



Title: ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rev: 3

Date: September 2015

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Steiner Academy Exeter by:

- Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ❖ *parents keeping children off school unnecessarily*
- ❖ *truancy before or during the school day*
- ❖ *absences which have never been properly explained*
- ❖ *children who arrive at school too late to get a mark*

Procedures

- Parents are requested to ring school no later than 9.15 am to notify us that their child will be absent. The school will then authorise absences that are due to sickness.
- The school registers are closed at 9.15 am each morning. Children who have not arrived by the end of registration are marked absent. Latecomers should report to the school office on arrival. The child will be given a 'late after register closed' mark.
- If the school has been informed that the child will arrive late due to a medical/dental appointment then an attendance mark will be given on arrival.
- Attendance will be monitored at least half-termly and parents will be informed of their child's attendance should it fall below the school's target of attendance (between 90 and 95%).
- Parents will be informed of their child's low attendance level and invited to discuss their child's attendance when:
 1. A child continues to be absent for more than 7 consecutive days without explanation.
 2. A child is absent for 7 school days or more with an unsatisfactory explanation.
 3. A child's attendance drops below our agreed attendance target.
- Where a pattern of unauthorised absence persists or attendance does not improve, despite the school's involvement (including phone calls to parents/carers, letters of warning, school meetings and home visits), the Educational Welfare Officer will be contacted and asked to visit the home.
- Staff are asked to inform the school office of any unexplained absences and the school will then telephone home for a reason for absence.
- If members of staff are concerned about the level of attendance or punctuality of any of the children in their class, they should inform the Principal.

- Attendance figures are reported termly to the governors in the Principal's Report.
- Attendance is reviewed on a half termly basis where pupils identified as persistent absentees in line with the set government criteria and the school's attendance targets are marked for further monitoring and or action. We as a school have a duty to inform parents of their child's attendance and how this can impact upon their well-being and development.
- Long term medical conditions need to be reviewed and monitored with evidence (either a letter from a consultant doctor or photocopy of medical prescriptions) where appropriate.
- Lateness - where lateness becomes an issue the matter will be discussed with the parents and this will be monitored and a record kept.
- Holidays - holidays in term time are not a right for the parents and we ask them to complete a holiday request form which needs to be signed by the Principal. The assumption will be that such requests will not be granted unless under very exceptional circumstances and/or with the support of relevant outside agencies, for example social services or a medical expert.
- In the eventuality of a child having long term absence or persistent absence the Education Welfare Officer may be contacted for advice. The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement, but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use Court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.