
St. Mary's CE Academy

'Excellence through faith & learning'



Attendance Policy

*"I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full."*

John 10:10

**Reviewed: Summer 2020
Approved by Governors: Summer 2020
Date of next review: Summer 2022**



Introduction:

At St Mary's Church of England Academy, we aim to provide a caring environment where every child can thrive and is supported to achieve their unique & amazing potential as a child of God. As such, this means that we want all children to be able to access school as well as all that education can offer.

As such, we aim to educate the whole child & prepare children to enter secondary school with a positive self-esteem, a sound foundation of learning and an eagerness to develop further their intellectual and moral faculties. The school works in partnership with parents and the LA to recognise and value individuals' needs and to respond to these needs. These aims can only be fulfilled by commitment from all interested parties and is dependent upon children's regular and punctual attendance.

Aims and Targets:

- To encourage all pupils to attend school and achieve their maximum potential;
- To monitor individual and whole school attendance and measure against agreed targets;
- To ensure that pupils and their parents understand and support the procedures in place to record and monitor attendance;
- To ensure that all staff and governors understand and support the policy;
- To ensure attendance data to inform policy.

The Law:

The following legal requirements are placed upon parents, the LA and the school under the 1996 Education Act:

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise;
- The LA must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school;
- The School must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session;
- The school must report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than 10 days without explanation;
- The LA has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities;
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law;
- Fixed penalties can be issued by the LA under certain circumstances;

What the school expects of its pupils:

- Attend regularly and arrive on time;
- Be prepared to work hard and behave well, appropriate to their age and stage.

What the school expects of parents:

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to encourage pupils to attend regularly and on time;
- Informing school on the first day of reason for absence. When the child returns, a note should be sent to school signed by the parent/carer;
- Ensuring pupils are adequately prepared for the school day;
- Informing school of problems preventing attendance.

Arranging holidays out of term time:

- Term time leave will only be authorised for Exceptional Circumstances. (See Term Time Leave Policy).
- Non-urgent medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours. If this is unavoidable, school should be informed and an authorised absence pass obtained.

What parents and pupils can expect of the school:

- A broad and balanced and relevant curriculum;
- The encouragement of good attendance;
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality;
- First day contact with parents where absence is unexplained;
- Prompt action and contact with home when problems arise;
- Regular liaison with the Attendance and Inclusion Service to support parents and pupils where needed.

Registration Procedures:

- Morning registration is at 8:40am. Any pupil arriving after 9:00am will receive a late mark.
- Pupils arriving after 9:00am must report to the school office to receive their mark.
- Registers will be closed at 9:00am and 1:20pm. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as unauthorised late.
- Class teachers must ensure that the register is completed.

- Registers are completed electronically unless there is a supply teacher/technical problem in which case a paper copy will be completed and sent to the office.
- If for whatever reason a child does not arrive at school at normal registration times, the parent/carer must ensure a member of school staff has registered the child as being in school before they leave them.

Responding to Lateness:

- When a child arrives at school after 9:00am the parent/carer must report to the school office to get a mark and explain the reason for lateness
- Where a pupil is frequently late, the Executive Headteacher / Head of School will contact parents by letter. If the lateness is not authorised this may lead to a penalty notice.

Responding to absence:

- A telephone call, email or absence note is required from the parent/carer when a child returns to school giving dates and reason for absence;
- These should be sent to the class teacher or school office who will ensure that the reasons for absence are recorded in the register;
- Where the reason is accepted, the absence will be authorised using the appropriate symbol as indicated on the register code sheet attached to each register. Acceptable reasons would include illness, unavoidable medical/dental problems, agreed religious observance, bereavement and exceptional circumstances. The school may request medical evidence if there are frequent absences due to illness;
- If there are any doubts about the legitimacy of any notes this should be reported immediately to the Executive Headteacher / Head of School will ensure contact with parents/carers is made. Absences will not usually be authorised for circumstances such as caring for other children, day trips, shopping, etc.
- If an explanation of absence is not provided, the child will receive an unauthorised absence mark. If this becomes a persistent problem parents may be contacted by the Executive Headteacher / Head of School and a referral may be made to the Attendance and Inclusion Service resulting in contact from the Education Welfare Officer.
- When a child cannot be located and appears to be missing, the procedure for following up children missing from education will be followed and the Missing Children Team will be notified (See policy and procedures for Children Missing from Education).
- Telephone messages from parents are received in the Office and are passed to teachers via message slips.

Responding to Poor Attendance:

- The school will always attempt to resolve any problems relating to attendance as early as possible.
- Parents will be contacted where there are attendance problems.
- On going attendance problems will be monitored.
- A referral may be made to the Attendance and Inclusion Service requesting a home visit by an Attendance and Inclusion Officer. This will always be considered for those pupils with attendance less than 85% during the previous half-term. It may also be considered for pupils with higher attendance but where there are patterns of absence or punctuality issues that need to be discussed
- Responding to good attendance
- Class teachers acknowledge good attendance.
- Attendance is celebrated each week in Celebration Assembly & children achieving a 100% receive a certificate.

Collecting and Analysing Attendance Data:

- Whole school and individual computerised attendance data is produced weekly by the school office.
- The Executive Headteacher / Head of School and an identified member of staff monitor this data regularly.
- This data is used to monitor overall attendance percentages, and to check for frequent individual absences or patterns of absence.
- Each half term the school will identify any individuals for whom there is a concern and agree actions.

Roles and Responsibilities Executive Headteacher / Head of School:

- Will monitor attendance data;
- Will follow up any cause for concern;
- Will report to governors on attendance percentages at every full governing body meeting Governors;
- Will receive attendance monitoring reports;
- Will support the school policy.

Class Teachers:

- Will accurately complete attendance registers at appropriate times;
- Will pass on to the Executive Headteacher / Head of School any individual causes for concern.

Admin Staff:

- Will register any pupil who arrives late;
- Will maintain the SIMS system;
- Will pass to Executive Headteacher / Head of School any cause for concern

Senior Inclusion Officer:

- Will support school to develop policies and whole school strategies for improving attendance;
- Will offer support to analyse school data and identify targets and the formulate an attendance plan;
- Will work with families where there are complex issues, which might prevent good attendance;
- Advise on and instigate prosecution procedures as appropriate.

Education Welfare Officer:

- Will receive referrals from the school;
- Will visit parents at home where there are concerns regarding attendance or excessive lateness. This will include an assessment of the situation and implementation of strategies to achieve an improvement in attendance.
- Initiate appropriate action from other agencies when necessary.