

St Martin's Garden Primary

Attendance Policy

Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children, thus supporting achievement in learning.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To monitor, communicate and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely with, and make full use of, support from the wider community including the Children Missing Education Officer and multi-agency teams.
- To comply with legal requirements by compiling, monitoring and retaining accurate records of attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that in the case of an emergency evacuation of the school premises everyone present can be accounted for.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality.

All parents/carers of children registered at St Martin's Garden Primary school are responsible for making sure that their children attend regularly and on time (Section 7 - Education Act 1996).

Governors are responsible for:

- setting annual targets for attendance and monitoring progress towards their achievement
- evaluating the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and making revisions when necessary.

The Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that effective systems are in place to accurately record individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns
- monitoring individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality
- working in partnership with key agencies when attendance and/or punctuality is an issue
- providing Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the policy and its practice
- writing to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance and/or punctuality
- arranging meetings with parents/carers to discuss support, and to set targets, for those experiencing attendance difficulties
- making a judgement as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- celebrating excellent performance and achievement.

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- providing an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class
- completing registers carefully and accurately at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions

- returning registers to the School Office after the closure of the registration period
- responding promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff
- organising work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness
- celebrating excellent attendance.

Office Staff are responsible for:

- preparing, managing and co-ordinating the use of the Attendance Manager System
- recording on the appropriate record sheet the reasons for absence given to them
- monitoring and tracking attendance patterns for all children and preparing relevant attendance reports when necessary
- contacting any parent/carer who has not informed the school of the reason for their child's absence on the first day of absence; this is done by phone in the first instance followed by a text
- ensuring that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week
- recording punctuality and reporting reasons for late arrival.

Reasons for Absence

Punctuality (Lateness)

- The beginning of the school day is an important time to ensure that children are settled, organised and ready to start learning. Poor punctuality not only has an impact on an individual's ability to begin learning but can impact on the rest of the class if the class teacher has to spend time supporting late comers.
- At our school, we expect children to arrive at school on time and the Assistant Head Teacher monitors children's arrival to school on a weekly basis.
- Late arrivals need to enter the school via the main entrance.
- Parents/carers are expected to sign the 'late' book, giving a reason for the late attendance.
- The Assistant Headteacher will contact the parents/carers of any child who is persistently late in order to discuss and resolve any barriers that may be preventing a child from attending school on time.
- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8.55am are considered as late.
- Pupils arriving after 8.55am must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after 9.00 am are marked as absent (L code) for the morning session.
- Pupils arriving after 9.15 am are marked as absent (U code) for the morning session.
- The School will phone and then text parents by 9.45am in the event that children are absent without explanation from a parent/carer.

Illness

Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am by way of telephone call to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. Parents/carers should also provide a written explanation on their child's return to school. Office staff will contact parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given.

If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments. Whenever possible, parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Frequent Illness

If a child has frequent illness and is regularly absent from school parents/carers will be invited to meet with the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher and School Nurse to help the school understand the nature of the illness and inform how the school can support the child's education. This may result in a medical care plan.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

Leave of Absence including holidays during term time will not be authorised, unless there is an exceptional reason why the leave cannot be taken at any other time.

Applications to take a 'holiday' or an occasional 'special' day during term time must be applied for using the leave of absence application form obtained from the school office. Please complete this form giving reasons why this is an exceptional circumstance and could not be taken in the school holidays. Parents must complete this form 2 weeks in advance of the first day of absence.

If the leave of absence is not authorised and the leave of absence is taken anyway, Penalty Notices may be issued by the Children Missing Education Service to each parent of each child. The penalty is £120 per parent per child. If payment is made within 21 days the penalty is reduced to £60. If payment is not made within 28 days parents may be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court

It is important to understand that children who take extended leave of absence usually fall behind their peers in learning and this can have a long-term effect on their education.

Other Absences

Other absences from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or not to authorise the absence.

No leave will be granted to pupils in Year 6 during SATs week and the preparation time immediately beforehand during Term 4.

Reporting to parents and carers

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report. During the year, parents will be given an update at the Autumn and Spring parents' consultation.

In order to give parents/carers a benchmark of the impact on their education of their child's attendance, the **Attendance Matters Poster** will be used alongside this policy (**Appendix 1**).

Rewards

- Children who achieve 100% attendance for each term are presented with a certificate at the end of each of the six terms.
- The highest attending class for each week will be rewarded with 15 minutes reward time (30 minutes reward for 100%) – which the class decides how to spend. This may be banked and used in one block.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Attendance data is collated weekly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This includes children with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised absence; and all children with attendance below 95%. The data is reviewed regularly by the Assistant Head Teacher.
- If concerns are raised by this analysis, parent discussions occur, either through telephone calls to the parents/carers and/or formal letters detailing the attendance of the child and stating that there is an issue.
- The Headteacher recommends an attendance target to the Governors who have responsibility for setting an annual target; currently this is **95%** and 0.51% for unauthorised absence. Governors review the attendance policy and set the annual target at their first meeting of the academic year.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Matters

39 weeks in a school year, 190 pupil days, 5 days for staff professional development.

100% attendance	0 weeks of learning missed	Best chance of success Well done!
95% attendance	1 week & 4 days of learning missed	
90% attendance	3 weeks & 4 days of learning missed	Poor attendance Worrying...
85% attendance	5 weeks & 3 days of learning missed	
80% attendance	7 weeks & 3 days of learning missed	Very poor attendance Seriously concerning...
75% attendance	9 weeks & 1 day of learning missed	

Appendix 2 - Planned absence from school FLOWCHART

