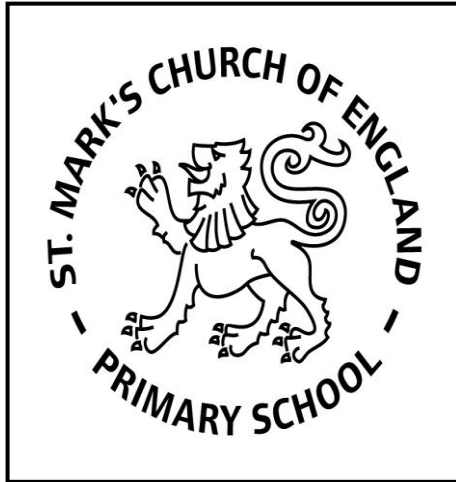


# Attendance & Punctuality



**“Every Child,  
Every Chance,  
Every Day”**



**Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day**

## **St Marks CE Primary School**

### **Policy for Attendance and Punctuality**

#### **Attendance and Punctuality matters.**

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a school, we encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

#### **Expectations and responsibilities**

##### **It is the responsibility of parents and carers to:**

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they inform the school **daily** of absence or, if known in advance, the dates when their child will be unable to attend school.
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Not take any holidays during term time

##### **It is the expectations of pupils to:**

- Attend school every day and be appropriately prepared for the day
- Attend school punctually
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance (according to their age and abilities).

##### **It is the responsibility of the school to:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere and safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality and to monitor and analyse the individual child's attendance and punctuality. These records include reasons for absence when provided by a parent or carer.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence. Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents.
- Send parents letters when their child's attendance or punctuality remains a concern and invite them to school meetings.



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- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition in assemblies organised by the School Home Support Practitioner (SHSP).
- Regularly inform parents of the link between attendance and attainment.
- To inform the Local Authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained absences.

### It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- Request from the senior leadership team termly reports on attendance and punctuality.
- Support the executive head and school staff in applying this policy.
- Consider further areas for development in this area.

#### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

If a teacher or other member of staff suspects that a student has been removed from, or prevented from, attending education as a result of FGM or in order to undergo FGM, a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care and the police.

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/f/fgm%20guidance.pdf>

## Authorising Absences

The school will keep a record of authorised and unauthorised absences for each pupil. There are limited reasons for authorised absences which are detailed below. While an explanation for absence may be offered by a parent or carer, it is the responsibility of the school to authorise an absence. Although parents may offer a reason, only the head teacher can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested by the school.

In authorising an absence the decision of the head teacher is final.

<b>Authorised absences:</b>	<b>Unauthorised absences:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• genuine illness of the pupil</li><li>• hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil</li><li>• major religious observances</li><li>• visits to prospective new schools</li><li>• external exams or educational assessments.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park</li><li>• a birthday treat;</li><li>• looking after other children / other family member;</li><li>• appointments for other family members.</li></ul>

The school has an attendance display near to the school office which shows which class has the highest levels of attendance and punctuality during the previous week. Good attendance and punctuality will be celebrated using whole school strategies such as congratulating and rewarding classes with the best weekly attendance, awarding individual certificates, and giving medals to pupils with 100% attendance at the end of each school term.



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## Persistent Absences

Children whose absence is 90% or below will be classed as having a persistence absence. They will be regularly monitored and checked by the school. Parents will be invited to formal school meetings regarding any persistent absenteeism. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the school may result in further actions, for example the Access and Engagement Service can issue parents with a penalty notice (see below) and families can be referred to Family First.

## Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Being late to school has a disruptive effect on the class which effects all the children's learning time. It is also disrespectful to the teacher to arrive late. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 9am and pupils who arrive after 9.05am will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.10am and after this lateness can be recorded as an unauthorised absence which is a 'U' mark in the register.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.30pm.
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be monitored by the SHSP. If a child is regularly late their parents will receive a letter reminding them of the importance of punctuality. If a child is marked as unauthorised absence due to lateness 12 or more times in a rolling 6 week period the parents may receive a fixed penalty notice (see below).
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

## Reporting to parents

The following classifications are used in your child's end of year school reports:

<b>Attendance</b>	98%-100%	Excellent
	96%-97.9%	Good
	95.9% -90%	Needs improving
	Below 90%	Persistent absentee

<b>Punctuality</b>	0-3 late marks in a year	Excellent
	4-9 late marks in a year	Needs improving
	10 or more late marks in a year	Persistently late, urgent improvement needed

## Exceptional Leave of Absence

*Parents are asked to note that amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, and came into force on 1 September 2013.*

*Amendments to the 2006 regulations **remove** references to **family holiday** and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional***



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**circumstances.** Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

In the light of the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** the executive head will only authorise leave in term time in **exceptional circumstances**.

Typically, exceptional circumstances would be:

Authorised exceptional circumstance	Number of days
Family funeral in UK of a direct relation (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle)	1 day or 2 days if travelling a substantial distance
Family funeral in Europe (non UK) of a direct relation (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle)	2-3 school days
Family funeral in remainder of world (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle).	up to 5 days
Genuine, recognised emergencies which prevent travel. E.g. <i>volcanic ash cloud or natural disaster while on holiday</i>	Up to 5 days or longer if deemed necessary by national and international organisations.

The governors have noted that the following circumstances are not exceptional and, under the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013* **cannot** be authorised

Examples of <b>non-exceptional</b> circumstances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family weddings, baptisms, or similar celebrations.</li> <li>Cultural celebrations such as national days</li> <li>Visits to the theatre and drama productions</li> <li>Accompanying relations to the airport following a visit</li> </ul>

- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances as detailed above, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the head on behalf of the school governors, at the earliest opportunity.
- During Key Stage assessments for Year 6 the head reserves the right to limit the number of days absence so the child can complete their assessments within the permitted timeframe for a time-table variation.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

## Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued via the Access and Engagement service in the Local Authority for unauthorised leave from school or when a parent fails to ensure regular school attendance/punctuality. Failure to pay a penalty notice within the timeframes may lead to prosecution by the Local Authority.

## The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007



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Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments are described below.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

### Pupils Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time. Medical appointments should be accompanied by the relevant appointment card.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

### Children Missing in Education

All children between the ages of 5 and 16 years old must be in full-time education. A child is considered missing from education if they are not on a school roll or if they are not being home-schooled. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. St Mark's school will work alongside relevant authorities in making reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of any pupil reported as missing in line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004.

#### Attendance and safeguarding.

As stated above, St Mark's school closely monitors unauthorised absence, closely monitoring children who are absent from school on repeated occasions. The school will follow up any concerning absences, investigate and address the reasons and use every effort to improve attendance. School staff will continuously assess unexplained absence and act accordingly, reporting concerns immediately to the school's safeguarding team. Staff can initiate home visits in order to make contact with a family, check with relatives, neighbours, and landlords, including private or social housing providers to establish whereabouts. An accurate record of all these enquiries and interventions will be kept on the school's safeguarding system known as CPOMS.



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When the whereabouts of a pupil is not known or disputed by the school, the school will notify the Local Authority of any pupil who has been absent for 10 consecutive days following a period of authorised or unauthorised absence using the 'Missing Pupil Alert'. **However if there are reasons to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care (and/or the police if deemed necessary).**

Due to repeat non-attendance being a safeguarding concern, the school safeguarding team will be aware of pupils who are of high risk and vulnerable to sudden and unexplained absence (also considering parents with health conditions, parents with mental health issues and parents with learning difficulties etc) therefore the school's admission form will also ask for information from parents regarding their own medical history to try to establish if children are exposed to greater risk if a parent becomes suddenly unwell.

## School Home Support Practitioner

The School Home Support Practitioner, Ayesha Taylor, is the attendance lead at St Mark's school. She will oversee punctuality and attendance related issues and will ensure that the Attendance and Punctuality Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. Parents are able to make appointments to see Ayesha Taylor to discuss any concerns.

Reviewed and ratified by Governing body	Summer Term 2018		
Next Revision (Please highlight as appropriate)	<b>Annual</b>	Biennial	Tri-annual
To be reviewed	Summer Term 2019		