



# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Aston le Walls

*"a place of educational excellence with Christ at its centre"*

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## Attendance Policy

*"This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it."*

*Psalms 118:24*

We believe that every child is a gift from God and our mission is to help every child to achieve their potential academically, spiritually and morally. We do this by encouraging them to use their individual gifts to the very best of their ability, whether this is class work, play, behaviour or anything connected to the school and the wider community.

### Introduction

For a child to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We expect children to attend school every day as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. At St Mary's we believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and so we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

We believe that every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

Under the Education Regulations, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether an absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

It is the responsibility of the school, Under Education Pupil Attendance Targets Regulations 2005, to decide whether or not any given absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. All reasons for absences are recorded on an Absence Confirmation Sheet. The absence is then authorised or unauthorised by the headteacher depending on the circumstances. If no reason is given for absence after two weeks the absence remains 'unauthorised'.

### Authorised Absence:

An absence is classified as 'authorised' when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if the child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence 'authorised'. Parents do not have this authority.

Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as 'authorised'. Some examples of 'authorised absences' are:

- When a child is ill or receiving medical attention.
- Sickness and diarrhoea- the children must remain at home for **48 hrs** after the last bout.
- When a close family member has died
- When prior consent has been obtained from the Headteacher, e.g. a music examination
- If the family have been contacted by track and trace and asked to isolate.
- If the child is displaying COVID-19 Symptoms and requires a test/ waiting for test results.

### Further COVID guidance DFE:

#### Symptoms

*The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:*

- *a new continuous cough*
- *a high temperature*

- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above, stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to [testing](#) to arrange.

#### Main messages

If you have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 however mild, self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to [testing](#) to arrange. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

If you are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, you must self-isolate for at least 10 days, starting from the day the test was taken. If you develop symptoms during this isolation period, restart your 10-day isolation from the day you developed symptoms.

You could be [fined](#) if you do not stay at home and self-isolate following a positive test result for COVID-19 or if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and instructed to self-isolate.

After 10 days, if you still have a temperature you should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. You do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone. See the ending isolation section below for more information.

If you live with others, all other household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they must stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14-day isolation period. The ending isolation section below has more information.

If you have [symptoms](#), try and stay as far away from other members of your household as possible. It is especially important to stay away from anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable with whom you share a household.

Reduce the spread of infection in your home by washing your hands regularly for 20 seconds using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser, and cover coughs and sneezes.

Consider alerting people who you do not live with and have had close contact within the last 48 hours to let them know you have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

Following a positive test result, you will receive a request by text, email or phone to log into the NHS Test and Trace service website and provide information about recent close contacts.

If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) COVID-19 service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency, dial 999. If you develop COVID-19 [symptoms](#) again at any point after ending your first period of isolation (self or household), follow the guidance on self-isolation again. The section below has further information.

**Unauthorised Absence:** An absence classified as ‘unauthorised when a child is away from school without a good reason, even with the support of a parent. Absences, both authorised and unauthorised, will be recorded on the child’s annual report to parents.

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p>A whole year has 365 days<br/>         A school year has only 190 days<br/> <b>This leaves :</b><br/> <b>175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays,<br/>         birthday treats, dentist and hospital appointments!</b></p> |   |  |
| <p>90% attendance is equal to 1 day off each fortnight</p>   |   |  |
| 100%   | 90  | 80%  |
| <p><b>VERY GOOD</b><br/>         Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start</p>   | <p><b>WORRYING</b><br/>         Less chance of success. Makes it harder for your child to make progress</p> | <p><b>SERIOUS CONCERNS</b><br/>         Your child will find it difficult to make progress, learn new skills and build social networks</p> |

**Procedures**

The school will be open to pupils for 190 days per year. Parents are supplied with a list of term dates, at least once during the preceding school year. The school session times are as follows:

| Class      | Gate                     | Drop off time   | Pick up time |
|------------|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| Farmers    | Rising Stars (side gate) | 9:15 – Parents will be allowed to come through to the playground to drop off observing social distancing. This will only be for the first 8 days to settle the children in. If this is difficult please discuss with me and we can arrange drop off from 9:00 from the front. | 2:50pm       |
| Fishermen  | Rising Stars             | 8:45  | 2:55pm       |
| Carpenters | Main Gate                | 8:50  | 3:00pm       |
| Shepherds  | Main Gate                | 8:55  | 3:05pm       |

Two members of staff will be on duty out the front of the school to direct the children through the correct entrance for their bubble.

**Registration**

A register is taken by each class teacher every morning and afternoon at the start of each session. All absences are recorded in the register.

**Absence Due To Illness**

An absence form must be completed on the school website. This will ensure that the absence is recorded as ‘authorised’

## Lateness

We like children to be on time for school so that they are ready to learn. If your child misses the start of the day they miss the learning input, information and news for the day. Arriving late for school can be embarrassing for your child and is disruptive for other children.

| <b>Did you know your child's best learning time is the start of the school day?<br/>That's when every minute counts!<br/>School starts promptly at 8.55 a.m.</b> |                         |                       |                             |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Evidence shows that children who start school on time, organised and well equipped, achieve higher grades at GCSE level.   |                         |                       |                             |
| He/she is missing  | That equals...          | Which is...           | Over 13 school years...     |
| 10 minutes a day   | 50 minutes a week       | 1 school week a year  | Nearly 1/3 of a school year |
| 20 minutes a day   | 1 hr 40 minutes a week  | 2 school weeks a year | Over 1/2 a school year      |
| 30 minutes a day   | 2 hrs 30 minutes a week | 3 school weeks a year | Over 1 school year          |
| 60 minutes a day   | 5 hrs a week            | 6 school weeks a year | Over 2 school years         |

### How we manage lateness:

The doors are open from 8.45 a.m. and the school day starts at 8.50 am (***During COVID measures please refer to the new drop off times***). We expect your child to be in class when registers are marked. If your child is not in the classroom at that time they will receive a late mark. Registers are officially closed at 9.25 a.m. and, in accordance with the Regulations, a child who arrives after the registers are closed will be marked "absent late" – a mark that shows the child to be on-site but which is included in the **unauthorised absence figures**. If the problem persists you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued against you.

### Absence Concerns

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases of frequent absences the school will try to resolve the problems with the parents. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the Northamptonshire County Council Education and Welfare Officer for advice.

### Request for leave of absence in Term Time

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding leave of absence, which stated, Headteachers are no longer permitted to authorise absence for holiday taken during term time. If a parent takes a pupil on holiday in term time, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents will be liable to further action, including the issue by the Local Authority of a fixed penalty notice and a possible prosecution through the court.

*A fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent per child may be issued when a child has had a minimum of 5 school days (10 school sessions) of unauthorised holiday absence. This will increase to £120 per parent per child if the penalty is not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice could lead to prosecution proceedings being issued against you.*

Headteachers can only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a parent thinks they have an exceptional circumstance, they should write to the Headteacher without delay **and before arrangements are entered into or money committed**.

## **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when he/she misses 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and school, parents and child need to work together to improve this. School monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the **PA mark** or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this. **PA pupils** are tracked and monitored carefully by the Headteacher as persistent absence will affect learning. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Attendance Officer during their visit.

### **Arrival and Collection from School during the school day**

If a child is collected by a parent, or other approved adult, between the hours of 9.00am and 3.00pm, the adult should report to the school office so that the child can be collected and signed out. Late arrivals should report to the office and the child signed in.

We firmly believe that:

- good attendance is one of the most important factors in achievement at school and we are committed to helping every child achieve their potential.
- any absence from school disrupts a child's learning. Missing lessons can damage a pupil's self confidence and understanding.
- when teachers have to slow down lessons to accommodate pupils who have missed previous sessions they are not doing justice to the rest of the class.

**How Parents Can Help** Do not allow your child to stay away from school unless absolutely necessary – attendance matters.

- Please let the school know of any absence. We do not wish to record 'unauthorised' unnecessarily.
- Please avoid any family holidays in term times
- If your child is worried about anything at school, encourage them to share their concerns so that we can help.
- Please support the school by recognising that good attendance is important.

Signed

Headteacher: L. Concannon

Chair of Admissions and Attendance Committee:

Date:

Date of next review: 2022

