Monday 8th July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

**RE: Changes to the Attendance Policy Beginning September 2024**

At St Anthony’s we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our pupils. We hope that this letter helps you to keep in mind the key aspects of our attendance policy.

Why regular attendance matters

Consistent school attendance allows your child to:

* Fully engage in learning and make academic progress
* Develop critical social skills by interacting with their friends and teachers
* Grow in confidence in a supportive and nurturing school environment
* Build a sense of routine and responsibility, essential for future success

Attendance support

We understand that some pupils may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's attendance team is here to provide support and guidance to pupils and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to Kirstie Phippin.

Acceptable reasons for absence

We recognise that there are circumstances where a pupil's absence can't be avoided.

Acceptable reasons for being absent from school include:

* **Illness**: when your child is too unwell, either physically or mentally, and unable to attend school
* **Medical appointments**: if your child has a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, please notify us in advance and provide relevant documentation (e.g. an appointment card)
* **Religious observance**: we respect the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our pupils. If your child needs to be absent for religious observance, please submit a request and the headteacher will review and approve the absence
* **Exceptional circumstances**: in exceptional situations, such as family emergencies or unforeseen events, please contact the school immediately to discuss the absence

How to report unplanned absences

In the event of an unplanned absence, we request you follow these steps:

1. **Contact the school:** on the day of the absence, please call the school office before 9am to inform us about your child's absence. This can be done by calling 01843 292015 and select option 1 for the absence voicemail.
2. **Provide a reason for absence:** please provide a brief explanation for the absence, such as illness or family emergency, to help us maintain accurate records
3. **Send a written note upon return:** when your child is ready to return to school after an absence, please send a written note explaining the reason for the absence. This note should be given to the school office.
4. **Please do not use DOJO to report an absence:** Whilst we encourage you to use DOJO to communicate with your child’s teacher, this is not an acceptable way to inform the school that your child is absent. Teachers are not always able to access their DOJO messages or may even be absent themselves from school or class. School registers are taken at 08:50 am and 12:55 pm, and all absences should be reported to the school office as described in Stage 1.

Term-time holidays

Term-time holidays are not permitted during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning and lead to missed opportunities in the classroom.

Fines for unauthorised absence

The headteacher may issue a fine (known as a fixed-penalty notice) for unauthorised absence. If issued with one, you’ll need to pay this directly to the local authority – **£80 within 21 days, or £130 within 28 days.**

Your local council can give **each** parent a fine of £80, which rises to £130 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child’s absence from school.

A fine can be issued to **each** legal guardian for **each** child absent from school. Therefore, each parent with legal responsibility to 2 children can be issued a fine per child. The decision whether to issue a fine may consider factors such as the number of unauthorised absences within a rolling academic year and one-off instances of irregular attendance.

**If a second Penalty Notice is issued to the same parents/carers in respect of the same pupil, the notice is charged at the flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.**

Rewards for good attendance

We value and recognise good attendance at St Anthony’s. Pupils who maintain excellent attendance records throughout the academic year are eligible for special rewards and recognition.

Weekly Attendance:

On a weekly basis (Fridays-Thursdays) we reward attendance in 3 stages:

• 100% Attendance – Certificate and 5 Reward Shop Tokens

• 90% + Attendance – 3 Reward Shop Tokens

• Personal Learning Plans 100% Attendance – Certificate and 1 Reward Shop Token.

Termly Attendance:

Before the Christmas, Easter and Summer Holidays we reward attendance as follows:

• Gift Card Reward Draw – All students which have achieved an attendance of 95% or more and the child with the most improved attendance compared to the previous term are entered to a draw for the chance to win one of 3 gift cards worth £20, £10 and £5.

• 100% Attendance Badges: Children who obtain 100% attendance for 1 out of 3 Terms receive a Bronze Pin Badge, children who obtain 100% attendance for 2 out of 3 Terms receive a Silver Pin Badge, Children who obtain 100% for 3 out of 3 Terms receive a Gold Pin Badge.

Yearly Attendance:

• 95% or more Attendance: children are reward with a trophy or medal for their attendance achievement for the entire school year.

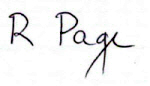
• 100% Attendance: Children are rewarded with their name etched onto the Attendance Plaque. Let's work together to celebrate and encourage regular attendance.

My question hasn’t been answered here

Please get in touch with Kirstie Phippin – Designated Safeguarding Lead by contacting the school office on 01843 292015 with any further questions, and we'll be happy to discuss them with you.

Thank you for your cooperation in making sure your child receives the best possible educational experience.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Robert Page

Headteacher

St Anthony’s School