

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
SYRESHAM ST. JAMES CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY STATEMENT**

Regular school attendance is of paramount importance. The school curriculum is very full and any time missed cannot be replaced. Furthermore, parents and children need to understand that an explanation will be required for all absences. This discourages truancy, which can lead to antisocial behaviour and place children at risk. Regular attendance is dependent on high regard for education and for those who deliver it. Home attitudes are so important. Education is therefore a partnership. As stated in the Home School agreement, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school on time, suitably attired and equipped to undertake curriculum activities.

**Registration**

Registers will be taken at the beginning of every morning at 8.50am and every afternoon at 12.45pm. Registers will be returned to the school office as soon as possible, but before 9.00am in the morning and before 1.00pm in the afternoon. A member of the school staff will ring parents of children who have not arrived in school, or telephoned or sent a message with an explanation, by 9.15am. Absence will be deemed to be unauthorised for that session if no communication from parents is received and where none of the conditions outlined under authorised absences apply. If in doubt, the Education Welfare Officer will advise.

**Authorisation Codes**

A list of coding will be clearly displayed inside each register, and this will be used at all times. See Appendix 1 for more guidance.

**Late Arrivals**

All children arriving after registration will need to go to the school office to be registered as late (L) and where possible the reason for late arrival will be recorded. The child/Parent/Carer will be required to detail the late arrival in a book in the school office. The register will close at 9.30am after which time pupils will have a 'U' recorded against their name (late, after registers have closed) – similarly 1.15pm for afternoon registers. If a child persistently arrives late, the Head will ask the parents to discuss the problem, and it may be necessary to inform the LEA. If a child leaves school early, due to illness, a medical appointment etc. they must be signed out of school, detailing the time and reason.

**Absence**

The Law is clear on absence: "only the School, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents". (p 10, DCSF Guidance Book, Keeping Pupil Registers, September 2006). Parents are expected to complete a blue absence form as soon as their child returns to school after an absence, making it easier for parents to give an explanation. When a reason is considered unsatisfactory, the parent will be required to see the Headteacher, and the absence may be recorded as unauthorised. Absence returns will be made on line termly to the DCSF. Unauthorised absences will be monitored and reported to the LEA Welfare Office.

**Illness**

Parents are expected to notify the school if a child is absent through illness as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This may be by letter, telephone call or by verbal

message. Telephone messages will be recorded in a book kept in the school office. An absence form must be completed on the child's return to school.

### **Medical and Dental Appointments – including Hospital and Opticians**

Parents are expected to make every effort for appointments to take place out of school time. When this is unavoidable, parents must seek prior permission and may be asked to produce an appointment card. Such absence would then be authorised. They would also be expected to restrict this time to a minimum, i.e. the child to be returned to school as soon as possible that same day.

### **Holidays/Family Outings**

Family holidays in term time are not allowed except in exceptional circumstances (see below). Parents should apply for permission to take a child out of school before any holiday is booked. This application must be made to the Headteacher in writing and should include the reasons parents feel it is appropriate for their child to be taken out of school during term time. The Headteacher will respond by letter. Each application will be considered on an individual basis and in certain cases the Headteacher may require a meeting with parents.

PERMISSION WILL NOT USUALLY BE GRANTED. If the school does not agree the absence and the pupil goes on holiday, the absence is unauthorised. Where parents keep a child away longer than the period agreed, the additional days are unauthorised.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

#### *Days of Religious Observance*

Absence will be authorised for pupils participating in a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Advance notice must be given in writing.

#### *Family Bereavements*

We fully understand how traumatic such an event can be for a family, and that it may not be possible to follow the above procedures. However, we would expect to be notified as soon as possible in writing. Such absences would generally be authorised, for a period depending on the individual circumstances.

#### *Families from other countries*

We appreciate that occasionally it may be necessary for overseas families to make an extended visit home, and that it is not always possible to organise this outside term time. Parents must follow the above procedure, but requests will generally be treated sympathetically.

#### *Special Occasions*

Only truly exceptional occasions will warrant authorised absence. Parents must see the Head teacher personally to discuss the individual need.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
*Reviewed June 2015  
Agreed*

*Next review June 2017*