

The Spire Church of England Academy Trust



Attendance Policy

Short version

St John's CE Primary School

December 2023

This policy was reviewed/updated by Suzanne Finlay, Acting Headteacher at St John's CE Primary School and is reviewed annually.

Reviewed: December 2023

Next Review: December 2024

In collaboration with



St John's C.E Primary School



Key Contacts

School Attendance Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead: Suzanne Finlay
Telephone number: 01562 745558 Email: sfinlay@stjohns.worcs.sch.uk

Mental Health and Well-being Lead: Rachel Taylor
Telephone number : 01562 745558 Email: rtaylor@stjohns.worcs.sch.uk

SENDCo: Lisa White
Telephone number:01562 745558 Email: lwhite@stjohns.worcs.sch.uk

Governor for attendance: Father Tim Williams
Email: teamrector.kwtm@gmail.com

At St. John's CE Primary, we want all students to aim for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all pupils and expect pupils to be in school every day that school is open unless they are too unwell to attend. This is really important so we can give your children the best education we can, and the education that they are entitled to.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and we will work together with parents/carers, pupils and any relevant partners to remove any barriers getting in the way of pupils attending regularly. Pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance will be fully supported by our school, in partnership, where necessary, with any health or external professionals. Promoting and supporting excellent attendance is everybody's business within our school and community.

Providing a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive school where all pupils want to be is important to us. We will work together with you as parents to explore the reasons and support any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly.

Why is Attending School Regularly So Important?

Excellent attendance is important for pupils to feel part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. This supports each pupil's all-round development, mental health, and well-being.

If attendance over the school year is:	...a pupil will miss this many days:	...and this many lessons:
100%	0	0
95%	10	50
90%	19	95
85%	29	145
80%	39	195
75%	49	245
70%	58	290

If your child is absent, you must:

- Telephone the school office or message (via ParentMail) **by 8:50am** on the first day of absence;
- Unless the date of return is known, please update the school office on a daily basis;

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or Parent Mail on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Conduct a welfare visit to the home if we cannot make contact with you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Senior Leader responsible for attendance if attendance doesn't improve or continues to cause concerns.

Absence Requests

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take a child out of school during term time for any reason, including a holiday.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Only in very, very exceptional circumstances will absence requests be authorised.

In **exceptional circumstances**, pupils may be granted leave of absence during term time for **not more than one week (5 school days) in any calendar year**. If you wish to make an application for a planned absence, **please obtain a form from reception**. The form should be completed and forwarded to the school **at least six weeks before** the planned absence is due to begin.

Where the application for planned absence has been submitted within the timeframe, all carers with 'Parental Responsibility' will be notified in writing of the decision.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence will be unauthorised if your child is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst as parents you can provide explanations for absence, it remains the school's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include, but are not limited to:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark on the register
- Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips, errands
- Absences whereby parents state they are, for example, waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered, or taking a pet to the vet
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless in very exceptional circumstances as agreed in advance by the school)
- If a pupil is kept away from school longer than has been agreed, then any additional absence will be unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in the use of penalty notices or prosecution.

Support for School Attendance

Sometimes your child may not want to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reasons for absence. If your child does not want to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to let your child stay at home. This can give the impression to your child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why your child may not want to attend school so we can support you and your child in the best way possible.

If your child is reluctant to come into school, please speak with the attendance officer who will support or signpost you to support.

For pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance we will fully support each pupil to be able to attend as much as possible. Our school will use an individual health plan and will work alongside other relevant professionals such as health colleagues, and yourselves, to best support this. Please speak to the attendance officer if you are in need of support.

If our school is unable to work in partnership with you as parents, we may refer to the Local Authority. We will only ever do this if everything else has failed. We hope as parents you will work with us to best support your child, so this does not need to happen.

If our school has any safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary to ensure a child's safety and well-being.