

**It is your parental responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day.** The purpose of this strategy is to set out how we will support your child's attendance.

Attendance at school matters. At St Matthew's CE Primary School we believe that good attendance is secured by developing a partnership between families, schools and our partner agencies involved in the social and emotional development of children.

**Your child's potential and life prospects are significantly enhanced when he/she has high attendance.** Thank you to all parents who have supported your child's attendance over the past twelve months. This has led to an **overall increase in attendance** at St Matthew's CE School, **impacting positively on your child's physical, social and emotional development.**

There remain, however, too many children with persistent absence. **Low attendance places your child at a significant disadvantage in terms meeting their academic potential.** Furthermore, children with low attendance often **lose confidence, find it more difficult to maintain friendship circles and their overall enjoyment of school falls.**

The Governing Body of the school fully adopt the change in regulations relating to school absence Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.** The amendments make clear that **headteachers may no longer grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** These are set out in the Regulations.

The aim of our attendance strategy is to:

- **Increase the school's overall attendance.** Our target is to develop an expectation of regular school attendance. In other words, that each child attends every single day.
- **Promote an understanding of the need for good school attendance** across the whole school community.
- **Reduce the number of children with persistent absence** through clarity of expectation, effective support and adherence to policy. We will continue to offer support to vulnerable families to help promote better attendance for all children.
- **Promote effective inter agency work.** This includes the use of the Participation Team to develop action plans. This would include the use of a Penalty Notice (HPN).

### Action Plan to meet desired outcomes:

<p><b>Personal Development: Behaviour and Attitudes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve baseline attendance and create a culture of awareness and importance for all stakeholders</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each school day impacts on a child’s progress, attainment and social development. It is therefore very important that we challenge and support parents to ensure that every child attends school every day.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Desired Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase overall attendance in line with national expectations</li> <li>To reduce persistent absenteeism</li> <li>To improve punctuality</li> <li>All stakeholders will understand: that regular attendance (100%) is our standard expectation; that attendance thresholds and intervention strategies will be implemented at every level of attendance.</li> </ul>			
Actions to be taken	Success Criteria: What will change?	Timescale and Personnel Involved	Evaluation and Monitoring Strategies Required
<p><b>Improve the attendance of persistent absentees (those with attendance less than 90%)</b></p>	<p>Children whose attendance falls below 90% will demonstrate a clear improvement in attendance and punctuality, and will therefore make better educational progress.</p>	<p>Headteacher Attendance officer Participation Officer Class Teacher External partner agencies (where appropriate)</p>	<p>All attendance is monitored and children with less than 90% attendance are quickly identified. Letters are sent home regularly and school staff communicate with families to ensure that parents understand the expectations around attendance and the impact of non-attendance on children’s progress and development. Those with low attendance will be required to provide medical evidence for any absence from school. If none is provided, the absence will be unauthorised. External partner agencies such as Stronger Families, the School Nursing Team and Young Carers will be contacted to ensure that families are well-supported. Children who are persistently absent will be given additional support in school, such as learning mentor support and close monitoring from the Safeguarding Team.</p>

			Where the above strategies do not sufficiently improve pupils' attendance, the participation officer will be contacted and the attendance policy will be followed, including panelling parents and issuing fines. Redevelop the role of the school family support worker to support families in improving their attendance.
<b>Reduce the frequency of term time holidays</b>	Term time holidays will not be taken except in exceptional circumstances	Headteacher Attendance officer Participation Officer	<p>Any requests for term time holidays will not be approved except in exceptional circumstances where evidence can be provided. What constitutes an 'exceptional absence' is made clear in the attendance policy.</p> <p>The headteacher will meet personally with any families making requests for term time holidays to impress upon families the importance of school attendance and the consequences of unauthorised term time holidays.</p> <p>Any families who choose to take unauthorised term time holidays will be referred to the participation team for fines.</p> <p>Where families apply for leave due to emergency circumstances, e.g. a family member being unwell overseas, this will be considered in the same manner as applications for term time holidays, and will only be authorised if evidence is provided.</p> <p>The position of the school with regard to term time holidays will be publicised amongst parents to deter parents from making such requests.</p>
<b>Promote awareness and understanding positive attendance in the community</b>	All parents and families will understand the importance of school attendance and the impact of non-attendance on	Headteacher Attendance officer Participation Officer Class Teacher	School newsletters, the school Facebook page and the school website as well as Parent Mail reminders will be used to raise awareness of the importance of school attendance on a regular basis.

	<p>their child's wellbeing and future life prospects. Attendance will continue to improve. Requests for term time holidays will be rare, and only granted in exceptional circumstances. The number of children persistently absent will decrease.</p>	<p>External partner agencies (where appropriate)</p>	<p>Positive feedback on attendance will be shared publicly and on an individual basis to encourage high school attendance. Home visits and support with school drop off and pick-ups will support families with challenging circumstances maintain high school attendance. Positive reinforcement through non uniform days will promote attendance amongst children.</p>
<b>Improve punctuality</b>	<p>Punctuality will improve and children will make better educational progress as a result.</p>	<p>Headteacher Attendance officer Participation Officer Class Teacher External partner agencies (where appropriate)</p>	<p>School newsletters, the school Facebook page and the school website as well as Parent Mail reminders will be used to raise awareness of the importance of school attendance and punctuality on a regular basis. Positive feedback on attendance and punctuality will be shared publicly and on an individual basis to encourage high school attendance.</p>

### Appendix 1: Attendance strategy outlining thresholds, communicated termly to all parents

Band	Attendance	Number of days	Commentary
1	95% - 100%	Equivalent of up to 9 days/less than 2 weeks absence	<b>This level of attendance will ensure that your child has the greatest opportunity to fulfil their potential. Thank you</b> for supporting your child's attendance at this level.

2	90% - 94%	Equivalent of up to 19 days/nearly 4 weeks absence over the year	<p>Over the course of a full academic year, <b>this level of attendance will begin to impact negatively on your child's progress and attainment.</b> We will monitor your child's attendance regularly to ensure it improves. <b>Support is available on an optional basis</b> though non-engagement may result in a Penalty Notice being issued where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overt truancy (including pupils found during truancy sweeps).</li> <li>• Inappropriate parentally – condoned absence.</li> <li>• Holidays in term time without prior school permission from the headteacher.</li> <li>• Failure to return to school on the agreed date (may also result in your child losing their school place).</li> <li>• Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).</li> <li>• All pupils who are excluded for between one and five days (fixed term or permanent) are required not to be in a public place, during school hours, without justification. This includes being accompanied by their parents.</li> </ul>
3	85% - 89%	Equivalent of up to 29 days/nearly 6 weeks absence over the year	<p>Over a full academic year, <b>this is a high level of absence and your child's progress and attainment and potential is being held back.</b></p> <p>If our attendance team is not satisfied that absence is unavoidable, then <b>we expect you to engage with us</b> (and the Participation Officer, if appropriate) <b>at attendance panel meetings</b> to improve your child's attendance. If attendance does not improve, <b>the Local Authority may choose to issue a Penalty Notice.</b></p>
4	Less than 85%	More than 29 days/nearly 6 weeks absence over the year	<p><b>If attendance falls below 85% over a full academic year, this will seriously impact and inhibit your child's progress, attainment and confidence.</b> If our attendance team is not satisfied that absence is avoidable, non-engagement with the Participation Officer will result in the issue of an Education Penalty Notice.</p>