



Attendance Policy

Updated: November 2021

Up for review: November 2024

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

St Mary's CE (Aided) Primary School is:

'A Christ-centred school, with a child centred curriculum' where wisdom and love guide and influence learning and teaching for our whole community.

We treasure each child and enable them to flourish, using their God-given potential, establishing a secure foundation for them to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

RATIONALE

Regular attendance at school is a pre-requisite of a good education. The curriculum is carefully planned and assumes full attendance. Any child who does not attend school is placed at a disadvantage and life chances are therefore impaired.

The school recognises that it is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school and teachers will play their part in ensuring maximum attendance of children at school.

Regular attendance and good punctuality reflects commitment, maximises potential educational achievement, and presents a positive public image for the school.

Truancy/unauthorised absence represents a significant waste of educational resources, puts children 'at risk', contributes to general disaffection and potential juvenile crime and thus should be a source of grave concern to parents/carers and teachers alike.

It is not enough for the school to assume that regular attendance is automatic and that absence is always an indication of home difficulties or lack of parental support. As a school we are committed to the idea that education is a life-long activity and thus the ethos of the school is that pupils should be happy to attend school.

AIMS

- 1 To enable maximum pupil attendance through valuing high attendance rates.
- 2 To encourage pupils to develop habits/routines that will ensure good punctuality and attendance beyond their school days.
- 3 To encourage pupils to take good advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly.
- 4 To recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and work in partnership with parents/carers and the Pupil Entitlement team / other agencies to address any difficulties.
- 5 To provide an effective and efficient system for the monitoring of attendance.
- 6 To identify patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and work to resolve any personal/social/academic difficulties.



PRACTICE

1 The procedures for the completion of attendance records are that class teachers send registers to the School Office within 15 minutes of the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions, and office staff will then make contact with parents on the first day of any unexplained absence.

2 At the 'Meet The Teacher' meeting held in the first month of term all parents are informed about the importance of attendance and the impact on a child's learning if a child does not attend on a regular basis.

3 Class teachers are expected to keep accurate records of attendance; office staff will follow up absences and refer concerns to the Headteacher.

4 The Headteacher regularly analyses attendance across the school (at least half termly) and follows a clear procedure when attendance drops:

A standard letter is sent to parents when attendance falls below 92%, regardless of reason for absence. Where there is a specific reason (hospital visit, bereavement, holiday early in the academic year) discretion may be used in not sending a letter but contact should be made via a telephone call to ensure parents are aware and to establish any support strategies that can be agreed.

A standard letter is sent to parents when the number of 'lates' to school reaches 10.

If attendance falls below 90% a second letter is sent to families requesting they contact the school to discuss their child's attendance.

Where letters have been sent, and an improvement in the child's attendance is not evident, the Headteacher will usually contact the parent/carer by telephone to discuss the absence and offer reasonable support/advice in improving attendance. This may also involve discussions with the child.

When attendance falls below 85% (10 absences) the case is discussed with the Pupil Entitlement team at the termly meetings and a referral will usually be made, unless a specific reason negates the need for a referral (see above).

5 Authorisation for 'withdrawal from learning' for holidays, trips, visits, and other reasons will not be approved except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.

6 The School Secretary will use the school's SIMS system to monitor unauthorised absence, patterns of absence, lateness and absence of siblings. The School Secretary will manage the system to ensure records are up to date, correct codes are entered and first day contact made.

7 If a child is absent without authorisation for 10 days without explanation, the Pupil Entitlement team must be informed immediately. If the absence is an unauthorised holiday, the Pupil Entitlement team should be informed at the next meeting.

8 The Education and Inspection Act 2006 places a statutory duty on the Local Authority to establish the identities of children missing education.

If a child fails to start at school, enquiries should be made with Admissions to establish whether the child will be starting. The Admissions Assistant should also attempt to contact the family. The Pupil Entitlement team should be informed by the Attendance Leader. If a Common Transfer File (CTF) has been received by the school it should be uploaded to the S2S website.



When a family disappears, or a child ceases to attend for ten school days, without explanation, every effort will be made to trace the child by the school. Where the child's attendance is low, the absence unexplained or unusual, or the child is deemed to be 'at risk', immediate contact should be made with the Pupil Entitlement team.

Any unexplained, continuous absence of any child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan must automatically be treated as the highest priority and the duty team of social and caring services contacted immediately.

9 Children can only be taken off roll when contact has been made by the receiving school and the CTF file transferred. All other reasons (disappearance, moving abroad/returning to home country) will necessitate contact and advice from the Pupil Entitlement team.

10 The school will encourage good attendance by:

- Informing parents of their child's attendance at Parents' Evenings. Class lists will be generated and given to teachers.
- Attendance percentages will be shared on the website.
- Request for Absence forms will be returned to parents showing the level of the child's attendance.
- Letters will be sent to parents annually, to inform them of their child's annual record of attendance.
- Prizes in the form of a sticker will be given for any class with 100% attendance for a whole school week.
- Certificates will be given to children who show good attendance regularly.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Headteacher will monitor and evaluate the policy.

