

St Marys Catholic Primary School

'Learning together in Faith and Love'

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Mission Statement

St Mary's is a vibrant two form entry Catholic Primary School in North Kensington with a strong sense of community. We are a school that welcomes all children from the ages of 3 to 11 years. Our school serves the Roman Catholic Parish of Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Kensal New Town and other local parishes.

The aims of our school are:

- To promote Christian values where children live, learn and celebrate the teaching of Christ.
- To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced and meaningful and where children can experience enjoyment and fulfilment.
- To promote the highest standards of teaching and learning within the framework of the National Curriculum.
- To develop in each child a sense of achievement, value and self-worth and to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- To help our children acquire the skills of independent learning and make sufficiently rapid progress.
- To provide a safe and secure environment where children feel valued and where they respect help and care for each other.
- To involve parents in all aspects of their child's education and promote good home/school partnerships.
- To develop in our children awareness and respect for the different cultures and religions represented in society and their responsibility to the wider community.
- To foster the continuing development of staff, parents and Governors in serving the community.

St Mary's School Values

These are the values which will be explicitly taught, modelled and rewarded at St Mary's:

- **Kindness**
- **Respect**
- **Tolerance**
- **Honesty**
- **Responsibility (for ourselves and our world)**
- **Co-operation**

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Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- ✓ support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ✓ ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- ✓ enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- ✓ make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ✓ ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

Introductions

- ✓ The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- ✓ Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).
- ✓ Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.
- ✓ Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:
 - Authorised Absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
 - Unauthorised Absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.
- ✓ Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised.
- ✓ Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.
- ✓ Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school

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is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

- ✓ There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.
- ✓ The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

Being At School

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day
- attend school on time
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school by 9.15am **on each day of** absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.

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Examples	Authorised Absences:	Unauthorised Absences:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* genuine illness of the pupil* hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil* major religious observances* visits to prospective new schools* external exams or educational assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park* a birthday treat* oversleeping due to a late night* looking after other children / other family member* appointments for other family members.* Holidays in term time

We expect that the school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils.
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- meet regularly with the Attendance and Punctuality Manager to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Attendance Team. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Attendance Team may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice by RBKC, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Attendance Team after 10 days unexplained absence.

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Promoting Good Attendance

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by

- By sharing % attendance on the weekly newsletter
- By awarding classes in FS / KS1 / KS2 who achieve 100% attendance at weekly Friday assembly
- By awarding individual children who have 100% for each term.
- By awarding individual children who get 100% attendance for the whole academic year (September to July).
- By rewarding the 100% A & P with special events (3 term per school calendar year).

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the main playground is supervised from 8.45am.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 9.00am and pupils who arrive after 9.00am will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.15am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm (FS/KS1) and 1:30pm (KS2).
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with initially between home and school but may be referred to the LA Attendance Team.
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.

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- parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- if a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

Leave of Absence

- The school holiday dates are published on our school website and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during term time. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

Attendance Days

- There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

Attendance Procedures:

- Attendance will be monitored on a half termly basis.
- If your child is absent 10% (or more) a parent/carer must meet with the class teacher where they will be issued with a first letter of concern.
- If attendance still hasn't improved in the next half term a second letter of concern will be sent and a parent/carer must meet with the Attendance and Punctuality Manager.
- If attendance still does not improve a referral may be made to the Tri-borough ACE team (who manage schools' attendance and punctuality) and fines will be issued.

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Penalty Notices

The school follows LA guidance with regards to penalty notices being issued for holidays being taken in term time and any other unauthorised leave.

Changing schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform St Mary's Catholic Primary School as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Tracking Officer and Education Welfare.