



## St Ann's School Attendance Strategy

**St Ann's is proud to be a Unicef Rights Respecting School Level Two. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child guides all aspects of our daily practice. Article 3 (best interests of the child) Article 4 (protection of rights) and Article 28 (right to education) are actively promoted through adherence to St Ann's Attendance Strategy.**

1. St Ann's recognises the direct link between good attendance and achievement.
2. St Ann's will aim to improve attendance over time for both individual students and cohorts of students.
3. Students need the consistency of daily attendance at school if they are going to derive the full benefit from teaching and learning, make good progress and maximise their life chances. A consequence of poor attendance may be regression so that valuable life skills are lost, sometimes over a relatively short period of time.
4. St Ann's aims to attain attendance rates similar to national averages for maintained mainstream secondary schools. However we are cognisant of the fact that our young people frequently experience barriers to very high attendance. These include complex medical and dental conditions, necessitating specialist treatment as an in patient or out patient in national hospitals, mental health issues, severe behavioural issues, sleep disturbance problems, lack of specialist respite facilities if parents need to travel overseas, and issues associated with family breakdown.
5. St Ann's will analyse attendance data on an annual basis with respect to cohorts of students eg boys, girls, SEN, FSM, ethnicity, and put in place interventions as necessary.
6. Persistent Absentee data will be further analysed to determine the specific causes of high levels of absence and multi-agency support will be sought as appropriate. (From September 2015 students with less than 90% attendance are deemed by the DfE to be Persistent Absentees).
7. St Ann's will monitor data on an individual student basis on a monthly basis. (SESW and Headteacher) and put in place interventions as necessary.

8. The termly Headteacher's Report to the Governing Body contains termly, and as appropriate, annual attendance data for Governor scrutiny.
9. The termly LA Link Officer Visit also includes discussion with the Headteacher on attendance data

**All St Ann's students have complex profound to severe learning difficulties. It is therefore essential that school, parents/carers and the multi professional team work in partnership to maximise each young person's attendance at school.**

**We will achieve this in the following ways:**

#### **Parents/Carers.**

1. On an annual basis sign and adhere to St Ann's Home School agreement which contains a section on attendance.
2. On an annual basis review with the School Nurse any nursing care needs and together complete/update a Nursing Care Plan.
3. Inform the school office **on the first day of absence** if their young person cannot attend or is unwell and needs to remain at home. This can be done by telephone, email or through the Passenger Assistant.
4. If possible inform SEN transport or the PA directly that transport will not be required on the first day of absence so that wasted journeys are not made by the designated minibus. Subsequently keep in touch with the PA so he/she knows when to next call for the young person.
5. After **three days** liaise with the School Nurse to see if any reasonable adjustments can be put in place to facilitate the young person's return to school.
6. For longer planned absences eg following major surgery keep the School Nurse informed so that the student can return to school as soon as possible.
7. Following an absence provide the School Nurse with any updated information regarding medication as appropriate.
8. Liaise with the Headteacher or Senior Education Social Worker if family issues or the young person's behavioural needs prevent him/her from attending school. School will share this information with the Children with Disabilities Team (CWDT) or the Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities (CTPLD) as appropriate.
9. Endeavour to take all family trips both within and outside the UK, during school holidays.
10. Any requests for authorised absence should be made to the Headteacher in writing using the appropriate form available from the school office.

#### **School.**

1. On an annual basis sign and adhere to St Ann's Home School agreement which contains a section on attendance.
2. On an annual basis the School Nurse will review with the parent/carer any nursing care needs their young person might have.
3. On the **first day of absence** from school, and if no notification as to the reason is received, the School Nurse will ring home to ascertain if the young person is unwell. If no contact can be made with the family or if the absence is for any other reason the School Nurse will on the same day inform the school's Senior Education Social Worker so that the absence can be followed up and monitored.
4. On the **fourth day of absence** due to illness the School Nurse will ring the family to receive an update if no further information has been provided and advise the family as to the best course of action.

5. Class staff will not ring home during a student's absence unless they have first checked with the School Nurse/SESW/HT as to the reason for the absence and whether it is appropriate to do so.
6. The School Nurse will provide clear advice as to the amount of time a young person should remain at home following the diagnosis of an infectious illness eg diarrhoea. If the young person has been sent home from school because of an infectious condition this will be written advice.
7. If the absence is due to behavioural reasons and the health and safety of the young person, their peers and staff is not compromised, school will work with the family and other agencies as appropriate to re-introduce the young person to school as quickly as possible. In exceptional circumstances this may involve sending school staff to assist the family, the organisation of personalised transport outside normal transport times and building up to full attendance over time as appropriate.
8. In the event of a hospital/clinic appointment during the school day, St Ann's will always encourage parents/carers to allow their young person to attend school before and/or after the appointment as appropriate.
9. St Ann's will facilitate students to come back into school following hospital admission as quickly as possible through making reasonable adjustments. In exceptional cases this may include collecting a student from Ealing Hospital and returning him/her there using school's own minibus if medical advice indicates that this is conducive to the recovery of the young person.
10. In the event of requests for authorised absence to facilitate family trips during term time St Ann's will consider each case on an individual basis and give a written reply as to the decision made.
11. Attendance will always be discussed as part of each Annual Review and comments on attendance levels will be included in the final written report
12. The Governing Body will schedule the three annual Occasional Days to coincide with the major faith festivals celebrated by our students and their families eg Eid, Diwali and Epiphany to further reduce student absence.
13. On a half termly basis one student will receive an attendance award at the Headteacher's Awards assembly for the most improved attendance during that half term period.

### **Multi professional team**

1. St Ann's will work with health agencies to try and ensure that fewer medical appointments are scheduled during the school day.
2. St Ann's will accommodate clinics in school if requested, and whenever possible, to further reduce student absence.
3. St Ann's will liaise closely with CWDT and CTPLD and keep them informed as to any concerns around attendance for students on their caseload.
4. St Ann's SESW will endeavour to attend all Child Protection case conferences and core group meetings, and Child in Need reviews so that updated information on attendance can be provided.
5. St Ann's will liaise with respite providers on a daily basis to inform them if any young person scheduled to receive respite care later that day is absent from school.
6. St Ann's will endeavour to make other members of the multi-professional team aware of individual student absence if they have a pre booked appointment with that young person on that day. In addition daily lists of absent students are posted on Google Documents, Daily Information, (Student Absence folder) and lists are displayed in other strategic points around school in order to update staff.

**Last reviewed March 2017**

**Review date March 2018**