



St Michael's C of E VA Primary School

As a Church School we seek to ensure that the ethos and principles of Christianity underpin the experiences of the children in our care.

“St Michael's is an inclusive school and respects and values the diversity of the Community”.

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Approved by the Curriculum Committee: September 2018

Frequency of Review: Annually

Next Review Date: September 2019

Signed:.....Date.....

St Michael's CE VA Primary School

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Introduction

We expect all children to attend every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. 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. 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.

Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006* the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present during the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised (see below).

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, telephones, or e-mails 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.
- 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 LEA support services, arrange a meeting and ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

Registration

Top School

- Bell rings at 8.45am (rainy days 8.40am). Any notes or messages may be left with the TA on the door who will pass them to the relevant member of staff. The door closes at 9.00am.
- If a child arrives after the door is closed the parent should complete the late form at the office detailing the time of arrival and the reason for being late. If a child has more than 5 late marks in a half term, the Head Teacher will contact the parents.

Lower School

- Reception and Year 1 are dropped off at Top School on a Wednesday and Friday.
- Reception and Year 1 are dropped off at Lower School on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.
- Any variation to these arrangements will be communicated to parents via parentmail and notices on the school/parent board at Lower School.
- Lower School bell rings at 8.40am and doors open. Any notes or messages left with the teaching assistant or teacher on the door will be passed to the relevant member of staff. If a child arrives after the door is closed, the parent should complete the late form, detailing the time of arrival and the reason for being late. If a child has more than 5 late marks in a half term, the Head Teacher will write to the parents.

Attendance Registers

- Attendance registers are completed directly onto Sims each morning and afternoon by the teaching staff. If a child is not in school they are marked as 'N' and the office change the codes with respect to any messages they may have had regarding illness and appointments.
- If a child is not in by 9.30am, the office will call the parent to see where the child is. The Head Teacher may call on occasions, where there is concern regarding continual absence.
- Any child who arrives after 9.00am reports to the office where the parent completes a form giving a reason for delay. The code 'L' is entered. If a child reports to school after 9.10 this is recorded as a U (unauthorised absence) unless there are special circumstances which are at the Head's discretion.
- Parents are expected to inform the school each day of any absence by emailing the office or leaving a message on the answer phone.

Medical/Dental Appointments

- Medical and dental appointments should wherever possible be made for outside school hours. If essential, they should be made at the beginning or end of the day. Children are expected to attend school before and after the appointment where applicable. Parents should give advance warning of the appointment by informing the school office in writing.

Response to poor attendance

The school aims to have an attendance percentage of at least 96% and pays particular attention to children who have an attendance level of less than 93%. The school works closely with the local Attendance Office and in conjunction with them the following process is followed when attendance is poor:

1. A telephone call to the parents from the Head Teacher
2. A letter to the parents from the Head Teacher
3. A meeting between the parents and the Head Teacher
4. A letter to the parents from the Attendance Officer
5. A meeting between the parents and the Attendance Officer

Response to poor punctuality

- Children arriving between 9.00am and 9.10am are recorded as late.
- Names of children arriving late are recorded on the daily 'late sheet' – which is transferred to the 'late file'.
- 'Late file' is reviewed at end of each half term
- Parents are contacted if child continues to be regularly late
- A meeting will be set up with parents when there is no improvement to punctuality
- Children known to be regularly late may be referred to a Family Support Worker for a weekly record sheet to be established

Requests for leave of absence and holidays in term time

Children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. For this reason we rarely authorise any additional absence.

- No holidays will be approved during term time
- If in an exceptional circumstance a child needs to be absent from school a parent needs to request Leave of Absence. This must be requested in writing at least a week in advance of the absence.
- The Head Teacher will decide whether an application for authorised absence will be granted.
- The Head Teacher will complete an Absence Request Form, either authorising or not authorising the absence. The original is returned to the parent, a copy filed in the pupil's file and the relevant mark made in the register. The office will inform the teacher in writing of any known absence.
- The Head Teacher will decide the numbers of days granted for any leave of absence.
- Leave of absence taken without permission will be unauthorised.
- The school will decide what is deemed as an exceptional circumstance.

Long-term absence

- 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.
- 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.

Encouraging good attendance

- Staff will set an encouraging ethos through a culture of praise and encouragement in regular discussion about attendance.
- Children will be praised for good attendance and punctuality.
- A certificate is awarded to the class with the highest attendance on a half termly basis
- 100% certificates are awarded at the end of every term to those pupils who have achieved 100% attendance that term
- Improved whole school attendance is celebrated on the school website
- The importance of good attendance will be regularly emphasised to parents in newsletters, assemblies and meetings
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Head Teacher. 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 to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Reports are looked at by Head Teacher and school office on a half termly basis and a “watch list” kept up to date of children with a history of poor attendance
- Head Teacher speaks to the Attendance Improvement Officer to ensure best practice
- 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 Deputy Head Teacher, who will contact the parents or guardian.

Register Attendance Codes

- Teachers should mark the register to show if the child is present, (/,\) or absent (N)
- Where the reason is known the appropriate code can be inserted by the admin staff
- Where the reason is now known, the absence will be investigated and the code inserted by the admin staff
- No absence (N) cannot be left open without explanation

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	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	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
-		No mark recorded
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances