



# Stanwell Fields C of E Primary School

## School Vision:

To encourage and support thoughtful, happy and responsible children with a lifelong passion for learning, within a Christian community

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Reviewed and Updated: September 2013, 10.09.14, 07.09.15, 07.09.16**

This document outlines our expectations regarding attendance.

### **Aims**

Our attendance policy aims to:

- ◆ support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ◆ ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- ◆ enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- ◆ make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.

### **Being at school**

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. It has been proved that irregular attendance can severely impede academic and social development. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

### **School Times**

- ◆ The school day for Reception and Years 1&2 begins at 8.55am. Pupils may enter their classrooms from 8.45am.
- ◆ The school day for Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 begins at 8.40am. Children are allowed into the playground from 8.30am when a member of staff is on duty.
- ◆ Close of Registration is at 9.15am
- ◆ Lunchtime registration is at 1.00pm.
- ◆ School finishes at 3.00pm for Reception and Year 1 & 2 and at 3.10pm for the older year groups

It is your legal responsibility as parent/carer to ensure that the child in your care attends school regularly, and that they get up in the morning in time to arrive punctually.

Nursery children start the day promptly at 9.00 and finish at 12.00.

### **Getting to school on time: 8.40am for Juniors, 8.55am for Infants**

When the class arrives on time:

- ◆ registration takes place quickly and smoothly;
- ◆ the day gets off to a good start for everyone;
- ◆ everyone hears information given and is included in important explanations and discussions. This ensures that everyone knows what to do and what is expected of them.

When a child arrives late:

- ◆ it interrupts concentration;

- ◆ it wastes valuable learning time;
- ◆ the teacher has to repeat information/instructions whilst others have to wait;
- ◆ the late child is at an immediate disadvantage because they may have missed discussions where ideas were shared and will be generally unsettled.
- ◆ If a child is not at school by the times specified he/she will be marked absent. If they subsequently arrive after the register has been taken then they will be marked as late. If a child arrives at school after the register has closed (9.15) they will be given a "U" mark in the register which means that it will count as being absent all morning.

### **Taking the register**

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day. If a pupil has to leave school for any reason during the day, the parent/carer must contact the school staff with an explanation. Pupils leaving the school site during the day must exit via the school office.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools.

### **When your child is absent**

By law, schools must record absences and the reasons given for these absences. Only the Headteacher can officially authorise an absence. Parents/carers must provide reasons for absences and the school must decide whether or not they justify authorisation according to government guidelines.

### **Examples:**

#### **Authorised absences:**

- ◆ Genuine illness of the pupil;
- ◆ Unavoidable hospital/dental appointment for the pupil (not regular check ups);
- ◆ death of a near relative;
- ◆ religious observance (faith of the parents/carers)

#### **Unauthorised absences:**

- ◆ a shopping trip or a birthday treat
- ◆ a holiday
- ◆ oversleeping due to late night;
- ◆ looking after other ill children;
- ◆ letting the gas man in.

Whenever a child is absent from school the parent/carer should

- ◆ contact the school before 10am on the first day of absence, give a clear reason of the absence (this should specify the reason for the absence and not just that the child is unwell). and keep the school informed of likely return;
- ◆ if possible let the school know in advance of any planned absences, e.g. hospital appointments and provide a copy of the appointment letter.

The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to ensure the highest levels of attendance. If there is a concern about unauthorised absence or where there has been 10 days unauthorised absence a referral will be automatically made to the EWO.

### **Wherever possible medical/dental appointments should be made outside school hours.**

#### **How can you help**

You can help the child you care for by:

- ◆ ensuring they have everything they need ready for school the night before;
- ◆ ensuring regular bedtimes and wake up times on school days;
- ◆ **ensuring they are at school every day and arrive at school punctually;**
- ◆ talking to a member of the school staff if there is a problem.

- ◆ informing the school by 10am on the first morning if your child is going to be absent
- ◆ following up a child's absence with an explanation of the reason for absence
- ◆ If your child has an unavoidable medical appointment, send a copy of the relevant letter into the school.

### **What the School does**

- ◆ We monitor attendance on a daily, weekly, monthly, half termly and termly basis to ensure all children are attending regularly.
- ◆ We inform parents by letter if their child's attendance is a cause for concern
- ◆ We invite parents in to meet with the Headteacher or Home School link worker if a child's attendance is not at expected levels
- ◆ If having met with the Headteacher or Home School Link worker the child's attendance has not improved then we refer the family to the Educational Welfare Officer for further support.

### **Holidays in Term time**

Family holidays should take place during the school holiday dates, these are published a year in advance. Government guidelines state that no holidays should be taken during term time so the **school is unable to authorise any holiday requests**. In very exceptional circumstances please apply in writing to the Headteacher who will give your request due consideration. Please note that if you take holiday in school time this will count as unauthorised absence and may result in the serving of a fixed penalty notice.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount. This fixed amount is per parent, per child.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

### **Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued**

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officer.

Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term time for 5 days or more within a 3 month period without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised.

Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Late arrival after the close of registration (9.15 am) on 5 occasions during a half term where the pupil's attendance falls below 90%. The lateness will be recorded in accordance with the 'Registration and Lateness' section of this policy.

**With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

**Let's all work together for the benefit of your child.**

# Did you know .....

- Each year there are only 190 school days, this means that there are 175 days for shopping, birthday treats, non urgent medical appointments, dental appointments and holidays etc
- If a child misses 16 days of school in a year then they are out of school more than they are in school!
- If a child misses a day a week for their entire school life it is the equivalent of missing 2 years of school.

## Impact of poor attendance

% Attendance	= % absence	= Days missed	= approx GCSE grades dropped	= weeks missed	= Years missed (over 5 years of education)
100%	0%	0	0	0	0
90%	10%	19	1	4	0.5
80%	20%	38	1-2	8	1
70%	30%	57	2-3	12	1.5
60%	40%	76	3-4	15	2
50%	50%	95	4-5	19	2.5

## Late Arrivals

<u>5</u> minutes late	=	<u>3</u> days lost each year
<u>10</u> minutes late	=	<u>6.5</u> days lost each year
<u>15</u> minutes late	=	<u>10</u> days lost each year
<u>20</u> minutes late	=	<u>13</u> days lost each year
<u>30</u> minutes late	=	<u>19</u> days lost each year



## **Children Missing from Education**

### **Definition of Children Missing Education**

*For the purpose of the Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education (2015), children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.*

### **Our School Procedure**

**Every morning Sarah Wickes checks the schools answer machine for any absentees**

**The registers are then inputted and checked**

**Any child registered a 'N' on the register will receive a telephone call from Sarah, if no one is available to speak to a message will be left asking the parent/carer to contact the school**

**The child's vulnerability is taken into consideration and any concerns will be discussed with the DSL**

**In the following circumstances a referral to Social Care and/or Police will always be made promptly:**

- **The child may be the victim of a crime;**
- **The child is subject of a Child Protection plan;**
- **The child is subject of s47 enquiries;**
- **The child is looked after;**
- **There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household;**
- **There is a history of the family moving frequently;**
- **There are serious issues of attendance.**

**The answer to the following questions can also assist a judgement as to whether or not inform Social Care and the Police:**

- **In which age range is the child?**
- **Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?**
- **Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?**
- **Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?**
- **Has the child been a victim of bullying?**
- **Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.**

- Does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.
- Rites of passage or forced marriage planned for the child?
- Has the child got a disability and/or special educational needs?
- Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying? e.g.
- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence? Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?

The length of time that a child remains out of school could, of itself, be an alerting factor of risk of harm to the child.

If the situation is not resolved within **3 days** the EWO will be contacted, then referrals should be made to the police and social care, as appropriate over the next two weeks.

Regular meetings take place every half term between Colin Franklyn, Adam (EWO) & Sarah Wicks to discuss children's attendance records.

**Children missing from school for more than four weeks**

A child may **not** be removed from the school roll before the end of four weeks.

*Guidance provided by Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board October 2015 Statutory Guidance on Children Missing from Education (2015)*