



# 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 Head teacher, e.g. a music examination

**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.

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

### **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.

### **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? That's when every minute counts!</b> School starts promptly at 8.55 a.m. 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 8.30 a.m. and the school day starts at 8.45 am. 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 9.10 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: July 2023

Date of next review: July 2024



