



STATUS: APPROVED

APPROVED BY: GOVERNING BODY

DATE:

St. Margaret's C of E Junior School Policy for School Attendance

Philosophy

St Margaret's C of E Junior School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage all our pupils.

Our school will give high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home – school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a pupils' attendance, we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focussed approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
- To acknowledge and award a successful record of attendance
- To ensure a consistent throughout the school

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

Roles and Responsibilities:

St. Margaret's Junior School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governing Body, in order to ensure that the school is complying with its statutory duties, will:

- Review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings;
- Ensure that there is a named senior member of staff to lead on attendance

The School will:-

- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance;
- with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Monitor Attendance effectively and follow up absence appropriately;
- Raise awareness of regular school attendance by highlighting expectations in newsletters, the school prospectus, assemblies and parents meetings;
- Encourage a welcoming and positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and their presence is valued;
- Reward pupils successes in achieving high attendance standards;
- Discuss appropriate strategies with pupils and parents to support those with attendance difficulties;
- Use appropriate resources and advise parents on accessing support to aid their child's social, emotional and behavioural development;
- Ensure staff receive training regarding supporting pupils with school attendance difficulties;
- Consider individual circumstances and discuss strategies with parents and pupils in the event of a child returning to school after a lengthy absence.

Principles

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of

the school community and the Education Welfare Service in development and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

We will encourage parents / carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the law relating to attendance.

Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Promoting staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by senior managers and the school governors.

Attendance will be an important feature of the School Improvement Plan.

Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

Reporting Absences

It is parents' responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible.

At St. Margaret's parents are expected to contact the school office answerphone on the first day of absence giving as much information as is available at that time. The school 'adopts a 'first day calling' policy and will contact parents on the first day of absence if parents have not contacted us. If the absence is prolonged, interim information would be appreciated, so that the school can help with homework or other necessary arrangements.

In the event of no contact having been made regarding a child's absence on the child's return to school, the parents will be contacted by the Attendance Lead (Claire Cole). If unexplained absence continues, or the school is concerned regarding irregular attendance the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be enlisted.

Procedures

The procedures for this school are:

- The school day starts at 8.50am when class teachers will take the register. Any child arriving after 9.00am can only access the school via reception where their arrival and reasons for lateness will be recorded by office staff.
- The register is to be marked in pencil. The registers are taken twice a day at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Each school day counts as two attendances.

/	Present a.m
\	Present p.m
L	Late for session (before register closes)
B	Educated off site
V	Educational visit
C	Authorized absence (other authorised circumstances)
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)

I	Illness (not medical/dentist appointments)
J	Interview
M	Medical/ dental appointments
R	Religious observance
T	Traveller absence
O	Unauthorized absence (unacceptable reason given)
N	Unauthorized absence (no reason yet given)
P	Approved sporting activity
U	Late for session (after register closes)
#	Holiday for all
X	Staff only to attend.
Y	Enforced closure
!	No attendance required.
*	Not on roll
-	Missing mark

- Children leaving school during the day will be signed out by office staff with reasons for departure recorded.
- We operate a 'same day calling' system whereby parents will be contacted to ascertain why their child is not in school if they fail to notify the office by morning break time. Initial contact is made with parents using Teachers to Parents text messaging.
- If an absence is requested in term time the parents or carers will need to complete an Absence Request form which they can obtain from the School Office. Government guidelines on not authorising requests for holidays during term time are followed. A copy of the Devon County Council letter outlining these guidelines displayed on the school website. If a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term time St. Margaret's will follow the Devon County Council procedure for awarding a penalty notice.
- Certificates are given to celebrate 100% attendance at the end of each half term and are reported on the school website and Messenger. Class percentage attendance is celebrated each half term and is reported on the school website and Messenger.
- A pupil's annual attendance percentage for the year is included in their annual report
- The school's overall attendance figures are published in the prospectus.
- At St Margaret's C of E Junior we work closely with the Education Welfare Officer who visits on a regular basis. The 'Fast Track' procedure is used to improve the attendance of persistent absentees.

Reviewed and ratified annually