



**St Margaret's CE VA  
Primary School**

# **ATTENDANCE POLICY - Pupils**

**Adopted by Governing Body**

**July 2016**

**Date of Review**

**July 2018**

## **Aims**

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

## **Being at school**

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 will 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**

**We expect that all pupils will:**

- attend school every day – a child must attend school for 95% of sessions
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

**We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- 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 contact the school **daily** of absence by 9.30 am or if known in advance, whenever their child is 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.

**The school will:**

- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence by 9.30 am.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school 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.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of their child.
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.

- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Local education Authority (LEA) after 10 days sickness.
- Will notify EWO after 3 days unexplained absence.

### **Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. The school site is open for all pupils at 8.45 am. The children come into school at 8.55 am.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place between 9.00 am and 9.10 am after which it will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Arrival after 9.10 am is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00 pm.
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by the Headteacher and may be referred to Education Welfare.
- Pupil's attendance is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

### **Pupil Leaving During the School Day**

During school hours the school staffs 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 notify the office the reason for any planned absence and expected time of return if applicable.
- 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.

### **Leave of Absence**

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- in **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of 10 days of leave providing your child has had a good (98% or higher) attendance recorded over the previous three terms.
- Families who are serving members of the armed forces can apply for leave of absence if the parent is returning after 12 weeks service.
- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the

Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance

- Any other leave of absence in term time must be requested on an application form from the school office and submitted 4 weeks prior to the requested date.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified.

### **Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notices can be issued by the Local Authority for unauthorised leave if a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance. Appendix 1 gives details.

### **Penalty Notices for Holidays**

In line with the amendments made to The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher can issue a Warning Penalty Notice to parents when pupils are taken out of school for 10 sessions for holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation, and when a level of attendance will fall to 95% or less due to this.
- If further unauthorised leave of absence for more than 10 sessions a Penalty Notice will be considered
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- Penalty notices are issued to **each** parent, for each child.

### **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

St Margaret's CE VA Primary School has regular attendance meetings with the AO.

Education Welfare may issue a Penalty Notice to parent / carers who are failing to secure their Child's regular school attendance or are persistently late and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance or lateness proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

### **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform St Margaret's CE VA Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Education Welfare.

## Appendix One

### **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

#### **Term-time holiday**

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** currently allow Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a **family holiday** during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

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

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

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

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.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, 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.