

## **ATTENDANCE**

Please make every effort to support your child's education by ensuring good attendance throughout the year. All schools are required to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence. The attendance of all pupils is monitored closely by the school, the local authority and Ofsted.

### What is regular school attendance?

- attending school every day unless there is a very good reason for absence
- getting to school on time and
- being present for both morning and afternoon sessions

### Why is it important for children to attend regularly?

Children who have good attendance are more likely to:

- keep up with school work
- develop good habits and important life skills
- maintain friendships
- gain better qualifications
- have a wider range of opportunities when they leave school

### What does the law say about parental duty concerning children's education?

- parents must make sure their children receive efficient full time education in school or elsewhere
- parents must make sure that children attend school regularly
- parents must inform the school of any unavoidable absence on the first day
- parents may request term-time leave of absence only in special or exceptional circumstances; this should be made in writing to the head teacher

### When is it okay for children to miss school?

- during illness but not for minor complaints
- for religious observance
- for any other avoidable cause

### What is unauthorised absence?

If the head teacher decides that the reason given for absence is unacceptable, the absence will be unauthorised. Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- birthday celebrations
- shopping
- family outings
- family holidays and 'long weekends'
- absence without explanation

### What legal and financial sanctions can parents face if their children miss school?

- prosecution in a magistrates' court
- an Education Order issued by a family court
- fixed penalty notices to the amount of £120 each, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days

St. John's is expected to promote good attendance and comply with the expectations and protocols stated above. Schools are supported by Barnet's 'Education Welfare Team' to ensure full attendance. "Education Welfare Officers will work to support and challenge parents in respect of their child's attendance through advice and problem solving. Legal sanctions are available in the event that school attendance remains poor without cause."

***Please support the school in its obligation to secure good attendance for all pupils.***