded in writing.
- 2) The request must include the reason why it is necessary to take such absence during term time, including exceptional circumstances, or evidence such as a medical certificate. For an emergency trip, evidence of last minute booking of flights must be provided.
- 3) The request should be made in writing using the leave of absence form (available from the office) with supplementary information attached.

On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. Parents/carers will be notified of the decision (whether absence is authorised/unauthorised) by the school within 7 days.

Any leave of absence that is not authorised may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the London Borough of Merton. The Penalty Charge Notice currently carries a fine of £120.

Attendance Awards

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

- Weekly celebration assembly for children to celebrate class with the highest attendance
- Termly attendance certificates for those children with 100%
- Termly class rewards for classes with the best attendance/punctuality

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. Progress towards these targets will be analysed regularly by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and strategies adopted in line with this policy will be implemented to achieve or exceed the target. It is the responsibility of the parents, staff and pupils at St John Fisher Primary School to ensure good attendance and achievement of targets.

Our school's targets are: **96.7%**
2018-2019

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. (Phoenix report AO2). Alternatively, electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three years.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers must be safely stored. Registers are kept in the school office unless being delivered to the classrooms by the appointed register monitors.

Review

This policy is due for review ready for September 2019.

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

2. 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
- Most types of dual registration

St John Fisher RC Primary School
Request for Leave of Absence Form

Request for Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances during Term Time

It is not advisable to take your child/ren on a leave of absence during term time as this causes disruption to their education. Schools must follow the law in this regard and may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances if certain criteria are fulfilled.

The Pupil Registration Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- **Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Head teacher.** (This is **not an automatic right** of parents/guardians)
- You should not normally take your child(ren) on a leave of absence during the school term.
- If the absence is approved by the Head Teacher you will be advised as to how many days the Head teacher has approved for your child's absence.
- If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

In order for your application for absence to be considered, please complete below:

Name(s) of Child(ren).....**Class**.....
.....
.....**Class**.....

Dates of absence: From..... To:.....
Reason for request (additional evidence must be provided in order for authorisation to be considered. Without evidence a request will be unauthorised.)

Signed: Parent/Guardian

The above request for leave of absence in term time for
.....
.....
has/has not been authorised.

Signed.....
Headteacher

Check List – SATs Year yes/no