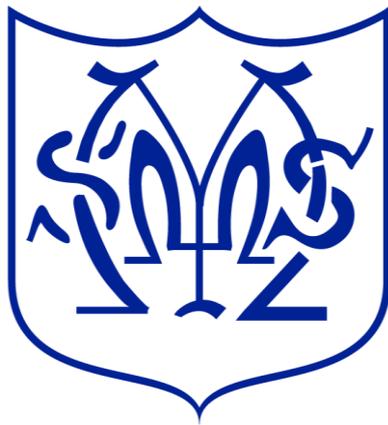


St Mary and St Michael Catholic Primary School

Attendance Policy



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

Last reviewed: January 2021
Next review due by: January 2023

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction

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%.

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

Attendance chart	
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: 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. 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The headteacher (or the designated member of staff) is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Acknowledge and recognize good attendance

The Local Authority

The school attendance and welfare advisor (AWA):

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Works to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Responds to referrals made by the school.
- Makes home visits in cases of persistent absence.
- Issues penalty notices for persistent absence, poor punctuality and for holidays taken in term time.

Class teachers

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
- Recognise good attendance

School office staff/the school

- School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.
- As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, office staff will try 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.
- Seek advice or refer to the AWA if we continue to have concerns.
- Invite parents to meetings with the AWA in school.

Parents

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%.

Punctuality and Lateness

- The school register is taken at 9.00am. Doors open at 8.40am and children can enter their classes from then. Anyone arriving in class after 9.00am will be recorded as late.
- Children can arrive from 8.35am, when there will be supervision at the gate and on the playground.
- 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 and submitted on time.
- Raise concerns over persistent lateness with the attendance officer.

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 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
- Issue penalty notices for persistent absence, poor punctuality and for holidays taken in term time.

Absences

Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible.
- An absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, text notification or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- Class teachers will not provide work for children who have unplanned absences.

Planned absence

- We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.
- If a child is admitted to hospital for a planned medical reason, school will liaise with the hospital tutor responsible for that child.

Leave of Absence 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 unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 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 Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Follow up unpaid fines through court action. If issued with a fine or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
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Review

This policy was reviewed on: January 2021

Next Review date: January 2023

Signed: _____

Date: _____