

# S I N G L E T O N

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## **Attendance – A Guide for Parents**



### **Attendance Policy**

This leaflet is a brief summary of the main points of the attendance policy..

### **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 pupil 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 child's life. It has been proved that regular non-attendance can severely impede academic and social development. Parents / carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making educational success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all the school has to offer. This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

## School Times

- Children are welcome to come into school from 8.45a.m and must be in their classrooms ready for the register by 8:55am and not just coming through the school door.
- In Y5/6 Mr Goostry provides morning maths support from 8.45am and encourages all pupils to arrive by this time.
- Lunchtime registration is at 1:00pm.
- School finishes at 3:00pm.

## When a child arrives on time:

- Registration takes place quickly and smoothly
- An activity is put on the board or out around the classroom
- The day gets off to a good start for everyone
- Everyone hears the 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 repeats information / instructions whilst others have to wait
- The late child is at an immediate disadvantage because they may have missed important teaching points, missed discussions where ideas are shared and will be generally unsettled

If the child arrives after 8:55am they will have to enter school via the front entrance as playground gates are locked at 8:55am. On arrival at school they must be accompanied to the school office by a **parent / guardian** and **signed** in by the parent in the school **Late Book** with an explanation as to why they are late. This is monitored by the Family Learning Mentor, she then reports directly to the Head and the Governing Body. If a pattern arises of children regularly arriving after 8:55am then parents will be invited in to school to discuss this and the attendance team at LCC may be informed. If children arrive after 9:00 a.m., he or she will be marked late.

All children **must be picked up at 3pm**; our staff have a variety of commitments after school –running clubs, staff meetings and courses and it should not be assumed that they are available to supervise children after this time. If a child is not collected on time then they will be put into Kids Club and you will be charged accordingly. This change in procedure has been implemented as result of the amended key legislation relating specifically to the attendance which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. **Late collection will monitored by the Family Learning Mentor.**

### **Taking the Register**

By law schools must take a morning register 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 school day, the parent / carer must contact the school with an explanation. Pupils leaving the school site during the day must sign out at the school office.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded and will be passed on to a future school as necessary.

### **When Your Child is absent**

By law, schools must record absences and the reasons given for the absence.

Only the head teacher can officially authorise an absence, but unless there is a concern, the staff will usually do this on her behalf. Parents / carers provide reasons for absence and the school must decide whether or not they justify authorisation according to government guidelines.

### **Examples of Authorised Absences:**

- Genuine illness of the pupil
- Hospital / dental appointment for the pupil
- Death of a near relative
- Religious observance (Faith of the parent / carer)

### **Examples of Unauthorised Absence:**

- A shopping trip
- A birthday treat
- Oversleeping due to a late night
- Letting the gas man in

### **Whenever a child is absent from school, the parent / carer should:**

- Contact the school before 9:20am on the first day of absence. If no notification of absence is received, the school office will contact the parent / carer to ascertain the reason
- Where possible let the school know in advance of any planned absences e.g. hospital appointments
- Where possible make medical / dental appointments out of school hours.

### **Are you aware that . . .**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

<b>Attendance during one school</b>	<b>Equals days absent</b>	<b>Which is approximately</b>	<b>Which is this is the number of</b>
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year		weeks absent	lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

### Holidays

The Government has amended key legislation relating specifically to the authorization of leave in term time which comes into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. This decision has been made to encourage schools to take a firmer stance on unnecessary absence and to dispel the myth held by many parents that there is an entitlement to time off school for holidays in term time.

The new legislation means that as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are "exceptional" circumstances to warrant the granting of leave. In our school the Chair of Governors monitors absences and he considers applications for holidays in term time

Lancashire County Council attendance department explained the following examples are classed as exceptional circumstances:-

- Parents in Afghanistan – who miss school holidays
- Police – who annual leave can be dictated by certain, circumstances i.e. Riots/ critical incident or Olympics last year where annual leave holidays were all cancelled.
- Parents whose holidays are inflexible – in this circumstance parents would have to give schools the contact names of their employers to clarify this. (e.g. where a factory closes down for a set date a year and holidays cannot be taken out of this time)

As a result of these changes the Governing Body has no choice but to make the following changes to our school attendance policy;-

- Holidays will not be authorised in term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.
- The new County recommended up dated "request for leave" forms will be used and these can be obtained from the school office.
- All applications for "exceptional circumstance" leave must be made 6 weeks prior to the requested leave. All requests are considered by the SHE committee which meet monthly and school also needs time to carry out the administration related to verifying the "exceptional circumstance." (e.g. contacting employers for information)
- The decision will be made by a representative of governing body in consultant with the head teacher but the more stringent requirements shall be enforced.
- Parents may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the application for exceptional leave.
- Parents will be informed by letter as to the outcome.

### Encouraging Regular Attendance

Pupils will receive school awards for regular or improved attendance.

### How You Can Help

You can help your child by:

- Ensuring that you have everything they need ready for school the night before
- Ensuring regular bedtimes and wake up times on school days
- Ensuring they arrive at school punctually
- Talking to a member of the school staff if there is a problem

#### **Attendance information for parents**

Significantly above expectations = **Above 99%**

Above average expectations = **97%-99%**

Average = **95% – 97%**

Below expectations = **92% – 95%**

Significantly below expectations = **Below 92%**

**Please note if your child's attendance drops below 93% then our Family Learning Mentor will contact you.**

**As a school we currently have attendance targets of 96%**