



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of issue : March 2011

Date of review : March 2012

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement:

"learning together as we walk in the footsteps of Christ"

underpins all that we do at St. John Fisher R.C. Primary School

Signed (Chair of Governing Body)

Date.....

St John Fisher School is a place where we respect and care for everyone and everyone is important. Statistics show there is a clear link between under-achievement and poor attendance. We will therefore work with parents and carers to ensure that the highest attendance is possible for all students.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and Best Practices produced by the DfES and Herts. County Council. The School attendance service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted or have to pay a fixed penalty if unauthorised absence has continued.

As a School we are responsible:

- For supporting the attendance of our pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance
- For calling attendance registers at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- For differentiating between authorised and un-authorised absence.
- For working towards maximise attendance
- For working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) where appropriate

As a Parent/Carer you can help by:

- Ensuring your child arrives at school on time (by 8.55am), properly dressed and ready to learn.
- Notifying the school on the first day of any absence, with a reason and saying when the child is likely to return
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness.
- Keeping us updated if your child has an extended illness
- Not making routine medical or dental appointments during the school day

We will:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters and the home-school agreement
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance

Authorised Absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. A note or an explanation from the parent does not oblige the school to accept it. Examples of authorised absence are:

- The Pupil is ill
- Religious observance
- A Family bereavement
- The pupil is a child of Traveller parents who have temporarily left the area

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery
- Going shopping
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- It is the child's birthday
- Unapproved holidays.

Punctuality

All students should be in their classrooms by 8.55am. The School is open from 8.45am. **Please do not leave your child unsupervised in the playground before 8.45am.** This is important as the first few minutes of the day are often used to give instructions for the rest of the day.

If your child arrives after 8.55 am please ensure that they go to the office and sign in- they should not go straight to their classroom.

We take the view that there are no late children- only late parents.

Term time leave of absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the school in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governors.

It is our policy:

- Requests for time off should be made **in advance** to the Head teacher by filling in the form available from reception.
- Holidays in term time will only be allowed **in exceptional circumstances** (The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason for an application).
- No Request for absence of more than 10 days will be authorised

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A good understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to transfer to Secondary school, we ask that you:

- Give the school full information about your plans, including the date of move, new address and the new school and start date
- Confirm the school has contact details for you
- Let us know when you move

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given the above information, and we cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations which will include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies to try to track and locate your child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.