



Attendance Policy

This document sets out the Policy of St Andrew's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School with respect to attendance.

All children must attend school regularly and punctually so as to achieve the best possible education through an optimum use of their time with us. We have a legal obligation to keep attendance records and the parents of the children have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend regularly and inform us of any reasons for absence or lateness.

Aims

- To ensure children attend school on time and regularly.
- To encourage parents to keep the school informed of absences or late attendance.
- To keep accurate records of attendance and follow up repeated lateness or absence.

Absences are categorised as either "authorised" or "unauthorised". Only the school can authorise absence, not parents. This means that parents must offer acceptable reasons for the non-attendance of their children. A child will be authorised as absent in the following circumstances:-

1. When prevented from attending by sickness or unavoidable cause.
2. Exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
3. On the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance.
4. For authorised holidays. Please note this can only be agreed in exceptional circumstances (please refer to Wiltshire Council's "Penalty Notices - information for parents" leaflet – copy available from school or on the website)
5. When the school is closed to the child's class in exceptional circumstances (Attendance Register Code Y).
6. To attend hospital appointments and emergency medical appointments. Routine medical appointments and dental check-ups should be made outside of school hours where possible.

The school must be informed by the parents about these absences for them to be authorised. If no reason is received, the absence remains unauthorised. Similarly, if we have reason to doubt consistently reasons for absence, then the Education Welfare Officer should be informed.

Attendance is monitored termly by the Headteacher and an attendance summary is printed for all children with persistent absence (i.e. whose attendance falls below 90%). The Headteacher discusses this with parents if appropriate (i.e. if persistent absence has not been caused by long-term illness) in order to improve the child's attendance, followed by a formal letter (attendance letter 1). The attendance is monitored over a further term, when, if applicable, further letters (attendance letter 2, 3, and 4) are sent to the parent to improve attendance. If, after this period, attendance has not improved, the Headteacher will discuss this with individual parents. The Education Welfare Officer will be informed in cases of continuing low attendance.

Attendance is also monitored termly for vulnerable groups of students (EAL, FSM, Pupil Premium, SEN, Disabilities). A record of each child's attendance percentage for the year is included in their School Report each July. To support our attendance monitoring, the school keeps a record of all verbal reasons for absence on SIMS and keeps letters received by parents.

In exceptional circumstances only, Headteachers may grant leave term-time leave for pupils. Parents should refer to the guidelines issued (please see www.st-andrews-laverstock.wilts.sch.uk (About Us – School Documents) or ask at the School Office for a copy. Any requests for leave must be made to the Headteacher on the relevant leave of absence request form. The guidelines and form are available from the school office or the school website.

Lateness

Children arriving late at St Andrew's Primary School (after 8.45am in the morning and 1pm in the afternoon) will be marked with an "L" if they arrive after the start of school but before the registers have closed, and with a "U" if they arrive after registers have closed. A "U" absence will be classed as unauthorised unless approved reasons are given by parents for the absence.

Marking Registers

Daily registers are marked electronically. Paper copies of all registers are also held at the office to use if electronic registration is not possible, or in case of an emergency (e.g. fire evacuation). If the school has received a valid explanation from the parent/guardian, the appropriate absence mark should be entered on the register. A list of codes is available on the electronic register.

Unexplained Absences

Registers close formally at 9.00am in the morning and 1.15pm in the afternoon. If a child has not arrived in school by close of registers, and no notification has been received, the school will contact the parent to ascertain the situation. Parents should telephone the school on the first day of their child's absence to confirm their illness or email the school absence email (absence@st-andrews-laverstock.wilts.sch.uk). Teachers who have not received a valid reason for absence will mark the pupil with an N code and the Admin Office will phone parents to check the reason for absence. If the school is unable to contact parents or has concerns about reasons for absence then they will notify the Educational Welfare Officer.

Date: April 2019

Next Review Date: April 2021