

# St Mary and St Michael Catholic Primary School

## **Attendance Policy**



*“Learning together hand in hand with our friend  
Jesus.”*

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

### Rationale

Regular attendance and punctuality at school is essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential.

Regular attendees make better progress academically and socially. They find school routines and school work easier to cope with. Regular attendees also find learning more satisfying and have an easier transfer to their next school.

We aim to ensure that pupils' attendance is as good as possible. This means meeting or exceeding the Borough target of 96%.

Attendance of 90% means that a pupil is absent from lessons for the equivalent of half a school day every week. This amounts to 4 whole school weeks in a year and, over 5 years, half a year's schooling. For this reason, persistent absence must be monitored closely and tackled.

### Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

| <b>Attendance chart</b> |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 98%+                    | Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of pupil progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.  |
| 96%+                    | Good – Well done, strive to build on this.  |
| 94 – 95%                | Requires improvement  |
| 90 - 93%                | Poor - Absence is affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school urgently to improve the situation and to avoid further action.   |
| Below 90%               | Unacceptable:<br><br>Absence IS causing SERIOUS CONCERN. It IS affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. We will need to work with you and the Attendance & Welfare Advisor [AWA] to improve your child's attendance.<br><br>Your child is now on the Persistent Absence list and there is a possibility that legal action may be taken against you. |

### Legal Requirements

Parents have a legal duty (under section 7, Education Act 1996) to ensure that their child who is registered at a school attends that school regularly. If the child fails to do so and the absences are unauthorised, the parent is committing an offence and may either be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted.

### Attendance

Parents are expected to:

- Telephone the school on the day of absence to explain the reason for the absence.

- Keep the school informed by telephone on subsequent days if the absence persists.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours wherever possible (hospital appointments may be kept if they have been arranged during school hours).
- Provide medical evidence for all sickness absence where attendance has fallen below 90%.

#### Class Teachers Will:

- Monitor the attendance of all children in the class.
- Record the absence in the register.
- Speak to parents where there is a concern over attendance.
- Ensure that registers are completed correctly and submitted on time.
- Raise concerns over attendance with the school attendance officer if it does not improve or falls below 90%.
- Alert the attendance officer immediately if a child with a CP plan is absent.

#### The school will:

- as part of our Safeguarding Procedures, endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.
- Keep a list of persistent absentees and monitor their attendance rigorously.
- Challenge parents of persistent absentees and ask for medical evidence for all absences if attendance falls below 90%
- Remind parents of the importance of good attendance.
- Acknowledge good attendance.
- Contact parents where there are concerns over poor attendance.
- Seek advice or refer to the AWA if we continue to have concerns.
- Invite parents to meetings with the AWA in school.
- Arrange for the school nurse to advise parents on how to improve their child's attendance.

#### The Local Authority Will:

- Respond to referrals made by the school.
- Meet with parents at panel meetings.
- Make home visits in cases of persistent absence.
- Issue penalty notices for persistent absence, poor punctuality and for holidays taken in term time.

#### **Punctuality**

- The school register is taken at 9.00am. Doors open at 8.50am and children can enter their classes from then. Anyone arriving in class after 9.00am will be recorded as late.

- Children can arrive from 8.30am, when there will be supervision at the gate, morning exercise and breakfast club (free from 8.30am).
- Breakfast club for children of working parents opens at 7.45am. There is a charge for this.

Parents are expected to:

- Make every effort to ensure their children arrive to school in time.
- Use breakfast club and morning exercise clubs if there are issues with transport which mean they need to arrive early.
- Sign children in at the office if they arrive late.

Class Teachers Will:

- Monitor the punctuality of all children in the class.
- Speak to parents where there is a concern over punctuality.
- Ensure that registers are completed correctly (with late marks) and submitted on time.
- Note the time for any late arrivals.
- Raise concerns over persistent lateness with the attendance officer.
- Alert the attendance officer immediately if a child with a CP plan arrives late for school.

The School will:

- Contact parents with concerns over punctuality.
- Ask parents to provide reasons for lateness at the office.
- Seek advice from AWA where lateness becomes persistent.
- Refer to the Local Authority AWA if punctuality does not improve.
- Keep a list of persistent latecomers (after 9.10am, children are considered legally to be late) and monitor their punctuality rigorously. Persistent lateness may result in parents being issued with penalty notices.

The Local Authority Will:

- Respond to referrals made by the school.
- Meet with parents at panel meetings.
- Issue penalty notices for persistent absence, poor punctuality and for holidays taken in term time.
- **Holidays in Term Time**

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and in law, have to apply for permission in advance.

Parents are expected to:

- Take all holiday during the designated 13 weeks of the school holiday period.
- Arrive back in time for the start of each term/ half term.

The School will:

- Provide guidance for parents regarding holidays in term time.
- NOT authorise any holiday during term time.
- Write to parents informing them that their holiday will be unauthorised and they may receive a penalty notice or lose their child's place in the school.
- Refer those parents who take their children on holiday during term time to the local authority.

The Local Authority will:

- Issue penalty fines.
- Follow up unpaid fines through court action.

**Review**

This policy was reviewed on: September 2016

*Next Review date: September 2017*

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_