

## **Attendance and punctuality policy**

### **Introduction**

Ideally, children need to be in school, on time, 100% of the time. Lateness and absence affect all children's learning, not just those directly involved. We aim to achieve good attendance and punctuality through this policy within which children, staff, parents, Education Welfare Officers and the Social Services can work in partnership.

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## 1 Policy principles.

We start from the principles that:

- all children should come to school every day and be on time;
- good attendance and punctuality are essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life;
- children should only be absent or late if the reason is "unavoidable";
- poor punctuality and absence has an impact not only on the child directly involved but as their teacher helps them to catch up, the quality of teaching and other children's learning is adversely affected.

1.2 By good attendance and punctuality we mean that every child should attend and be on time at least 96% of the time.

1.3 Our staff encourage punctuality and good attendance.

1.4 Children's attendance is registered using an electronic registration system. We follow the DfE and Local Authority guidance on completion of attendance registers (see Appendix 4 for categorisation of absence).

1.5 The school monitors attendance and punctuality which ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

1.6 Designated staff will liaise with home and other agencies about a child's attendance and / or punctuality as necessary.

## 2 Authorised and unauthorised absences

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

2.1 **Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes.

2.2 **Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. In these cases a note from parents is unlikely to be sufficient. Unauthorised absences include:

- term time family holidays;
- social events eg: parties;
- tutoring/additional support in school time which is not part of a child's Individual Education Plan or Education, Health and Care Plan;
- coaching for entrance exams;
- going shopping;
- staying at home eg due to waiting for deliveries or services;
- truancy and absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the registers have closed.

2.3 Parents will be notified if there is a recurring pattern of absence (see Appendix 3).

### **3 Registration and lateness**

Morning registration is between 8.45am and 9.15am; afternoon registration is between 1.30pm and 2 pm.

3.1 In the morning:

- children must be in their classes between 8.45 am and 8.55am in order to receive an attendance mark from their class-teacher;
- children arriving between 9.00am and 9.20am, must report to the office in order to receive an attendance mark. Their attendance will be recorded as 'late: before registers closed' (code L);
- children arriving after the registers have closed at 9.20am or later without good reason, will be recorded as 'late: after registers closed' (code U). **This will be reported as an unauthorised absence on the child's end of year report.**

3.2 In the afternoon:

- children must be in their classes between 1.30pm and 1.40pm in order to receive an attendance mark from their class-teacher;
- children arriving between 1.40pm and 2pm must report to the office in order to receive an attendance mark. Their attendance will be recorded as late: before registers closed' (code L);
- children arriving after the registers have closed at 2.00pm or later without good reason, will be recorded as 'late: after registers closed' (code U). **This will be reported as an unauthorised absence on the child's end of year report.**

3.3 Parents will be notified if there is a recurring pattern of lateness (see Appendix 3).

3.4 Special Circumstances

There may be circumstances when a child arrives late for a period of time because of transport difficulties or because of prolonged illness. In these instances we would adopt a flexible approach and work with the child and parents to help in any way we can.

- Parents should inform the school as soon as possible.

### **4 Procedure for notification of absence**

If a child is unfit for school, their parent(s) should contact the school on the first day of their absence, in person or by telephone.

4.1 Absences which are not accompanied by a note/verbal explanation by the parent will be recorded as 'unauthorised' on the child's report at the end of the academic year.

### **5 Requests for leave of absence**

There are some circumstances in which absences during term time may be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. These include:

- leave for a child whose parents have to work temporarily outside London/UK during term time, when it is not feasible for the child to travel to St Aidan's; and when the child is educated in an alternative learning environment;
- special family events including bereavements, births and weddings;
- religious observance;
- long term medical treatment;



- absence resulting from a one-off visit to a sick relative.

**Please note that family holidays taken during term time will not be authorised.**

- 5.2 All requests for leave must be made in advance by the parent looking after the child by explaining in person, writing a note or by completing an application form (see Appendix 1).
- 5.3 Provided that the child’s attendance record is satisfactory, leave may be granted for the reasons outlined above, for up to ten days per school year.
- This ten days leave is not a right for parents. It is a discretionary period to be used by the school in extenuating circumstances.
  - Leave may be refused where a child has had an unsatisfactory attendance record or at crucial times of the year (e.g. during exams).
  - Requests for leave beyond ten days a year will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
  - The school will inform parents within 3 working days of its decision (see Appendix 2a for approval and 2b for refusal).

**Please note that if absence leave is not granted and a child is absent without permission, the period of absence will be recorded as ‘unauthorised’ on the child’s report at the end of the academic year and the matter may be investigated by the school’s Education Welfare Officer.**

## **6 Support for families**

- 6.1 If parents notice that their child is reluctant to attend school, they should contact the school at an early stage so that pastoral staff can help in resolving the problems.
- 6.2 If pastoral staff are unable to resolve attendance problems or problems of lateness, the school may refer the child to the school’s Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO will meet with the parents and child and try to resolve any issues.
- 6.3 If these measures fail to improve a child’s attendance, court proceedings may be used to prosecute the parents.
- 6.4 We can arrange an interpreter for any parents who require this service.
- 6.5 Parents may wish to contact our Education Welfare Officer to ask for advice or support with attendance or punctuality. Education Welfare Officers work independently of the school.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

- 7.1 The senior teacher responsible for absence monitoring is the Headteacher. The link governor is Ms Bryony Howe.
- 7.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Care and Communication committee every two years or sooner if the need arises.

## **8 Glossary**

DfE	Department for Education
EWO	Education Welfare Officer



Date of policy: **MARCH 2021**

Policy ratified: ..... (Signature) ..... (Date)

Review due: **MARCH 2023**

**ST AIDAN'S**  
Voluntary Controlled  
**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Albany Road  
London N4 4RR

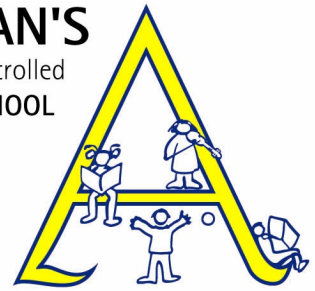
T: 020 8340 2352

F: 020 8341 2320

T (Nursery): 020 8341 6703

E: [admin@staidansprimaryschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@staidansprimaryschool.org.uk)

**Headteacher:** Anne Etchells



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Leave request application form

Date of application:.....

Number of leave requests made during current year: .....

Pupil's name & date of birth:.....

Class:.....

Dates requested: from ..... to .....

Number of days:.....

Reason for absence:

Name of parent (BLOCK CAPITALS): .....

Signature:.....



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Deputy Headteacher: Tessa Padel

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Date

Name and address

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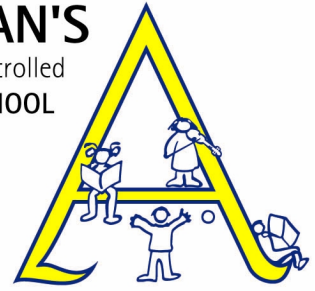
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**Re: Request for leave to be taken during term time**

Dear .....

Pupil's name & date of birth:.....

Dates requested: from ..... to .....

Thank you for your request for leave to be taken during term time.

We have decided to authorise your child's absence from..... to 8.45am on.....

In reaching our decision, we have taken into account:

our policy on attendance and punctuality;

the effect this absence will have on your child's education and achievement;

your child's attendance record and previous holidays taken during term time.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher



Deputy Headteacher: Tessa Padel

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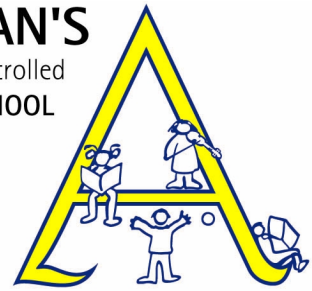
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**Re: Request for leave to be taken during term time**

Dear .....

Pupil's name & date of birth:.....

Dates requested: from ..... to .....

We are unable to authorise your request for leave during term-time.

In reaching our decision, we have taken into account:

Local Authority guidance and the school's policy on attendance and punctuality;  
the effect this absence will have on your child's education and achievement;  
your child's attendance record and previous holidays taken during term time.

As you know, we believe that it is important for children to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of school and gain the skills which will equip them for life. When they are absent not only do they miss lessons, but their irregular attendance makes it more difficult for them to keep up. In addition, as their teacher helps them to achieve this, the quality of teaching and other children's learning is adversely affected. Our school target is for all children to be in school, on time, at least 96% of the time.

Should your child miss school regardless of this decision, we have been advised by the LA to record this as an unauthorised absence on your child's annual report.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher



Deputy Headteacher: Tessa Padel

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Date

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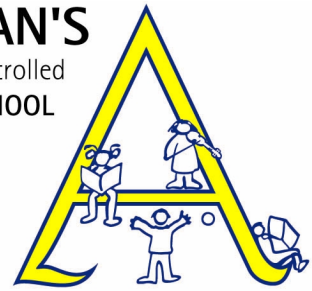
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**Re: Attendance / Punctuality**

Dear .....

I am writing to you about your child's attendance / punctuality record.

As you know, our school expects all children to come to school every day and to be on time. We believe that it is important for children to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of school and gain the skills which will equip them for life.

When they are absent or late, not only do they miss lessons, but their irregular attendance makes it more difficult for them to keep up. In addition, as their teacher helps them to achieve this, the quality of teaching and other children's learning is adversely affected. Our school target is for all children to be in school, on time, at least 96% of the time. We are obliged by the Local Authority to inform them of any pupil whose attendance falls below 90% so that their attendance can be investigated and monitored.

We have noted that between the period of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
your child has been in school..... % of the time.  
your child has been late ..... times. (*delete as appropriate*)

I am therefore writing to ask you to improve your child's lateness/attendance (*delete as appropriate*). Please make an appointment through the office if you think we could help in achieving this. We will continue to monitor the situation; if there is no improvement, we will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher



Deputy Headteacher: Tessa Padel

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### Registration codes

Code	Description	Statistical meaning
/	Present	Present
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/ description)	Unauthorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
H	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
V	Education visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another code)	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
S	Study Leave	Authorised absence
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded ( no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school; age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances