



# STUDLEY COMMUNITY INFANTS' SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Studley Community Infants' School believes that regular attendance is essential for pupils to gain the maximum benefit from their education.

Although absenteeism is not a serious problem at Studley Community Infants' School we recognise that:

- At primary level absence is highest when children begin school.
- Children with significantly higher than average absence at primary school are likely to be poor attenders at secondary level.

As an establishment with pupils between the ages of 3 and 7 years we believe that parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend regularly, (except in very exceptional circumstances) as they must accompany them to and from school.

We encourage attendance by:-

- Raising the issue at new parents meetings.
- Including advice in the School Brochure.
- Including individual attendance records with the Annual Progress Report to their parents. This record sheet shows **all** absences not just unauthorised ones.
- Administering prescribed medicine in school if the child is well enough to return after illness.
- Providing an indoor area for children to sit during lunchtime breaks if they are recovering from operations/broken limbs and advised by doctors that they are able to return to school.
- Having an Assistant Head with responsibility for pastoral care and family support available to signpost families or offer the CAF process to support.

## **Registers**

### The marking of Attendance Registers - Legal Responsibilities

- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the registers of pupil attendance are properly kept.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the registration process is properly carried out. The responsibility for completing the registers will normally be delegated to teachers, including:
  - . keeping and maintaining an attendance register although it remains a legal responsibility of the teaching staff to ensure the register is accurate.
  - . recording each pupil's presence or absence at the start of each morning and afternoon session.

Our doors open at 9.00am and the school day officially starts at 9.15. Children who arrive after 9.15 will be marked as late with an L on the register. Children who arrive after 9.30 need to sign in at the School Office and will be marked in as a U on the register.

At Studley Community Infants' School registers are computerised and should be returned to the school office at 1.30pm each afternoon.

We discourage lateness and the Head Teacher should be informed of any persistent latecomers. It is important that parents are informed, as soon as possible, of the disruption to their child's education that lateness causes, especially as it often leaves children unsettled and not ready to learn.

Latecomers must be signed in at the school office in the interest of safety.

Parents will be informed of this policy. A pupil who arrives after the register closing time will be recorded as absent unless a genuinely unavoidable circumstance is proven.

Parents must inform school to inform us of their child's absence on the first day of illness. This information is recorded on the absence forms kept by the telephone in the school office and put in the appropriate class register.

## Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

- Within the context of the law, only the Head Teacher or staff to whom the legal responsibility is delegated can approve/authorise absence from school, not parents.
- Parents have the legal responsibility to justify to school staff the reason for the child's absence.

We do not have to accept the explanations offered in a note or by direct contact as valid reasons for absence. If we doubt an explanation or none is given, we can treat the absence as unauthorised. If an absence is not explained within a 10 day period it will be unauthorised.

Letters are sent to parents requesting a meeting with the Headteacher if we are concerned about the attendance levels of a child.

## Monitoring of Attendance and Punctuality

Each half term the attendance of those children who have under 95% will be monitored. In the first instance a letter will be sent out to inform parents that their child's attendance has fallen below 95%.

If after that letter attendance does not improve, then a meeting will be held with the parents to discuss why and to look at opening a CAF to support the family or whether the Attendance Compliance and Enforcement team need to be involved. The Headteacher will meet with the designated Attendance Governor each term to discuss current attendance levels and what the school is doing to address any issues.

## Holidays during school terms

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**

#### **Use of Holiday forms**

This policy will be renewed annually.

#### **LEGAL**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).