



St. Giles CE Primary School

Achieving Through Adventure

Attendance Policy

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Statement of intent

St Giles Church of England Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

St Giles Church of England Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)

1.2. This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2016) 'School attendance'

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The **governing body** has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of **St Giles Church of England Primary School**.

2.2. The **governing body** has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

2.3. The **governing body** has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.

2.4. The **headteacher** is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.

2.5. The **attendance officer** is a member of the local authority multi-agency team whose role is to work with parents if their child's attendance falls below 90%.

2.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Primary Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

2.7. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.

2.8. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.

2.9. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

2.10. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

3. Definitions

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

- **“Absence”** as:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Not attending school for any reason.

- An **“authorised absence”** as:
 - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
 - An absence due to a family emergency.

- An **“unauthorised absence”** as:
 - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without satisfactory reason.
 - Truancy before or during the school day.
 - Absences which have never been properly explained.
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
 - Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
 - Leaving school for no satisfactory reason during the day.

- **“Persistent absenteeism”** as:
 - Missing **10 percent** or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Pupil expectations

- 5.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day, for at least **97 percent** of the school days throughout the school year.

6. Absence procedures

- 6.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- 6.2. Parents are required to ring school as early as possible if their child is not going to be at school.
- 6.3. A **phone call** will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 6.4. In the case of persistent absence, a letter will be sent out to parents and a referral will be made to the **attendance officer** at the Multi Agency Team (Stage 1 of process).
- 6.5. If a pupil's absence drops below **85 percent** a formal meeting will be arranged with the headteacher and parents (Stage 2 of process).
- 6.6. **St Giles CE Primary School** adheres to the Derbyshire Policy on Children Missing from Education and puts into place the CME School Flowchart on the first day of an unexplained absence from school.

7. Contact information

- 7.1. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 7.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

8. Attendance officer

- 8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the **attendance officer** who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement.
- 8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the **attendance officer** has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

9. Lateness

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school day starts at **8:50am**. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

- 9.3. Registers are marked by **8:55am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.4. The register closes at **9:00am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 9.5. Afternoon registration closes at **1:15pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.
- 9.6.

10. Term-time leave

- 10.1. At **St Giles Church of England Primary School**, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 10.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 10.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made in advance and the headteacher will have to be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising any term-time leave.
- 10.4. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 10.5. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- 10.6. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.
- 10.7. In line with Derbyshire County Council the following statement applies:
- *"In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.*
 - *Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.*
 - *You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996."*

11. Truancy

- 11.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 11.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- 11.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by **8:50am** and **1:00pm** (1.15pm in KS1), where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.
- 11.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.
- 11.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting.
- 11.6. If truancy is suspected, the **headteacher** will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.
- 11.7. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
 - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
 - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
 - A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, holidays in term-time (that has not been specifically authorised by the Headteacher) and persistent late arrival at school.

12. Religious observances

- 12.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 12.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

13. Appointments

- 13.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

13.2. Where this is not possible, a note or appointment card will be sent to the **school office**.

13.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the **school office** by a parent.

13.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

14. Young carers

14.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.

14.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

14.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

15. Monitoring and review

15.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

15.2. St Giles Church of England Primary School's attendance target is 97 percent.

15.3. This policy is reviewed annually by the **headteacher and governing body**; the next scheduled review date for this policy is stated on the front cover sheet.

15.4. Any material changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

St Giles Church of England Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. Any absence that is not notified by the parent/carer will be followed up with a phone call the same morning.
2. All absences of 'Vulnerable Pupils' and how they are followed up will be recorded in the absence log book.
3. All pupils' attendance will be reviewed every half term and those below 95% will be checked for genuine reasons for absence. Parents will be contacted if necessary.
4. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% a letter will be sent home and help will be offered to parents for ensuring pupils attendance improves.
5. Where a pupil's attendance continues to be below 90% during the following 6 weeks a referral will be made to 'Starting Point' for family support.