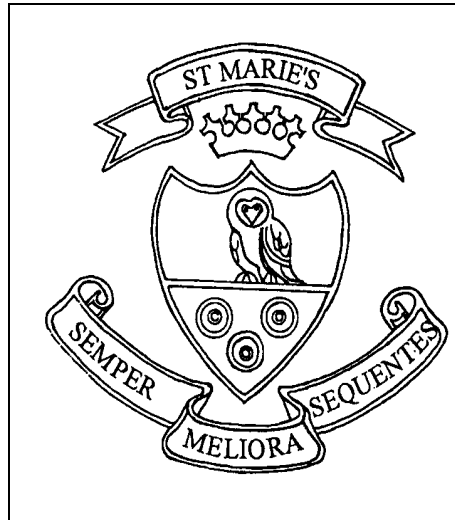


Policy for Attendance



Chair of Governors/Committee Mrs F Cheetham

Headteacher Mrs M J Smith

Reviewed November 2018

Attendance Policy

1 Rationale

- 1.1 The Governors and staff at our school expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- 1.2 We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.
- 1.3 We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.4 We will work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually by:
- Reminding parents regularly of their responsibility in ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually
 - Working towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children
 - Regularly making parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on academic progress. Attendance of less than 94% (i.e. 9.5 days lost from a 190 school day academic year) is known to compromise pupil attainment.
- 1.2 Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. See appendix 1 for the absence codes used

2. School Procedures

- 2.1 Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a

parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- If a child's attendance is 90% or below, medical evidence must be provided or the attendance will be unauthorised. Likewise, if there is a pattern in the child's absence e.g. regular Mondays off school.

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3. Lateness

- 3.1** Children are expected by the school to be ready for the start of the day. Morning registration will take place at 9.05am and the register will remain open for 15 minutes. Therefore any child not in school by 9.05am will be recorded as late. Any pupil arriving after 9.20am will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence unless a valid reason is presented
- 3.2** In cases where the absence is for attending an early medical appointment the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- 3.3** Afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm and registers close at 1.30pm
- 3.4** Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present but will be entered as late before the register closed.

4 If a child is absent

- 4.1** Where a child has not arrived in school at the close of the register, and parents have not contacted school as to the reason for this absence, then school will telephone parent/ carer to ascertain the reason for non-attendance as soon as practicably possible.
- 4.2** When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or carer to explain the absence.
- 4.3** A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.
- 4.4** If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

- 4.5 If after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parent/carers, the school will contact the parents in writing. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 2 weeks if no explanation can be given

5 Requests for leave of absence including holidays

- 5.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. We discourage parents and carers from arranging any holiday or absence during term time as they are not in the best interests of the child.

- 5.2.1 Parents are entitled to **request** leave up to ten days in one academic year however it is the school that approves this request. From September 2013 all absence in term time will be unauthorised except in very exceptional circumstances. In line with the Government and Local Authority advice no holidays in term time will be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances which would be discussed by the Head and School Governors before a decision is made regarding authorization. Holidays in term time could result in a penalty notice warning being issued.

Parents/ carers must apply to the Headteacher in at least 6 weeks in advance for permission to take children out of school during term time. .

The following circumstances will not normally be granted an authorised absence

- Within transition periods (home –school, primary - secondary)
- Immediately before and during National Curriculum assessments
- When the pupil’s attendance record is already at or below 94% or will fall to or below that level if the leave is granted.
- If the pupil already has unauthorised absences in the current academic year.
- Birthdays and anniversaries

- 5.3 The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave

- The child’s previous attendance history
- The age of the pupil
- The child’s stage of education
- Time of Year (e.g.SATs)
- The nature/reasons for absence
- Duration and impact on continuity of learning
- The circumstances of the family requesting time out of school
- Rarity or otherwise of this event in the pupil’s’ career to date
- Parents who are unable to take a holiday during school holidays due to the nature of their work will be asked to provide written confirmation from their employer

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Holidays taken for the following reasons will not normally be authorised

- Availability of cheap holiday
- Availability of desired accommodation

- Poor weather experienced in school holiday period
- Overlap with beginning or end of term.

6 Long-term absence

- 6.1** When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 6.2** If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

7 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 7.1** The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 7.2** The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

8 Extended Leave

8.1 In exceptional circumstances where a parent / carer requests leave totaling more than 10 days per school year each case must be carefully assessed on its merits. Whilst the presumption is to discourage any leave in term time, there are circumstances in which a Head teacher might consider such applications sympathetically including

- Return to a country of origin for family, religious ,or cultural reasons
- Parent/career recuperation or convalescence from serious illness or surgery
- Death of a parent or sibling
- Life threatening or critical illness of a parent or sibling

9. Persistent absence

A child who is persistently absent (defined in legislation as 10% or more absences) is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.

10 Managing failure to return by an agreed date

10.1 Failure to return to school by the agreed date, without acceptable cause, will jeopardize the pupils' place at the school.

10.2 Where a pupil has been granted 10 days or more leave and fails to return by the agreed date a further period of 10 days is allowed for the school and Local Authority to

investigate the circumstances before de-registration is considered. This 10 day period of investigation is recorded as unauthorised absence.

10.3 If a pupil is unavoidably detained from returning to school by the agreed date the parents/carer must endeavour to contact school and request an additional period of leave. Such cases will be considered on an individual basis

11. Pupils taking holiday/extended leave without permission

11.1 Where a parent/carer takes a pupil out of school in term time without asking for or not receiving permission, a period of unauthorised absence is immediately created which could generate a penalty notice warning being issued.

11.2 The Headteacher will write to the family advising them that the absence is unauthorised and that there is a risk of the child losing his/her place at the school. The school may also notify the Gateway Services and may consider a penalty Notice being issued under the provisions of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003

11.4 A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances

- If a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence are taken during the current term
- If a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) leave are taken during the current term without the permission of the school
- Parentally condoned absences
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed at 9.05am)

11.5 Failure to return to school within 20 school days places the pupil at risk of losing his/her place at the school.

12 Start Well Services

12.1 In the promotion of regular attendance the school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer and Start Well Service who visit the school on a half termly basis to support the school in carrying out regular register checks and to support the school through a range of strategies to improve attendance

12.2 If attendance falls below 92% a letter will be sent home by the headteacher requesting an improvement and offering support. If the attendance rate does not improve the school's Welfare Officer will contact parents/carers to invite them into a meeting to discuss the reasons and an Early Help /parent contract will be implemented and recorded with the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub

13 Rewards for good attendance

13.1 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one year will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the year.

14 Attendance targets

- 14.1** The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors in the Autumn term. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

The current attendance target is 96.5%

15 Monitoring and review

- 15.1** It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 15.2** The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 15.3** The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.
- 15.4** Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardian.
- 15.5** This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Equal Opportunities The governing body will pay particular attention to matters of equality and diversity; it will seek to ensure that the school abides by the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2010, and that no child is treated unfairly because of race or ethnic background, gender or disability. Every child will be treated equally according to their ability.

Appendix 1
The Registration System

The school will use manual paper registers and a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records
The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present am	Present
\	Present pm	Present
B	Educated off site	Approved Education Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement	Unauthorised absence
H	Family Holiday agreed	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved education activity
L	Late before registers close	Present
M	Medical / dental appointment	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised
T	Traveller absence	Authorised
U	Late after registers close	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved education Activity
X	Untimetabled session for non compulsory school age children	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers must be kept for at least 3 years
Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes