



ST JAMES HATCHAM
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Raising leaders in academic excellence and godly character

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Mission Statement

At St James Hatcham Church of England Primary School, we are committed to creating a happy, caring and enriching learning environment, underpinned by Christian values. We celebrate children's achievement and encourage them to fulfil their potential. We respect their differences, encourage kindness, consideration, respect and foster self-esteem. We hope to provide a sound foundation for their future life.

Rationale

At St James Hatcham School, we expect all children to attend school every day unless they are ill. Good attendance and punctuality is vital if pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Children with good attendance do better in school.

St James Hatcham Church of England Primary School:

- recognises that parents have the primary responsibility for bringing their children to school on time every day
- believes absence and lateness damages children's achievement, their friendships and their relationships in school
- believes not attending school and or being late can place children in unsafe situations, as well as impact on their future choices

Attendance

The Education Act 1996 states that it is the parents' duty to ensure a child attend school regularly. Failure to adhere to this could lead to a prosecution and a fine of up to £2500 or a prison sentence.

Class registers are kept by each year group teacher, by law, and all absences, both authorised and unauthorised are recorded, along with lateness.

If your child is absent for any reason the School Office should be informed in person, by telephone or in writing by the parent/carer of the child. Your child should bring a note when he/she returns to school. If your child has a medical/dental appointment, then the appointment card or letter from the hospital should be taken to the school office and shown as proof. Absences cannot be authorised when a child is taken on holiday during term time.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Absences are authorised or unauthorised by the Headteacher in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995. If the school regards the reason for a child's absence as acceptable such as sickness, doctors / dental / hospital appointment or an interview at another school, then it is recorded as an authorised absence.

However, if the school is not informed or an unacceptable reason is given then it is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Where there are a series of unauthorised absences relating to any one child, the matter will be referred to the Attendance Welfare Officer by the Headteacher.

If parents wish to have a planned authorised absence – they must complete a 'Leave of Absence' Form (obtained from the school office) and give to the Headteacher for acceptance. No more than 10 school days will be authorised by the Headteacher, and the reason must be of exceptional circumstance. **If your child will be absent for more than an additional 10 days, he/she will be taken off roll and a referral made to the Attendance Welfare Officer.**

The Attendance and Welfare Service, which acts as the lead agency within the Local Authority (LA) in matters relating to attendance and pupil welfare, will review the school's attendance against the whole school policy on a half termly basis and where necessary make appropriate interventions in developing a strategic approach to the improvement of attendance. Children whose attendance falls below 95% will have their attendance reviewed.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 8.55am. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her learning but also that of others. Where a pupil arrives after 9.30am their absences are marked as unauthorised. Emerging patterns of lateness will provide grounds for investigation and possible prosecution.

Children who are late for school are also recorded in the registers. Lateness is defined as arriving at school after 9.00am. Mrs Burnage notes the names of pupils late for school and those pupils in Key Stage 1 miss some of their playtimes with the Attendance and Punctuality Champions. Late children in Key Stage 2 miss some of their playtimes with the Headteacher and fill in late forms. Where children have been persistently late over a period of time, the Headteacher will discuss the reason for lateness with the parent concerned.

SE McFarlane
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