



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

St. Matthew's Church of England Primary School's mission statement

We aim to provide a positive learning experience in a safe and respectful environment. We strive to teach an inspiring and inclusive curriculum that promotes a love of learning. As a Christian school, we endeavour to develop the spiritual and moral values of all members of the St. Matthew's family, and a meaningful, loving relationship with God. We want our children to be cheerful and independent individuals who reach their potential and are proud of their achievements. We hope to develop confident, caring citizens who are well prepared to enjoy happy and rewarding lives.

Our motto: Live, Love, Learn

Policy Adopted	
Date	By Whom
18.11.2020	Achievement Committee
Date for next review: Nov 2021	
Signed by Chair of Governors	
Date of Signature	

At St. Matthew's Church of England Primary school we seek to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education, which maximises opportunities for each to realise their true potential. We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment in which each member of school community feels wanted and secure. All staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

We have established a system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives, we aim to establish and maintain an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information advice and support.

In line with Government legislation, extended leave is only permitted in exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the Pupil Leave of Absence Policy for more information.

Aims

1. To maintain a high overall percentage attendance of pupils at school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school, including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To develop a positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To continue to reward and celebrate good attendance.
8. To promote effective partnerships with the LA's Inclusion Team.

Procedures for ensuring good attendance

1. Registers are completed and returned to the office by 9.05am and 1.15pm.
2. Parents should explain all absences on the first day of absence, whether by phone call/message or letter. A messaging indicating 'not well' will not be accepted. The School Wellbeing Mentor will make contact with parents to ascertain the reason for absence.
3. Absences can be either authorised or unauthorised. It is the Headteacher's discretion whether any absences are authorised or unauthorised.
4. If a class teacher is uncertain about the nature of a child's absence, they should discuss the absence with the School Wellbeing Mentor. This will then be followed up by a phone call or a home visit.
5. Attendance of all pupils is monitored by the School Wellbeing Mentor and Headteacher on a weekly basis. Any pupils causing concern are discussed and any actions are implemented.
6. Any pupils whose attendance falls below 96% will be discussed at the monthly meeting with the LA's Inclusion Officer. Further actions are discussed and implemented. If absence persists, and the child's attendance falls below 85%, the Inclusion Officer will make contact with parents.

Monitoring Attendance

Daily

- The School Wellbeing Mentor will check registers and telephone any family that has not informed school of their child's absence.
- The School Wellbeing Mentor will pursue persistent targeted absentee children and carry out home visits if necessary.

Weekly

- Whole school attendance is monitored every week (Thursdays) by the School Wellbeing Mentor and Headteacher and any areas for immediate action are discussed.
- Any pupils whose attendance falls below 95% will be discussed at the monthly meeting with Inclusion Officer. Actions are discussed and implemented. If absence falls below 90% and a child accrues eight unauthorised absences, the LA's Inclusion Officer will make contact with parents.
- If absence continuously persists, a formal meeting is held with parents, School Wellbeing Mentor and Headteacher. The child may be put on an Action Plan and regular monitoring meetings will take place to ensure improved attendance.

Individual attendance will be monitored weekly for:

- Improvement in attendance
- Patterns of non-attendance
- Number of absences record

Medical Appointments

Any hospital/dental appointments **MUST**, where possible, be arranged outside school hours. A routine check-up appointment will not be acceptable during school time. Where children need to attend such urgent appointments during the school day it is important that parents must inform the school office in advance for approval from the Headteacher.

Improving and Maintaining Good Attendance

1. Parents are informed about the importance of good attendance, through regular letters, newsletters, and text messages.
2. Children are made aware of the importance of good attendance through whole school collective worship using attendance awards and from class teachers.
3. Children who achieve an excellent rate of attendance in their class over the full school year will receive a certificate at the end of year prize giving service.
4. Class attendance is shared weekly in the parent newsletter. The classes with the best attendance and punctuality are recognised during the weekly Achievement Assembly.

Improving and Maintaining Punctuality

Parents and carers are informed about the importance of arriving at school on time through:

- The initial meeting for Reception parents
- School prospectus
- Regular reminders in the school newsletters
- Text message/ phone call/letter/meetings in case of repeated lateness
- Meetings with the Headteacher and School Wellbeing Mentor in case of persistent lateness.

As with attendance, punctuality is monitored on a daily basis. We urge parents and carers to co-operate with us and ensure their child arrives at school on time every day. The school has facilities for a breakfast club, which starts at 7.50am at a cost of £1.00 per day. If parents/carers are struggling financially they should speak to the Headteacher.

In case of poor timekeeping these procedures are followed:

- The late arrival will be noted in late book by the office staff and text message sent out to parents informing the parents of their child being late to school.
- Children who arrive late for school will be marked on SIMS as late (L) and their reason, along with the time they arrive.
- Children who arrive more than 30 minutes late for school will be marked on SIMS as unauthorised (U) and their reason, along with the time they arrive.

- In the case of repeated lateness, parents will be contacted by the School Wellbeing Mentor to discuss other options.
- If there is no improvement in punctuality and the child is late again in the half term, parents will be invited to school for a meeting with the School Wellbeing Mentor and Headteacher to discuss actions to improve punctuality.
- Continued issues with punctuality will be referred to the LA's Inclusion Officer from the Inclusion Team. A copy of the attendance report will be issued.

Role of the School Wellbeing Mentor

Whilst we aim to develop a positive response to attendance, we recognise the importance between good attendance and achievement and our responsibility to ensure good attendance at school.

The School Wellbeing Mentor monitors attendance daily in the office. She phones parents where no message or contact has been made with school. If no contact can be made the School Wellbeing Mentor will carry out a home visit to eliminate any potential safeguarding concerns. The Inclusion Officer works with the school on a regular basis to monitor attendance figures.

If a child develops an attendance problem it is the school's responsibility to inform the LA's Inclusion Team as a responsibility to enforce school attendance and has a responsibility to help parents and the LA meet statutory requirements on attendance.

If lateness continues the Headteacher/School Wellbeing Mentor will speak with the parents and child and seek support from Inclusion Officer if necessary.

The Inclusion Officer works in partnership with school through a system of regular monitoring meetings and will become involved in cases of non-attendance where school initiatives have failed to have an impact.

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school

It is important that children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend school due to health needs or illness have the same access to education as other children.

As soon as it is clear that a child will be absent for more than 15 days, this can either be consecutive days or a total of days over a period of time, the local authority must make sure that suitable education is provided. This applies whether or not the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend. It applies to children who are pupils in academies, free schools, special schools and independent schools as well as those in maintained schools.

The Department for Education has published the following statutory guidance for local authorities and schools; outlining their roles to ensure children receive a good education.

- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

Missing Children

If a child fails to attend school and no contact can be made with the family, the School Wellbeing Mentor informs the Education Welfare Officer, completes the necessary CME forms and sends them to the Local Authority.

Responsible person for updating this policy: Headteacher

Review and Monitoring: This policy will be reviewed annually by the Achievement Committee