



ST MARY ABBOTS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2018

Regular attendance at school is a prerequisite of a good education. The disruption and damage caused by poor attendance and lateness not only affects the individual pupil but also adversely affects other pupils and teaching staff.

The publication of schools' attendance levels is used increasingly as a major performance indicator for schools, and individual pupil's attendance is recorded in the end of year reports and contributes to leavers' references.

Children must attend school regularly and 'on time' if they are to derive the maximum benefit from their education.

AIMS

St Mary Abbots aims to encourage and achieve high levels of attendance for all pupils and seeks to work closely and co-operatively with parents to promote regular and punctual school attendance.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY - a framework set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations.

Once a child becomes a registered pupil at school:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

☛The LA has a legal duty to ensure that parents carry out this responsibility.

- The School has a legal duty to record attendance and absence of registered pupils in compliance with the regulations.
- The governing body has a legal duty to ensure that the school register is kept in accordance with regulations and must publish figures in the School Profile to parents.

The Royal Borough discharges its enforcement obligations including the prosecution of parents, through the Education Welfare Service. Governing bodies usually look to Headteachers to secure the discharge of their legal responsibilities.

SCHOOL REGISTERS

All schools must keep an Attendance Register. It is a legal document which must be kept accurately and may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for nonattendance. An electronic return is completed on a weekly basis and sent to RBK&C each half term.

At St Mary Abbots School the following procedures are in place:

- Registers are completed electronically in the classrooms by staff.
The Register is marked at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- Children are expected to be at school for 8.55 a.m. A bell is rung to mark the start of the school day.
- The Registers are marked in the classroom at 9.00 a.m. when those children present are marked as such.
- A child arriving after 9.05 a.m. is marked as late. A note is made electronically of their arrival time.

If a child arrives after 9.30am, the absence is recorded as 'unauthorised' for the entire morning session unless the cause for the absence is known and can be authorised.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If a child is absent from school, parents are requested and expected to contact the school on the first day of the child's absence to explain the reason for it and to establish an expected date of return. Please contact the school before 10.00am to confirm your child's absence. If the school has not been notified of a pupil's absence, parents will be contacted by office staff.

A note of explanation should be provided when the child returns to school. A medical certificate may be requested as well.

Similarly, an explanation from the parent should be provided if a child is late for school. If a child is late or absent without an explanation, parents will be contacted by the school and repeated lateness/absence is followed up by the school ACE Team or Early Help Team.

If a child arrives late on three occasions in a week, a letter is sent from the school. These are sent electronically via 'SCHOOL COMMS' giving specific information about the amount of time lost on those occasions. The Receptionist keeps a record of the letter sent out to parents & the Headteacher is kept informed.

Any notes, certificates and records of telephone calls are dated, named and initialled by the member of staff who receives them and kept in a separate file. In cases of on-going poor attendance and/or lateness, the family will be invited into the school to discuss this with the Headteacher. Where explanations are unsatisfactory, if absence persists, or in cases of persistent lateness, a child may be referred to the child's home ACE Team.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

A child's absence from school will be authorised by the Headteacher if it is for sickness of that child, interviews at secondary transfer, religious observance or a family trauma.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Holidays during term time are not 'authorised.' The Governors are clear that unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' holidays during term time will be unauthorised. Any parents requesting 'Leave of Absence' during term time **MUST** complete a proforma explaining the type and duration of leave. The information on the proforma is taken into consideration when granting leave. Previous requests, the child's attendance levels and academic ability are also taken into consideration.

If holidays are taken without permission of the Headteacher, the resulting absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the Register. If leave on 'exceptional grounds' is granted, the school and family should agree a return date with the Headteacher. If the child does not return on that date, the following absence will be registered as 'unauthorised.'

When a child does not return from holiday on the agreed date and no acceptable reason has been given to the school for this, the name of the child may be removed from the school roll ten school days after the date of return has elapsed. A child returning after this time would need to reapply for a school place.

GOOD ATTENDANCE

Rewards for good attendance are likely to be more effective than sanctions for nonattendance, but there could be occasions when a child has to be challenged on his or her poor attendance. The support of parents will be sought wherever practicable. However, poor attendance or lateness cannot be accepted as a natural consequence of geographical location.

St Mary Abbots has a system of rewards and seeks to devise further strategies to encourage punctuality and regular attendance:

- Each week, the class with zero lateness is awarded the **Bear and the Cup**.
- Certificates are presented in assembly at the end of each term, to those pupils who have achieved **100%** attendance over the term or an academic year and recorded in the Newsletter.
- Pupils who have a 100% record at the end of the academic year are invited for a meal at a chosen restaurant with the Headteacher & Deputy Headteacher at the beginning of the next academic year to celebrate this achievement.

Children Missing Education – Guidance from KCSiE September 2018 gives clear guidance to schools on their role & responsibility regarding children who leave the school and move to another authority. Children who go missing or who run away from home are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education. Check should always be carried out to ensure that a child is registered at a school, their UPN confirmed and the child is in school and receiving an education.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/707688/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_-_Part_1_-_September_2018.pdf

This policy is reviewed every two years or earlier if required.

Policy reviewed: October 2018

Next Policy review: October 2020

Nicola Doyle - Headteacher

APPENDIX A

TRI BOROUGH CHILDREN'S SERVICES

REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL

(The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

Unlawful removal of a child from the roll of a school/academy can be dangerous with potential implications for safeguarding. Please ensure where possible you have confirmation of the new educational provision the pupil is transferring to before removing a child from your roll. You have a duty to inform your local authority and the local authority where the child lives.

Circumstances in which a child can be removed from a school/academy roll:

- 1. Child is transferred to roll at another place of education and name and address of same has been established.**
Action: information about child should be passed to staff in the new school and common transfer file (CTF) via s2s website.
- 2. Child has been absent for 20 continuous school days or more without explanation or authorisation;** school/academy has made all reasonable enquiries as to child's whereabouts and local authority where child resides confirms child cannot be found.
Action: child must remain on roll until reasonable enquiries completed, even if this absence exceeds 20 days.
- 3. Child has failed to return from previously authorised leave within 10 school days of the agreed return date. The total absence period, including the authorised leave period, must be equal to or more than 20 school days.**
Action: School/academy staff must make sure child does not have good reason for failing to return on agreed date. The school/academy and local authority must make reasonable enquiries to locate child. Child must remain on roll until the enquiries have been concluded
- 4. Child has ceased to attend school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is reasonable distance from the school at which he/she is registered.**
Action: School/academy must ensure that the new address is obtained from the parent/carer. Appropriate members of staff in the local authority that the child has moved are notified. Members of staff at the school the child has left have received confirmation of receipt of the notification, in order that they can ensure that the child is in receipt of education.
- 5. Parents/carers have withdrawn child from school/academy and have given written notice that child will be educated otherwise than at school*.** (It is unlawful for school/academies to encourage parents/carers to educate children at home as a way of avoiding an issue staff in school should be tackling.)
Action: If parents/carers indicate desire to educate children at home, matter should be referred to the Tri-borough ACE team.
*This does not apply if a child is attending your school in compliance with a School Attendance Order.
- 6. Child is in custody for period exceeding four months and there is no reason to think that he/she will return to school at the end of that period.**
Action: Child detained for purely medical reasons should not be treated as child in custody.