



Policy on Attendance 2018

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1. Introduction

This policy was designed in line with the LA's Attendance Policy and has been kept under regular review since its inception. It has been used to address four issues:

- reduction of all absence
- reduction of unauthorised absence
- reduction of late arrivals
- reduction of family holidays taken in term time

Pupils receive termly rewards for good attendance and they are presented with certificates and rewards for 100% attendance termly throughout the year.

Ongoing effort and vigilance is required to implement the policy effectively. All pupils causing concern are monitored continuously, by the school and in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kingston Education Welfare Service.

Any child falling below 90% attendance is highlighted as a concern and parents are invited into school to meet with the headteacher and/or Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss absences. A school attendance contract may be drawn up between school, parent and Education Welfare Officer. Pupils falling below 90% attendance are seen as Persistent Absentees and the Education Welfare Service may take further action through court proceedings in these cases.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. We will ensure, where possible that we have more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This will give the school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Our attendance policy is reviewed regularly by the Governing Board. The school operates in accordance with statutory guidance 'Children Missing Education' (DfE 2016) [Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance](#)

2. Aims

- to promote good learning and enable all pupils to achieve their potential
- to develop a shared concern and responsibility for regular and punctual attendance.
- to clarify the different responsibilities within the school community
- to set out procedures which are clear, staged and responsive to individual circumstances
- to promote continued co-operation with the Education Welfare Service
- to identify targets for improvement



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3. Shared responsibility

Teaching is carefully planned so each lesson builds on earlier learning; missing lessons greatly affects a child's progress. Learning begins as soon as children are in the classroom and arriving late can be very unsettling for the pupil who is late and for the whole class. If the habit of regular, punctual attendance is established in the Early Years, it is likely to continue. For these reasons, we need to work together to promote good attendance by all children.

4. Particular responsibilities

a) Parents

Under the Education Act 1996: "the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education", usually by regular, punctual attendance at school.

Parents are asked to notify the school by telephone on the first day of absence, and to confirm the reason for the absence in writing. If a child is absent for more than 3 days, medical evidence is required on the child's return to school.

If the child is already a persistent absentee (ie. their attendance is less than 90%) then medical evidence will be requested and expected for any absence from school.

Requests for holidays during term time must be made to the Headteacher in writing outlining the reasons why the request is being made. Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional family circumstances surrounding the request.

b) Class teachers

Class teachers are required to mark the register correctly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session, and submit it electronically to the office. They share responsibility with the office staff for recording the authorisation of absence. As part of their pastoral responsibility for the class, it is good practice for class teachers to enquire about the whereabouts and well-being of absent children.

c) Administrative staff

The administrative staff are responsible for making enquiries about absence, and authorising it. Office staff check registers every morning and afternoon to ensure that notified absences have been recorded using the appropriate symbols, they file the letters received. They receive and record telephone explanations, recording them the same way. Where no explanation has been received, they make enquiries on the same day by telephoning the parent. Information from the registers is recorded electronically on the school's management information system (SIMS) each day.

When children arrive after the register has been returned to the office, the administrative staff record late arrival in the register, also noting date, name, reason and time in a separate book. This record is used to monitor patterns of lateness. Parents are contacted if there is a recurring pattern, and cases of continual lateness are referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Anyone requesting a holiday form will be required to make an appointment with the Headteacher, for consideration according to the criteria established by the Governing Body.



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The office staff are also responsible for totalling absences (authorised and unauthorised), using totals to calculate percentage attendance figures for individual pupils (as required for annual reports to parents), and for the school as a whole (as required for national data collection).

d) The Headteacher

As well as having overall responsibility for the operation of this policy, the headteacher,

- is alerted by the office staff where patterns of absence, non-explanation of absence, lateness, etc, are cause for concern.
- may be involved in subsequent contact with parents, and/or with the Education Welfare Officer.
- considers and signs, on behalf of the Governors, applications for absence during term time.
- is responsible for reporting to the Governors and school community on progress towards improvement targets.

e) Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for adopting the Attendance Policy and keeping it under review. It has a duty to set and monitor attendance targets in conjunction with the LA and the school staff.

f) The Education Welfare Service

The Service keeps in contact with the school through our attached Education Welfare Officer. The EWO visits regularly, checks the proper completion of the registers, and discusses with the administrative staff and/or the headteacher issues of concern. The EWO undertakes home visits as required to ensure that parents are fulfilling their statutory obligation. Where necessary, the Service takes action through the courts. A child missing in education is a safeguarding concern and St Mary's Primary School will report any concerns in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

5. Term-time leave

The Governors want parents to understand that term time absences are detrimental to all children's learning, and should be avoided. The form for parents to request such absence is designed to make this clear, and requires the headteacher to consider two factors in deciding whether to authorise the absence:

- the attendance record of the child (expected to be 96% or more) and
- the exceptional family circumstances which have led to the application (further evidence may be required to support this)

N.B. Term time holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances

6. Monitoring and review

The targets in the policy will be monitored on a continuous basis each term by recording the data in the office. Progress will be reported to the Governors and the school community (through the school newsletter, parent mail, website and the School Profile), and policy and procedures kept under review.

Signed Mrs S Hodgson..... Head Teacher

Dated April 2018

Signed Mrs S Vieitez.....Governing Body

Dated April 2018

Date for next review: April 2019