



English Martyrs Catholic Primary School
"where everyone is special"



P1: School Attendance Policy

Mission Statement 2012

With Christ at the heart of our Catholic community,
our mission is to:

- ✘ nurture the potential in each individual,
- ✘ celebrate achievement,
- ✘ and develop an awareness of service
to God and each other

Adopted by the school: July 2014

Review: As needed

Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, 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 also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. Parents whose children are of compulsory school age and registered at school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If they fail to do this they are guilty of an offence and may be given a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Arrival and Registration

- All children should be ready to come into school at 8:55am each day, although children are entitled to be on the school site from 8:45am. Children are to wait on the Key stage 1 playground (the playground with the boat, train etc on it). The register is taken twice a day at 8:55am and again at 1:15pm. A day counts as two sessions. A teacher will be on duty from 8:45am on the playground. Children are not to be on the school site before 8:45 unless accompanied by an adult who is solely responsible for them. Children are not allowed to be on any of the equipment before or after school.
- Morning registration ends at 9:00am. If a child arrives after the registration period, he/she will be marked in as Late. After 9:30am this will become an Unauthorised Absence, unless the school has an acceptable reason for the absence. Parents must complete the late book and give an explanation for the lateness. The afternoon register is taken at 1:15pm.
- It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

Illness and Medical Appointments

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, if appropriate for the duration of the absence.
- A child whose attendance is raising a concern will be asked to have written documentation from the GP or hospital informing the school of the medical concerns. Parents will also be referred to the school nurse if additional help and support is needed for either the school or parents.

Definitions

Authorised absence

An authorised absence is when a child has been away from school with a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. This absence must be approved by the Head to be authorised. Eg If a child is unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence, this absence would be classed as authorised. 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 to Alton Towers during school time, this would not be authorised. Just because a parent has informed the school of the absence does not make it authorised.

Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is when an absence is away from school without the permission of the Head. Under the new regulations which were introduced in September 2013 any absence from school can only be authorised if it '**Exceptional Circumstances**'. It is the sole responsibility of the Head to judge whether an absence is 'Exceptional' or not.

All absences require a given form to be completed. It is returned to parents with an indication whether it is authorised or unauthorised.

If a child is absent

- When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.
- The school offices will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian if no message has been given regarding the reason for the absence.
- If the office is aware of the reason or the absence they will endeavour to put a note in the school register to inform the teacher.
- It is the duty of parents to email or telephone the school by 10:00am on the morning of the absence to inform the school that their child is absent. They must also state a reason for the absence.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Section 2(a) "leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application has been made in advance to the proprietor (headteacher) by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides; and the proprietor (headteacher) considers the leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

PLEASE NOTE: LEAVE FOR HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME WILL NOT BE GRANTED AS THESE ARE NOT CLASSED AS EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Exceptional Circumstances

There may be an occasion that constitutes **exceptional circumstances**; an application can be made to the headteacher for its consideration. Each application is judged on a case to case basis. If a parent still takes the child out of school it will remain unauthorised and a penalty notice may be given.

Repeated unauthorised absence

- Unauthorised absences remain on the child's record and will be reported to the Warwickshire, Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement unit (ACE).
- Attendance and punctuality are monitored by the ACE and the school. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents and guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.
- The ACE may also visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- The Local Authority has the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Monitoring and Reviewing

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance.
- 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 the school's 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.
- The school office will be responsible for monitoring attendance on a day to day basis. If they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day, they will contact the headteacher immediately. If there is a longer-term absence or a general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this again will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

TEMPLATE LETTERS FOR PARENTS TO REQUEST ABSENCE ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE SCHOOL OFFICE AND CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE SCHOOL WEBSITE.