



St Matthew's CE Primary School Attendance Policy

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Approval

Signed by Chair of Directors	
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This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or best practice (where appropriate).

To enable continuous improvement, all readers are encouraged to notify the author of errors, omissions and any other form of feedback.

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1 Scope

As part of Frays Academy Trust we aim to create a caring, secure and stimulating environment in which all children are enabled to develop intellectually, spiritually, socially, morally, mentally and physically to gain an understanding of the diverse cultural society in which they live.

Pupils need to attend this school regularly and punctually if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Our policy applies to all children registered at Frays schools and this policy is made available to all parents/carers via school websites.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, our schools work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are designed to ensure this happens. **We regard 96% attendance as the expected level.** Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Frays schools are successful schools and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

2 Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations regarding school attendance, [including those laid out in the Department for Education's \(DfE's\) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- [Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils](#)
- Promoting good attendance [and the benefits of good attendance](#)
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

3 Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data to ensure the highest levels of analysis is being provided in order to ensure organisational focus on attendance, including individual cohorts who need it most.
- Holding the CEO and Headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy and ensuring statutory duties are fulfilled.

4.2 The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB will monitor attendance figures for the whole school and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs. The Link Governors for Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and Disability will give specific focus to children facing barriers to attendance as part of their regular governor visits.

4.3 Headteacher (the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance)

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and promoting improving attendance across the school
- Implementation of this policy in the school
- Overseeing the development and monitoring of the school Attendance Strategy, setting out the school's overall approach, including specific actions to be taken by staff
- Through Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings, enabling the school to fulfil statutory duties and take ownership of the school Attendance Strategy
- Regularly monitoring school-level absence data to identify patterns and trends to understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on. This will include regular reporting to School Improvement meetings and the Local Governing Body
- Ensuring accurate completion of admissions and attendance registers to ensure statutory obligations are met
- Having robust daily processes in place to follow up absence, such as a first day call, in line with any relevant local authority procedures
- Overseeing the building of close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Overseeing the creation of intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Overseeing the delivery of targeted intervention and support to pupils and families in partnership with the local authority or other agencies as appropriate
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising others to be able to do so in line with any relevant local authority procedures
- Overseeing staff working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Overseeing communication with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Overseeing the school's communication strategy for communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels, including visual reminders around schools for all parents to see.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
- The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Ensure Attendance Officers in schools are able to access local training and/or forums to improve attendance
- Making sure schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

4.4 The School Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher (or member of staff authorised by the Headteacher) when to consider issuing fixed-penalty notices

The Attendance Officer can be contacted via email at stmatthews@fraysacademytrust.org or by telephone at 01895442724.

4.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office on the same day.

4.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Officer where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

4.7 Parents and carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts made with the school and/or local authority if applicable
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school, for example the class teacher

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time.

5 Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:45am and ends at 3:15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30 and will be kept open until 1:00.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via email at stmatthews@fraysacademytrust.org or by telephone at 01895442724.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This should be requested in writing, with evidence attached, either in person at the school office or via email at stmatthews@fraysacademytrust.org.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If your child has a persistent late record we will meet with you, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time.

When a child is not collected after school we will attempt to contact parents and other emergency contacts. Parents are requested to ensure that children are collected punctually as the office closes at 3:30pm. Parents can make use of after school clubs where necessary which must be booked in advance.

Ongoing punctuality issues will be addressed by the attendance officer, and then by the Headteacher where no improvement is seen. Where families require support, the inclusion team will meet with them to conduct an early help assessment.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will carry out a home visit.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the participation team, police or Hillingdon Children's Services.
- We may also carry out ad-hoc 'safe and well' home visits for the purpose of promoting attendance and ensuring pupil safety. At Frays we regard regular attendance as very important to assist in your child's progress, therefore visits at your home could be necessary to provide relevant support and/or advice.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

We will talk to you about your child's attendance during parent consultation meetings.

6 Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings
- Exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are defined as rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

The school will consider each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence. A leave of absence request form is available as an Appendix to this policy or from the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority

- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

6.2 Sanctions

The school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

6.2.1 Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

6.2.2 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7 Strategies for promoting attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling. Regular absence will seriously affect a child's learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring child's regular attendance at school is the parent's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

7.1 Promoting attendance

To help everyone focus on promoting regular attendance we will:

- Set out our approach in our Attendance Strategy
- Report to parents/carers on how a child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our regular newsletters;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events;
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

At St Matthew's CE Primary School our approach to improving and rewarding good attendance is through fostering positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents/carers; promoting clear lines of communication between school and home; adopting a positive and supportive approach to attendance; fostering a love of learning; giving children the skills so that they are ready to learn; and rewarding high school attendance. We will also engage with the Local Authority to uphold the government attendance guidelines.

7.2 Supporting attendance

Broadly speaking, the role of our staff is to ensure that the school is a calm, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn, which is the foundation of securing good attendance. We will achieve this by promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing through a whole-school approach to pupil mental health, and by developing trusted relationships with parents/carers and families that involves them in the conversation about the school's ethos.

Where pupils are at risk of poor attendance, we will work with each pupil and their parents/carers to understand and address the reasons for absence. We will remove barriers in-school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an Early Help referral or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues. If the issue persists, we will take an active part in multi-agency efforts with the local authority and other partners/professionals.

Where there are multiple agencies involved in supporting a pupil, the school may call a Team around the Child (TAC) or Team around the Family (TAF) meeting to formalise arrangements for working together to provide suitable support. We will also ensure that all professionals that are involved with the child and/or family are invited. This will also include the Virtual School Headteacher where necessary.

7.3 Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school, including pupil absence due to complex barriers to attendance

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those facing complex barriers to attendance, receive the support they need to access education. Our approach is structured, compassionate and focuses on close collaboration with families, personalised interventions and removing barriers to attendance. Building strong, trusting relationships with families is central to our approach. We will engage in regular communication with parents/carers to discuss attendance concerns and collaboratively develop solutions.

In-school barriers, such as anxiety, bullying, friendship issues or unmet educational needs, will be addressed as part of a tailored action plan. The school will ensure that any underlying issues within the school environment that affect attendance are resolved.

We recognise that certain pupils may face other, additional barriers to regular attendance, including challenges related to mental health, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or long-term illness. To ensure that all pupils receive the support they need to thrive academically and emotionally, we commit to the following:

- i. Individualised Support Plans:** For pupils with significant barriers to attendance, a personalised support plan will be developed in collaboration with the pupil, parents/carers, and relevant professionals (e.g., SENCO, pastoral staff, and external agencies). These plans will outline tailored strategies to manage attendance and address underlying issues.
- ii. Flexible Learning Arrangements:** The school may adjust the curriculum, lessons, support and resources or timetable to better meet the pupil's needs. In exceptional circumstances, where other strategies have been exhausted and it is in the child's best interest, the school will explore flexible learning options. This may include adaptations to timetables, a temporarily reduced timetable, or alternative provision. This ensures that pupils who are unable to attend regularly due to health concerns or SEND still have the opportunity to engage with the curriculum.
- iii. Access to Pastoral and Mental Health Support:** Pupils experiencing mental health challenges will be referred to external mental health professionals, or other relevant support networks. This could include regular meetings with a trusted adult or mentor to address emotional well-being, build confidence and support emotional regulation will be implemented. Regular check-ins will be arranged to monitor their well-being and adjust attendance plans as necessary.
- iv. Early Identification and Intervention:** The school will prioritise early identification of attendance issues related to complex needs. Staff are trained to recognise signs of mental health struggles, SEND challenges, or emerging health conditions. In such cases, the school will work closely with parents in ensuring that outside agency advice is sought to ensure needs are assessed and identified quickly. Any Interventions or recommendations will be implemented promptly, with the aim of preventing prolonged absences and ensuring appropriate support.

- v. **Collaboration with Healthcare, the Local Authority and External Agencies:** For pupils with long-term illnesses or significant health needs, the school will work closely with healthcare professionals and external agencies to understand the impact of the condition on attendance and learning. A coordinated approach will ensure that necessary adjustments are made to support the pupil's health and education.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Where a pupil has a social worker, the school is will keep them informed and involved in the process.

- vi. **Regular Reviews and Adjustments:** Attendance support plans will be regularly reviewed, with parents and carers, to reflect the changing needs of the pupil. Reasonable adjustments will be made as necessary to ensure that the support provided remains effective in helping the pupil maintain engagement with school life.

7.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

For pupils returning after an extended period of absence, a reintegration plan will be created. This plan may include phased returns, additional emotional and academic support, and close monitoring to ensure a smooth transition back to school life. Parents and carers will be involved in the process from the outset, with regular communication to ensure they are fully informed and can contribute meaningfully to decisions regarding their child's education and well-being.

8 Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality data) systematically and regularly analyse it. The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement. Data will be shared with the Local Governing Body and the Board of Directors.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

The CEO will monitor attendance on a termly basis through School Improvement meetings held with each Headteacher. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for attendance will be set at the beginning of

each academic year and monitored termly through the School Improvement meetings. Progress against the KPIs will be reported to and monitored by Local Governing Bodies and by the Board of Directors.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

Frays schools will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the local governing body and school leaders (including Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the Trust, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

9 Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection
- Behaviour
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Appendix A – Application for Exceptional Leave of Absence

The Department for Education has advised schools to only authorise leave of absence in ‘exceptional’ circumstances, hence St Matthew’s CE Primary School will not approve any absence in term time, except in such circumstances. The Headteacher will determine whether the reason given for requesting leave of absence is exceptional or not. Please also note that there is no automatic right to take holidays in term time nor will your child/children’s current overall attendance affect the Headteacher’s decision.

Please complete the section below and return to school **at least 4 weeks** before the requested absence. We will endeavour to respond to your request within 10 school days. If your request for leave of absence is approved your child will be expected to collect and complete all missed work. Please note that taking your child away during the school term is detrimental to their educational progress.

If leave of absence is taken without approval, a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Please think carefully before deciding to request exceptional leave.

Address:	
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Leave requested:	From (date):		To (date):	
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Reason for Exceptional Leave request: This must be completed. If the absence is for religious observance, please include the name and contact details of your place of worship.

Name of Parent/Carer:			
Address:			
Signature:		Date:	
Name of Parent/Carer:			
Address:			
Signature:		Date:	

This is an example of the number of lessons your child will miss. Remember these will not be repeated.

- 1 day’s absence = 6 lessons missed
- 3 days absence = 18 lessons missed
- 1 week’s absence = 30 lessons missed
- 2 weeks absence = 60 lessons missed

Exceptional leave absences which have not been agreed by our school will be marked as unauthorised absences. A Penalty Notice or other action may be considered by the school or the local authority.

For School Use:

Any previous Exceptional Leave (any Academic Year)	Yes/No*	No. of days:	
Meeting arranged with parent/carers	Yes/No	Date:	
Request authorised	Yes/No	Date:	