

Attendance Policy



St Erth School

Caring, Sharing, Preparing for Life

Date Written	June 2015
Reviewed On	Every 2 Years
Last Review	October 2020
Next Review Date	October 2022
I confirm that this policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body of St Erth Primary School.	
Chair of Governors Date: October 2020	

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office. The school secretary will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian to ascertain a reason for absence. This will be done after both morning and afternoon registration.
- 3.2 When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence if no contact has been made between the school and parent whilst child is absent.
- 3.3 A notification may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are at times exceptional circumstances under which a parent may request leave of absence for a child. We expect parents and carers to contact the school and give as much notice as practicably possible. Their request will then be considered on an individual basis and a decision made whether or not leave of absence will be granted.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by the EWO, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Weekly attendance is celebrated in school assembly. The class with the biggest improvement, overall attendance or the most 100% pupils will be rewarded by their class teacher, this could be with extra break time for example. This is also shared on the newsletter. This creates short term targets which maintain motivation as opposed to 100% certificates which are easy to become unattainable due to events beyond the control of both pupils and parents. Rewards are reviewed regularly in response to attendance trends and may vary in year.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the termly Headteacher's report to the full governing body.
- 9.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 9.5 The School secretary reports school attendance weekly in the newsletter. The Headteacher and the school secretary analyse attendance data weekly. Action is taken to address any concerning trends in a timely fashion. Parents receive a half yearly letter with their children's attendance figures attached. The letter points out the positive impact of consistent attendance on children's academic achievement and social development. At this point parents of pupils with less than 90% attendance will be invited to meet with the Headteacher and discuss attendance issues.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Signed: Bill Coleman **Headteacher**
Rachel Brotheridge **Chair of Governors**

Date: October 2020