



# **Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**Review November 2017**

# **C O N T E N T S**

<b>Page No.</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Mission statement, Parental involvement and School's responsibility.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Legal Responsibility and Parent Support Advisor's roll.</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Authorised Absences</b>
<b>5 and 6</b>	<b>Unauthorised Absences</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Appendix 2</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Appendix 3</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Appendix 4</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Appendix 5</b>
<b>12-15.</b>	<b>Appendix 6</b>

## **Mission Statement**

At Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School we seek to treat children individually in a secure, caring and intellectually challenging Christian environment, where children are valued and rewarded daily for their achievements.

**“For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.”**

**Matthew Chapter 18 verse 20**

Unless children attend school regularly and punctually, we have great difficulty in meeting their needs and, consequently, children will not achieve their full potential. Because of this, we will identify, at an early stage, children whose attendance and punctuality are causing concern and take measures to try to improve the situation. We endeavour to work in partnership with parents for the benefit of their children’s education. Consequently, when adverse patterns of attendance have been identified, our first step will be to contact parents.

## **Parental Involvement.**

Education Act 1996 – Establishes the duty of parents to ensure regular attendance of pupils.

We expect parents to: -

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly;
- Ensure children arrive on time and are appropriately prepared for their day;
- Contact school, in person, or by letter or telephone, to notify us of the reason for unavoidable absences;
- Complete the “Late Book” if their child has arrived late.

Registration closes at 9.10 a.m. Children arriving after this time, are recorded as being absent without authorisation.

## **School’s Responsibility.**

“At Ward Jackson’s Church of England Primary School safeguarding is everyone’s primary responsibility.”

Jan Brough Head Teacher.

Class teachers at Ward Jackson Church of England primary School will:

- Regularly monitor attendance and punctuality to identify adverse patterns at an early stage.
- Ensure children are aware of their responsibility to report to their class teacher, and the office, if they arrive after registration.
- Keep a record of any consultations regarding attendance/punctuality;
- Inform Head Teacher and/or Deputy Head Teacher of problems which, despite early contact, still exist.

## **Legal Responsibility**

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1997 (amended) provides the new registration categories of Approved Educational Activity. (Amended Regulation 3(2), (3), (5) of the Education Regulations 1995).

Education Act 1996 places a legal obligation on the Local Authority to provide education suitable to a child's age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs they may have and also Section 444 states that "The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law".

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 made provision for Penalty Notices (section 23(1)) to be issued in certain cases of unauthorised absence. The Penalty (fine) will require the parent of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.

### **Parent Support Advisor's role**

Parents/carers are expected to telephone, see the Parent Support Advisor (PSA) or send a note on the first day of their child's absence. This will allow school to interpret the category of absence. If information is not received, the PSA will try to telephone to discover the cause of the absence.

- Aim to contact parents on a daily basis by telephone, to inform them that their child has not arrived at school.
- Try to identify reasons for absence, and offer support where necessary. If they are not forthcoming send out a standard letter (Appendix 1) to parents asking them to provide reasons for absences.
- After three such occasions of absence, a letter (Appendix 2) will be sent to inform parents that the situation will be monitored over the next four weeks and, if there is no significant improvement, consideration will be given to a referral being made to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.  
In both instances, if no reply is received, it will be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher.
- To monitor late arrivals a letter (Appendix 3) will be sent to child's home address if necessary

If problems persist, the Head Teacher will: -

- Commence Fast Track attendance procedures (Appendix 6) □ Maintain a record of all contacts.
- If no improvements have been made following fast track procedures, the local authority attendance team will implement an attendance plan.

The principal function of the Local Authority Attendance Team is to help parents; the school and the Local Authority meet their statutory obligations on school attendance. The Local Authority Attendance Officer has a statutory duty to check the school registers on a regular basis.

### **Absences**

There are two types of absences - **Authorised and Unauthorised**.

Parents cannot authorise absences, only the Head Teacher can do this. The Head Teacher will only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.  
(Please see Appendix 4)

### **Authorised Absences**

Absences can only be authorised when the school has been notified in advance, or as soon as possible, of reasons for absences and include: -

- a) Illness, medical and dental appointment;
- b) Family bereavement

If parents request a leave of absence, they should complete an Application (appendix 5), which can be obtained from School's Reception. However only the Head Teacher has the right to authorise any absence from school and only in the most exceptional circumstances will the Head Teacher authorise a leave of absence in term time. On receiving an application for a leave of absence the parent/carer will be invited into school for a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss the time off and the consequences to their child's education. The school will check the amount of previous absences. The leave of absence may or may not be granted based on the criteria outlined in the leave of absence request form and parents will be informed during the meeting if the request is to be granted.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation from the Head Teacher may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to parent/carer requiring them to pay £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within 42 days will result in Court Action being taken under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

Unauthorised absences include: -

1. Any absences, the reasons for which school have not been notified
2. Arrival, without good reason, after close of registration at 9.10 am
3. Shopping.
4. Looking after brothers or sisters.
5. Birthdays.
6. Leave of absence which has not been discussed and authorised by Head Teacher.

An excessive amount of unauthorised absence can also seriously disrupt pupil's learning. Absences of pupils of compulsory school age without valid reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 provides that no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. If we are satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness the absence will be treated as authorised.

Where we have reason to doubt the validity of an explanation offered in respect of a particular absence, further information will be requested by the school from the child's parents. If the school continues to be dissatisfied then the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Where there is doubt about the authenticity attributed to illness, the School or the School Attendance Officer can refer the matter to a Doctor working in the School Health Service to arrange a special medical, or to make contact with the pupil's GP. If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period or a pattern of absences emerges contact will be made with the School Attendance Officer and/or the School Health Service.

Leave for medical or dental appointments will be given (i.e. the absence will be authorised) where confirmation has been received from the parent (either in person, in writing or by a telephone call) or on production of an appointment card.

Where a pupil is present for registration but then has to attend an appointment, school need take no action beyond recording the fact that (for the purpose of emergency evacuation) the pupil, although registered, is not physically present. Similarly the school must note the presence of a pupil (again for purposes of an emergency evacuation) who was not there when the register was being taken but returns later from an appointment. The class teacher will make a note in the relevant day's column in the register as to the times the child came or left so that there is information on the child's whereabouts in the event of emergency evacuation.

Education Act 2002 (Section 53) enables an overall absence target to be set by the school, covering authorised and unauthorised absence, supporting school improvement and raising community awareness of the issue (September 2003).

To enable School to achieve their target, systems have been developed to provide detailed robust data on school attendance;

- PSA will be available to support parents and pupils
- Monitoring mechanism on a weekly basis to encourage class attendance
- Identify concerns in nursery and encourage parents to improve attendance
- Publishing attendance in school through display boards
- Celebrating success in school worship
- Celebrating good and improved attendance via a reward system
- Information for parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality, via weekly news letters.
- Fast Track Procedures utilised by the School Attendance Officer in conjunction with school (please see appendix 6 for further details)



Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

At Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School we are committed to providing pupils with the best educational opportunities available. To enable our pupils to benefit from these opportunities it is essential that you ensure their regular school attendance.

It has come to my attention that ..... has been absent from the school and we have not received any reasons for this absence.

Could you complete the information below and return it with ..... If we do not receive any valid reasons for absence then we will mark this as unauthorised and may result in a referral to the School Attendance Officer.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Co-ordinator/Head Teacher

---

I would like to confirm that my son/daughter ..... was absent for

.....days due to ..... (reason for absence).

Signed ..... (parent/carer)



Childs' Name.....

Dear.....

We have asked on three occasions for you to let us know why your child has been absent from school, with no response. The dates we need reasons for are: -

---

---

---

Attending school regularly and punctually is very important to help your child achieve their full potential. If your child has been ill on these occasions, or had medical or dental appointments, then their absence can be authorised.

Your child's attendance will be monitored closely over the next four weeks. If there is no significant improvement, and no reasons given for absence, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Co-ordinator/ Headteacher





Dear Parent/Carer

As you are aware Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School starts at 8.45 am, with children being registered by 8.50 am.

\_\_\_\_\_ has arrived late at school recently and as a

result has lost \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of their valuable learning time **last** week.

This in turn means that they lose instruction time at the beginning of the lesson and in addition any lateness also causes disruption to the whole class.

It would be appreciated if your child could arrive at school on time in order to avoid any referrals to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.

Thank you for your support with improving punctuality at our school.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Co-ordinator

#### **Appendix 4 - ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
@	Do not use	
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental Appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	DfES #: School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Do not use	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils and staff	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>*</b>	DfES Z: Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>-</b>	All should attend/No mark recorded	



APPLICATION TO THE HEAD TEACHER FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

I would like to request ..... days leave from Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School for my child .....

My child will be absent from ..... to.....

The exceptional circumstances for a leave of absence during term time are:

---

---

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: .....

Pupil's Class Teacher: .....

**I understand that I will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher or a member of the senior management team to discuss my request.**

Signed:

**Take Note:**

1. It is **not** a parental right to take a child out of school for a holiday.
2. Evidence to support the request may include a receipt of a holiday deposit made or restriction of leave letter from employer or place of work.
3. If leave of absence is granted then school, in discussion with parents/carers, will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school.

# Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School Fast Track Policy



**Laura Newton  
School Attendance Officer  
September 2014**

## **Fast Tracking**

- Pupils targeted who have attendance below 90%
- Information sent to all parents re: attendance via letter or newsletter.
- Targeted pupils will be sent a letter home advising parents that their child's progress will be monitored for a four week period and if their attendance fails to improve, they will be invited to attend an Attendance Case Conference (ACC).
- A six week plan will be put in place and a Warning Letter issued. A minimum of 85% attendance is expected for the duration of the plan. If attendance is below 85% the case will be forwarded to court.
- Those parents who do not attend the meeting without contacting school or the School Attendance Officer, consideration will be given to issuing a Penalty Notice immediately.
- No absence (of targeted pupils) to be authorised unless agreed between school and the School Attendance Officer, for example a medical note is received.

- Home visits to be carried out by School Attendance Officer during this period and all records kept as appropriate.
- Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within 28 days will result in Court Action being taken under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- If attendance has improved school will monitor attendance for the next half term.

# Parents/Carers Newsletter

Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School and the Local Authority are working together to improve the attendance of pupils at school and therefore improve how well they do.

As you will be aware, if your child does not attend school regularly he/she will not progress as well as other pupils.

Following each half term, all pupils with between 65% and 90% attendance will be identified and letters will be sent home informing parents of their child's attendance

Those pupils' attendance which is of particular concern will be invited into school for a meeting. Following this, an agreed plan will be put in place for each pupil to improve his or her attendance.

The purpose of these meetings is to work together to improve your son or daughter's attendance and failure to ensure regular attendance may result in a Penalty Notice of £60 or £120 being issued to you or a fine being issued in court.

Throughout the next school year, all pupils' attendance will be monitored and parents of a pupil identified in this attendance target group will be invited into school.

Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School and the Local Authority are committed to ensuring that your child receives the best possible education.

We ask that you work with us to ensure that your child attends school every day.

Mrs J. Brough  
Head Teacher/  
Attendance Coordinator  
Tel: 01429 293777

Miss L. Newton  
School Attendance Officer  
Tel: 01429 523242

Date:

Dear .....,

Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School and the Child and Adult Services Department are working together to reduce absence and therefore improve pupil's educational achievement.

Your son/ daughter\_\_\_\_\_ has been identified as having only % attendance We have therefore arranged a meeting, in school, on .....2014 at.....am/pm to discuss....'s absence and put a plan in place to improve \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance.

**Please note: It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school on a regular basis. Failure to attend the above meeting without good cause and ensure your child is in school regularly may result in a Penalty notice being issued to you.**

It is hoped that by working together, we will be able to avoid the necessity of a Penalty Notice or fine being issued and that \_\_\_\_\_ will be able to benefit from the educational opportunities available.

If the time of this meeting is not convenient, or you require transport to get you to the meeting, please contact Laura Newton, School Attendance Officer on 01429 523242.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Webb  
Inclusion Coordinator (Attendance)