



St. Mary's C.E. Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

School Vision **One family: school, church, home and community.**

At St Mary's we believe in a culture where:

- Everyone is special, unique and valued: diversity and difference are celebrated. We are all God's treasure.
- Education is holistic; spiritual and moral growth is nurtured.
Life in all its fullness – John 10:10.
- Inspirational and reflective worship enables all in the school community to encounter the risen Christ.
- Wisdom, knowledge and skills are a focus in everything.
- Everyone does their best at all times with a culture of the highest expectations, respect and consideration for all.
- Everyone can succeed and achieve. Aspiration and inspiration are central to all that we do.

I know the plans I have for you. Plans to make you prosper – Jeremiah 29:11.

- Creativity and joy in learning is valued.
- The spiritual and emotional well-being of all members of our school community is a priority. Resilience and perseverance are developed in all.
- A community of global citizens of God is created through social action – on local, national and global levels.

All of these are underpinned by our spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and experiences; respect of our British values and through our core Christian values of hope, peace, compassion, forgiveness, trust and endurance.

Statement of Intent

St Marys CE (Aided) Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We aim to work together with parents in order to ensure the high levels of attendance and punctuality for all children. For children to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance provided by the Department for Education.

Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

School

St. Marys CE (Aided) Primary School expects children to attend school regularly and to arrive on time and in a fit condition to learn. The school will monitor and report on attendance to the Board of Governors and the Local Authority; supporting parents and pupils with punctuality and attendance where required.

Children

Children will come to school everyday that they are well enough to do so. They will arrive on time for the start of the school day at 9am. Once they have entered the school premises, they will not leave, except when accompanied by their parents or other designated adult.

Parents

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and ready to learn.

Parents are responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first morning of any absence (it is helpful if this is confirmed in writing when their child returns to school).

Parents will avoid arranging family holidays during term time.

Parents can expect the school to inform them when there are concerns about their child's attendance or punctuality.

Registration (including Punctuality)

Registration is an important part of the school day. It is a time for the class to get together with their teachers in readiness for their day's learning. Children usually have a maths, reading, writing or spelling activity to complete at registration. The school register is a legal document and must be completed daily for all children.

Registers will be taken punctually each day at 9.00am and at 1.00pm (1.25pm for KS1 and Reception). The morning registers will close at 9.30am. Children who arrive after 9.10am are marked in the register with 'L' as Late. The school security gate, double gates and external classroom entrances are locked at 9.15am.

Children, who arrive after 9.30am, without their parents providing a suitable reason, will be marked as 'U'. This is classed as 'late arrival after the register has closed'. This mark is counted as an unauthorised absence.

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 coded as late before registers close.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Head will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

All absences must be explained either by phone call or in writing by a parent. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorise the absence. The provision of a letter or phone call does not automatically provide an authorised absence.

Examples of reasons where absence from school will be authorised:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments (proof of an appointment must be provided)
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement.
- attendance at a music, dance or such exam

Examples of reasons where absence from school will be unauthorised:

- shopping
- staying at home because other brothers/sisters are poorly
- birthdays

Medical/dental appointments should be made, whenever possible, outside of school hours. If a medical or dental appointment is scheduled during the school day, the appointment letter / card / text / email must be shown to the school office to ensure that it is coded correctly on the attendance register.

NHS Self-Certificate forms for school absence for a self-limiting illness can be submitted. School will accept a NHS Self-Certificate form, for a maximum of 4 school days (8 registration periods), Any absence for 5 school days or more will require evidence from a medical professional, which can include proof of a GP appointment card or sight of prescription boxes/bottles if appropriate.

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers from 9.00am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Term Time Holidays

Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child out of school for holidays. Absence for family holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances as follows:

The exceptions in the policy are as follows:

- Where parent's are employed by the Fire Service or Armed Forces.
- Where there is a special/exceptional family event requiring term time holiday absence.

The local authority guidelines state that parents should negotiate their holidays with their employers, so that they coincide with the school holiday pattern.

The school's holiday pattern is on the school web site and sent out to parents in paper format.

Where these circumstances exist, parents should put their request for a term time holiday absence in writing to the Headteacher. The request should be made at least two weeks before the start of the holiday. The request should be accompanied by a letter from their employer, where this is the reason for the term time holiday absence.

Requests for holidays during term time, which do not meet the above circumstances will not be granted. If parents choose to go ahead with their term time holiday plans without the agreement of the Headteacher, then a fixed penalty fine may be issued for each child who is absent. Non-payment will be referred to Bury Local Authority, which will pursue the fixed penalty under section 444(1) of the Education Act. Each child's absences will be marked in the register as unauthorised.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

In the belief that all children are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs, St. Mary's makes a commitment through the school

aims to deliver an inclusive, challenging and creative curriculum, which nourishes the mind and spirit.

The school will award termly certificates to all children whose attendance/punctuality is either excellent or much improved. This is in the form of a bronze, silver and gold award for 100% that builds throughout the school year.

Regular, structured meetings will be held with staff and the Headteacher in order to identify and support those children whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern.

Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Termly reports will be made by the headteacher to the schools governing body on the issue of attendance/punctuality and progress towards meeting the school's attendance and punctuality targets.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)

Persistent absence is calculated from either authorised or unauthorised. A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full educational potential. As a school we have a duty to report persistent absenteeism to the local authority on a termly basis.

The registration system

St Mary's uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes are used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence

J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	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

Attendance reports will be sent to parents annually with the formal written pupil report in July.

Policy date: September 2019

Policy review: September 2021