



**St Gregory's C of E (VA) Primary School**  
**New Street, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1PZ**

**Policy Document**

# **Attendance Policy - Children**

**Review Interval: 3 years**

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**Review Date: December 2024**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At St Gregory's we aim to honour and fulfil The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy refers directly to the following article:

### **Article 28: Every child has the right to an education**

St Gregory's is a successful school and is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all.

We are proud of our attendance record which is generally very good and are grateful to our parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children.

All staff at St Gregory's have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day.

### **Why regular attendance is so important:**

**Learning:** For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and are at school on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

**Safeguarding:** Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety, access to the curriculum and anti-bullying. Failure to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding matter.

### **Legal Framework:**

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children at compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday).

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regards to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of eighteen.

## **Holidays**

In accordance with current DC policy, absence during term time for family holidays will be discouraged and will not be authorised by the headteacher. Authorisation will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

## **The School Day**

At St Gregory's we encourage all children to arrive at school between 8.35am and 8.45am when our school day officially starts.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses that start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

Registers are taken twice a day. A day counts as two attendances. Morning registration ends at 9.15am. If a child arrives after the registration period, he/she must report to the school office to sign in and will be marked in as 'Late'. Any pupil arriving after 9.30am will need to be signed in and an explanation given for their lateness. An unauthorised late mark will be recorded in the register.

Where school attendance problems occur, the school will endeavour to work with parents in the interests of the child to achieve a resolution.

## **Authorised and Unauthorised absence**

The law requires that all schools must show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. Absence known to be for the following reasons would be authorised:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Attendance at medical or dental appointments which cannot be made outside of school hours (these appointments will not normally require a full days absence)

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Truancy before or during the school day
- Parentally condoned absences
- Being persistently absent from school due to the illness of a parent/carer
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about

Absence requests for children in Year 2 and Year 6 immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS) will not be authorised. Similarly absence requests will not be authorised during September, as the start of the school year is very important for learning routines, establishing relationships and expectations and building friendships.

### **Rewarding Good Attendance**

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.

Certificates will be given and special acknowledgement will be given to children with 100% attendance who are never late at the annual awards assembly at the end of the summer term.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

We use a computerised registration system enabling the analysis of attendance information. Data can be analysed by authorised/unauthorised, class/year group, absence code, gender etc. We use appropriate absence codes as required by the Department of Education to accurately record attendance data.

We analyse the effects of persistent absence on attainment.

We ensure clearly defined late registration procedures, writing on a half-termly basis to parents of all children who are persistently late.

The average percentage attendance for the whole school is noted on a monthly basis and the schools attendance and related issues will be reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis. Letters will be sent to parents of children whose attendance is causing concern.

The Headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. We keep staff up to date with the attendance strategy and provide continuing professional development opportunities in 'Promoting Positive Behaviour and Attendance'.

### **Parents'/carers responsibilities**

St Gregory's School expects parents'/carers will:

- Ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- Notify St Gregory's School on the first day of absence before close of register 9.30am by phone or reporting to the school office.
- Send a written message when the child returns to school.

### **Monitoring the policy**

The Headteacher and the governors will monitor the implementation of this policy annually in a review of the attendance targets.