

# Finchingfield St John the Baptist C of E Primary Academy



## Attendance Policy

Adopted: 2020/2021

Next review: 2021/2022

### **CANONIUM LEARNING TRUST MISSION**

To create a sustainable future for learning in challenging settings through the strength of collaboration and by creating the environment in which each individual school can thrive.

### **SCHOOL AIMS:**

*Our Vision: Where we grow healthy bodies, loving hearts and inquisitive minds: living 'life in its fullness' John 10:10*

To do this it is important that children attend school and prepared for their learning every day.

Attainment is strongly linked to attendance, and research has shown that if pupils are to achieve well, they must attend school regularly.

We foster a working relationship with all families to ensure that attendance is good.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **The school will:**

- Under the 1996 Education Act, hold a register of all enrolled pupils and complete it at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session, using statutory registration codes
- Authorise an absence for a legitimate reason.
- Unauthorise an absence where a legitimate reason cannot be established at the time the register is taken
- Open registration at 08:55 and close at 09:30
- Transfer manual registration to an electronic system
- Record lateness (9:00-09:29) as late
- Record lateness (after 09:30) as absence
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of an unreported absence by 11:00
- Monitor absence patterns weekly and contact parents/carers about poor attendance and support that can be given before liaising with our Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Promote good attendance through school target information in the newsletter and recognition of 100% attendees
- Provide parents/carers with attendance information in end of year reports

#### **Parents/carers will:**

- Under the 1996 Education Act, be responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly, punctually and fully prepared
- Contact the school to report an absence on the first day of the absence by 11:00
- Provide a written explanation or doctors medical certificate on their child's return to school

- Enter the school through the reception/office if late
- Avoid planning holidays in term time
- Request leave of absence for holidays at least 2 weeks before the holiday is taken (*see appendix A*)
- Aim to arrange dental and other appointments outside of school time and term time
- Request leave of absence for other circumstances such as music exams, funerals or medical consultations as soon as they are aware of the need (*see appendix B*)
- Not take pupils out of school for birthdays, trips out or because parents/carers are unwell

#### **Pupils will:**

- Attend school regularly and be on time for registration and fully prepared for learning
- Be in class for registration for 08:55
- Enter the school through the reception/office if late

#### **Education Welfare Officer will:**

- Work closely with schools and families to promote good attendance
- Carry out statutory duties on behalf of the Local Authority to ensure parents/carers fulfil their legal requirements in relation to school attendance

#### **Attendance Targets**

*Our target attendance has been set in conjunction with the School Attendance Improvement Service and with reference to the DFE's aim of reducing unauthorised absence. It is expected that the whole school community will work together to achieve this target.*

**Our attendance target for the academic year 2020/2021 is 95%**

#### **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent/carer), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark on the attendance register
- shopping trips
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- their own or family birthdays
- holidays taken during term time without leave – 5 days unauthorised absence will lead to a penalty notice being triggered by the Local Authority
- day trips
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

# Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy

## Term Time Holiday Application Form

**Please note that leave for the purpose of a holiday is no longer an entitlement and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.**

Please complete this form and return it to the Head of School **no later than two weeks** before the requested holiday.

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent/carer of \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of child/ren) class/es: \_\_\_\_\_

hereby make an application for leave of absence for a holiday

from \_\_\_\_\_ (first day of absence) to \_\_\_\_\_ (last day of absence) a period of \_\_\_\_\_ (Number) school day(s)

My exceptional circumstances are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Carer Date \_\_\_\_\_

### For office use only

Attendance this academic year:  Attendance last academic year:  Holiday authorised this academic year? Yes No

Authorised:  Comments:

Unauthorised  for the following reason:

- Your circumstances are not exceptional
- A period of holiday has previously been authorised in the current academic year
- The request for holiday coincides with the **start of term** or with **SATs tests**

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### ***This section to be returned to parent/carer by the school office***

This is to certify that your request for leave of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ for your child/ren has been:

Authorised:  Comments:

Unauthorised  for the following reason:

- Your circumstances are not exceptional
- A period of holiday has previously been authorised in the current academic year
- The request for holiday coincides with the **start of term** or with **SATs tests**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Head of School on behalf of the governing body

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Please consider the following points before applying for a holiday for your child:

- Leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday is no longer an entitlement and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- The Directors of Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy have agreed that only one request for leave of absence for a family holiday in exceptional circumstances in an academic year be considered.
- The Directors of Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy will not grant a holiday:
  - If information given in the request is not sufficient for the Head of School to decide that the circumstances are exceptional
  - If a period of holiday has previously been granted in the current academic year.
  - If the period of holiday coincides with the **start of term** or with **SATs tests**.
- The Head of School will make a decision to authorise or un-authorise your holiday request based upon the information that you provide. **THAT DECISION IS FINAL.**
- If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the case may be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 28 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

**The Directors of Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy remind you of the importance of ensuring children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance:**

- Absence during term time, as a result of a holiday, interrupts continuity of teaching and learning, disrupts the educational progress of individual children and impacts negatively on overall performance.

# Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy

## Term Time Leave of Absence Application Form

Please complete this form and return it to the Head of School **no later than two weeks** before the requested absence.

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent/carer of \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of child/ren) class: \_\_\_\_\_

hereby make application for leave of absence for a special reason

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ school days or school minutes/hours

**For medical absences where possible please provide a copy of your appointment letter.**

For the following reason:

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**Please Circle:**      **Home Lunch**      **Sandwiches**      **School Dinner** (please order in advance on ParentPay)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Carer      Date \_\_\_\_\_

### For office use only

Authorised:  Comments:

Unauthorised  for the following reason:

- Unreasonable activity

Percentage attendance this academic year.

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### ***This section to be returned to parent/carer by the school office***

This is to certify that your request for leave of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ for your child/ren for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ (Number) school days/school minutes has been:

Authorised:  Comments:

Unauthorised  for the following reason:

- Unreasonable activity

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Head of School on behalf of the governing body

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Please consider the following points before applying for leave of absence for your child:**

- **Leave of absence should only be requested for exceptional events such as funerals, medical appointments, exams and school transition visits.**
- **Leave of absence requests will be unauthorised for unreasonable activities such as shopping trips, accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments, family birthdays, day trips and entertainment visits.**
- **The Head of School will make a decision to authorise or un-authorise your absence request based upon the information that you provide. THAT DECISION IS FINAL.**

**The Directors of Finchingfield St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy remind you of the importance of ensuring children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance.**