



St Mary's C of E Primary School

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Attendance and Punctuality Guide

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School we believe that good punctuality and attendance will increase and support your child's success at school and in life. Being late for school and absence from school can have a considerable impact on your child's learning. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the education opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and good punctuality. A good school attendance is one of the main factors in determining children's future academic success and opportunities in life. By supporting children's education we are giving them a better chance for a successful future. This academic year we will continue teaching our children about being organised to be punctual and responsible to attend school every day. St Mary's provides opportunities for parents/carers to discuss attendance and punctuality and to help families and children to get the most out of their education.

National changes this year

Please be advised that from the beginning of this academic year the government reduced the persistent absence threshold to 10% advising that persistent absence is a serious problem because much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up. This leaves these children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. Therefore, a pupil is now considered to have persistent absence if their attendance falls below 90% and that puts more responsibilities on the parents/carers and schools.

What is the role of school?

St Mary's must ensure that all parents/carers understand that they have a legal responsibility to make sure that their children attend school regularly and to support our parents and pupils in achieving excellent attendance and punctuality.

School has a responsibility to monitor children's attendance and punctuality and to refer to the local authority (Access and Engagement Services) if the attendance and punctuality is concerning.

All schools have a duty to monitor attendance through the daily attendance register and to notify the Local Authority if the attendance of any pupil becomes a concern.

If you are experiencing difficulty in sending your child to school, please contact Mariola Reron who is our School Home Support Practitioner. She will be very happy to talk to you about the difficulties, think about how this can be resolved and to support you in planning how you and your child can be supported in the best possible way. The phone number you can contact her is 07811 993986.

When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at the school playground ready to go into a class by 8:55 am.

Being late to school can have considerable impact over the whole year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

We understand that the school mornings can be hectic, but when your child is late for school they are missing out vital parts of their education. Their late arrival can also cause disruption to the class who are learning. As you know our School Home Support Practitioner, Mariola works with us to support the parents and pupils in achieving excellent attendance and punctuality so if you are experiencing any difficulties please contact her.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?

Make sure your child stays healthy by eating nutritious food and gets enough exercise.

Establish a regular bedtime to ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep, awakes rested the next morning and has enough time to prepare for school.

Discuss with your child what happened at school each day.

Show your child why education is important. Give specific examples of how education helps people to succeed.

Help your child to prepare for school by ensuring that their homework is done and the school bag, uniform, homework, PE bag and uniform are prepared each day in the evenings.

My child is trying to avoid coming to School. What should I do?

Contact school immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons eg difficulties with schoolwork, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

What Parents/Carers Can Do to Improve a Child's School Attendance and Punctuality?

All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to make sure that their children attend school regularly, which means:

- attending school every day
- arriving at school on time
- attending every lesson

The Local authority information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year

Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 days absence a year

These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.

90%: 19 days absence a year

The Government classes Young People in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

When your child may require an absence from school

You may only allow your child to miss school if:

- You've got advance permission from the school
- They're too ill to go in
- Day of religious observance

In line with local authority guidance, on the day when your child is not well enough to attend school please telephone in the morning and ensure that on return to school you must provide a medical appointment letter or evidence from your GP for any child absence. Please be aware that school is unable to authorise the absence if we do not know the reason for absence, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory. It is very important that you continue to communicate with us about any absence and avoid arriving late for school, we are here to help.

Absences

The school is not able to authorise absences other than those in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays, day trips, shopping, birthdays, looking after siblings or ill relatives are not classed as exceptional.

In the situation where a parent/carer or sibling is ill and having difficulties to bring their child to school we advise that you make alternative arrangements, so that your child does not miss school. Please be aware that such absences cannot be authorised by the school.

Please be advised that an accumulation of unauthorised absences leads to a Penalty Notice issued by Local Authority (Access and Engagement Service).

Routine appointments should be made for after school or during the holiday to help ensure your child has a good school attendance and is not missing out on learning.

Can we take family holidays during term time?

The Department for Education states that; "The current law does not give entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in

exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined for taking their children on holiday during term time without consent from the school."

Impact of missing school

- A two-week term time holiday will mean that your child misses out on 10 English and 10 Mathematics lessons.
- Research shows that those children do not catch up from work missed- this could have serious consequences for their learning process.

There are 190 school days in a year which leaves 175 non-school days in each year for holidays, culture experiences and family time.

Requesting a leave of absence in school time

If after considering the above information, you feel it is absolutely unavoidable to take your child on a leave of absence in term time, you must make an application to the Headteacher four weeks in advance of when you intend to. We strongly advise that you talk to our School Home Support Practitioner, Mariola Reron before making the application about your child's planned absence. The application form is available from the school office. Please make sure that you provide all the required information.

If your child is missing from school and we do not know where they are (and you did not complete a form), we may have to report them as a 'missing child' to the Local Authority.

Once again, please think carefully about taking your child out of school, as persistent absence is proven to have significant impact upon children's education and level of achievement.