

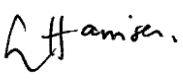
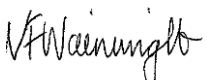




St Mary Magdalene C of E School  
with  
Christ Church C of E Primary School

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy was:	Written in	September 2019	
	Updated due	September 2020	
	Review	Annual	
	Approved by	Dr P Gregory	Mrs J Eastaugh
		<i>Co-Chairs of Governors</i>	
			
		Mrs C Harrison	Mrs V Wainwright
<i>Federation Co-Headteachers</i>			
			

It is the intention of this Federation to offer a high - quality education for each of its pupils. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually and this policy sets out how we, together, will achieve this.

In order for any attendance and punctuality policy to be effective it must be consistently applied throughout the whole school, by its staff, pupils' and parents.

It is the responsibility of all parents/carers to ensure punctual arrival for the start of the school day and collection at the end. We encourage parents to do all they can to ensure that their child attends school promptly and regularly.

### Why regular attendance is so important:

Research has shown that regular attendance and good punctuality are key factors in children achieving their full potential at school. Good habits formed early will benefit a child's education and are a good preparation for life.

Any absence affects the pattern of your child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and achievement. When children miss vital key learning objectives, it can be impossible to catch up, placing them at a disadvantage to their peers.

Pupils attend school for 190 days each year – a total of 38 weeks. If they miss days from school this will affect their attendance rate:

- Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance

### **Every School Day Counts**

Although being absent cannot always be helped as we all do become ill from time to time, please take a look at the table below to show you exactly how much time your child could be missing.

<b>365 Days in a Year</b>	<b>190 School Days in Total</b>	<b>Absence</b>
100% Attendance	190 Days	0
95% Attendance	180 Days	2 Weeks
90% Attendance	171 Days	4 Weeks
85% Attendance	161 Days	6 Weeks
80% Attendance	152 Days	More than half a term
75% Attendance	143 Days	9+ Weeks

**If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week. This clearly has a detrimental impact on a child's education and life chances.**

### Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parent, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will give you details on attendance in our newsletters and website.

**Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal and parental responsibility.** Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence in law and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or Court action/prosecution.

### **Safeguarding**

Effective attendance procedures are integral to ensuring all children are kept safe. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interest of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child.

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

### **The Law Relating to Attendance**

#### **Legislation**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal and parental responsibility. Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence in law and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued (Section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003) or Court action/prosecution (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996)

*Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable: -*

*a. To age, ability and aptitude*

*b. To any special educational needs, they may have either by regular attendance to school or otherwise.*

If you wish to find out more information about the legislation around attendance, please visit:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/564599/school\\_attendance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf)

### **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every-half day absence from school has to be classified by the Campus Leaders or Senior members of the Leadership Team (not by the parents or other staff), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which cannot be made outside of school time or unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

In order to enable the school to authorise an absence due to illness, parents/carers are requested to;

- **Provide medical evidence to the school. This can be in the form of GP/Hospital/Medical/Dental Appointment letters/cards, copies of prescriptions/antibiotics issued (providing the child's name is indicated there on).**

In order to enable the school to authorise an absence due to an emergency or unavoidable cause, parents/carers are requested to;

- **Speak to the Office staff, advise them of the issue and request the absence be authorised by the Campus Leader or the Senior Leadership Team.**
- **Write to the school and request the absence be authorised.**

*If the absence is not related to illness we have a Leave of Absence Form which we ask parent/ carers to complete. (The form is attached to this policy and also available at the school office.)*

Absence will only be authorised for educational or medical reasons. Our Campus Leaders or the Senior Leadership Team will authorise absences in accordance with their professional judgement and the requirements of the law.

There may also be occasions when the Federation permits one day's authorised absence for a day of religious observation and parents must complete a Leave of Absence Form.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "authorised leave of absence" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the use of sanctions and/or referring to the Local Authority for legal intervention.

**Unauthorised absences are:**

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Parents/carers not communicating the reason for absence to the school
- Absences which have never been properly explained or evidenced
- Parents not providing medical evidence to the school to support the absence as being due to ill health
- Children who arrive at school after the Registration period has ended
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips, holidays or overseas trips in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. Across our Federation we have dedicated Home School Link Workers who are there to help you as a family in these matters.

**Absence in Term Time:**

Holidays or overseas trip absences in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking students away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday/overseas trip in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. Because of the damage to your child's learning caused by this, **we do not authorise any holidays/overseas trips in term time unless travel is necessary for very exceptional circumstances.** There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday/overseas trip.

**Persistent Absenteeism (PA):**

A child becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling from the beginning of the school year **for whatever reason** (this includes authorised and unauthorised absences). This measure is set by the Government. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards it, is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

Projected PA children are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance system. All our PA children and their parents are subject to an Intervention Plan. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Attendance Advisory Officer and some cases may lead to a referral to the Attendance Advisory Service of the Local Authority, whereby legal action could be initiated.

**If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence, advising of the reason and likely length of absence, either by telephoning the school office. (A phone call will be made to parents each time the child has been marked with an unauthorised absence code and no reason has been given for the absence).
- Contact the school on the subsequent days of absence as necessary.
- Provide evidence where possible, supporting the reason for absence.

**What we will do if Attendance is a Concern:**

- Letters will be sent to parents to alert them to the concerns school has about their child’s attendance and/or punctuality.
- Invite you into the school to discuss the situation with either the Home School Link Worker/ Welfare Officer or Attendance Lead or Officer.
- Undertake interventions and offer support where possible/appropriate, through school resources and/or outside agencies.
- Use Royal Borough of Greenwich’s Guidance to Improve Attendance.
- Undertake Home visits, as necessary.
- Hold Pre-referral meetings to address irregular school attendance, in the presence of the Officer from the Attendance Advisory Service of the Local Authority.
- Undertake a referral to the Attendance Advisory Service if your child’s **unauthorised** absence reaches 10% or more.

**The Attendance Advisory Officer:**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the school staff in resolving any problems related to attendance together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved this way, and unauthorised absences continue, the school may refer to the Attendance Advisory Service. The Attendance Advisory Officer will try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve your child’s attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Attendance Advisory Service can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Parents may wish to contact the Attendance Advisory Service themselves to ask seek advice or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 020 8921 8510.

**Lateness:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and is categorised as ‘irregular school attendance’. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss spending time with their peers, their class teacher and getting vital information/news for the day. The late arrival of a child(ren) disrupts lessons, places the child at a disadvantage and can be embarrassing for them. All of which can contribute to a reluctance to attend school.

	<b>Christ Church</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Woolwich</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Greenwich Peninsula</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Secondary Phase</b>
School Start time	9:00am	8:50am	8:50am	9.00am
School end time	3:20pm	3:15pm	3:15pm	3.30pm

Fifteen minutes **after the school start time** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

Poor punctuality is classified as 'irregular school attendance' and action will be undertaken to address it, following the Federation's attendance procedure.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the School Attendance Officer/Senior Leader to address and hopefully resolve the problem.

It is very important to inform us at any time if you are experiencing problems getting your child to school on time as our Home School Link Worker can offer advice about this.

### **Every Minute Counts**

As well as being absent a lot from school effecting your child's development, being late also has a big effect on their learning time, please look at the table below:

<b>Lateness = Lost Learning</b> (figures below are calculated over the school year)	
5 mins late each day	3 days lost
10 mins late each day	6.5 days lost
15 mins late each day	10 days lost
20 mins late each day	13 days lost
30 mins late each day	19 days lost

### **School Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives:**

The school has targets to improve attendance and punctuality and your child has an important part to play in meeting targets.

The minimum level of attendance and punctuality for this Federation is 96% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to reach this level and how your child's attendance and punctuality compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

### **Our Federation Procedures for improving attendance:**

- Our Home School Link Worker/ Student Welfare Team or Office Staff will contact parents by either phone call or text by 9.45am if a student is absent and the school office has not been informed of the absence.
- We hold an induction interview/meeting before the child enters school if their previous school has reported poor attendance.
- All new parents are given a letter outlining that the school expectations with regard to attendance.
- There is a series of letter proformas we issue in relation to attendance matters which will be sent to parent/ carers when there are concerns regarding attendance.
- Each of our Campuses has:
  - 1- a member of the Senior Leadership Team who oversees the Attendance procedures and policy.

- 2- A member of the office Administration team who enters all attendance data onto the school's SIMS system, which is used for data analysis, and attendance reports.
- 3- Home School Link Worker who can support families when attendance concerns arise. In our secondary phase we also have two Student Welfare officers who can support students.
- The school works very closely with the Attendance Advisory Service and is visited by an officer every fortnight at secondary and every month at primary. Parents who have not followed the school's attendance guide are referred to the AAO (Attendance Advisory Officer) if attendance continues to be poor.
- At every campus senior leaders award 100% attendance and punctuality certificates at the end of each school term. Alongside this the names of all pupils with 100% termly attendance and punctuality are put in a draw. The names are drawn for a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.
- Pupils achieving 100% attendance for the entire school year receive a special certificate and prize.
- On our end of year reports we report on attendance and punctuality.
- The designated Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance will work closely with parents, the school attendance officer for the Royal Borough of Greenwich and the child to improve poor performance, in line with borough and national policies

### **Child Missing Education (CME)**

Any child who ceases to attend a school, without notification as to their new address and/or the school they are transferring to, becomes a '**Child Missing in Education**'. Any child in this category is reported to the Child Missing in Education Officer at the Local Authority, who will follow up the matter under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 and Safeguarding legislation, as necessary. This can involve the police.

The attendance procedures are crucial to ensuring the safety of all children. If a child has been absent from school for 20 consecutive days without good reason and their whereabouts are unknown, the school has a legal obligation to report the child as missing education to the relevant local authority. In accordance with DFE regulations the child may be removed from the school roll.

### **Communication – What we Need to Know**

#### **Telephone Numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we have always got current contact details including phone numbers for yourself and at least one other nominated persons who are your emergency contacts.

#### **Home Address:**

Please inform us of any change of address and the date you are moving immediately.

#### **Removing a Pupil from Our School:**

If you make the decision to transfer your child to another school as a matter of priority you need to provide the school with all of the necessary details.

We will provide you with a Leavers form, as we need to know your new address (if relevant) and the school your child is transferring to. If we do not receive this information and your child ceases to attend our school, they become a '**Child Missing in Education**'. \*The procedure will be followed as detailed above.

### **Elective Home Education:**

If you make the decision to educate your child at home, you are required to advise us of this in writing. Once the letter/email is received, we will remove your child from the school roll and advise the Elective Home Education Officer of the Local Authority, who will make contact with you regarding this matter. If a letter/email is not received, your child remains on the roll of the school and their absence is treated as unauthorised. \*Action to address the unauthorised absence, will be followed as detailed above.

### **The people responsible for attendance matters in the school are:**

	<b>Christ Church</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Woolwich</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Peninsula Primary Phase</b>	<b>St Mary Magdalene Peninsula Secondary Phase</b>
Senior Leader	Miss Reid	Mrs Ringmo	Mrs Ajayi	Mrs Pett
Home School Link Worker	Miss Lamont	Miss T Thomas	Miss Williams	Miss A Hinds
Student Welfare Support	n/a	n/a	n/a	Miss Abarese Mrs Newington
Attendance Admin Officer	Mrs Beaumont	Mrs Turner	Mrs Shanahan	Miss Etherington

### **DFE & Governor Monitoring**

The school complies with the requirement to complete the DFE Attendance Monitoring form each term. This form is completed by the Headteachers. Attendance data is also sent to the LA's Standards and Strategy team and Attendance Advisory Service.

Each term's Executive Co-Headteacher's report to Governors contains an update of the attendance statistics within the school for that term.

### **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)



ALONGSIDE THIS POLICY THERE ARE GUIDELINE DOCUMENTS FOR USE BY SCHOOL STAFF ONLY, THESE INCLUDE:

Appendix 1 - AAS Flow Chart (Attendance Advisory Flow Chart)  
Flow Chart Part 2

Appendix 2 - CME (Child Missing in Education) Referral Form

Appendix 3 - CME Guidance for Schools

Appendix 4 - Leaving School form for Parents

Appendix 5 - Pre-Referral and Early Help Assessment Checklist

Appendix 6 - Referral Form for AAS

Appendix 7 - Schools Data Template Primary

Appendix 8 - Schools Data Template Secondary

Appendix 9 - Attendance Letter templates