



ST MICHAEL'S
C of E PRIMARY
HIGHGATE

Attendance Policy

Date of issue	September 23
Renewal date	September 2024
Responsible for this policy	Sinead O'Brien Head of School

To nurture and inspire our children to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be



CONTENTS

- Rationale and Aims
- The School
- The Parent and Carers
- Attendance procedures
- Procedure for Exceptional Absence request
- Staff Roles
- Children Missing in Education
- Appendix (examples of letters to parents.)



Rationale and Aims

Our aim at St Michael's is to ensure pupils have excellent levels of attendance and punctuality in order that they are able to succeed and thrive at school and maximise their learning time and be the best they can be. In order to do this, we aim to:

- Encourage, recognise and celebrate good attendance and punctuality.
- Teach children the importance of developing good habits of attendance and punctuality.
- Have robust recording and monitoring of attendance and act quickly where issues arise.
- Set aspirational targets for high levels of attendance for all pupils at 97%.
- Have clear procedures, support and challenge parents to improve attendance.
- Work closely with the Education Welfare Officers and draw upon advice and support when necessary.

Staff and parents/carers should be aware of their rights and responsibilities with regard to the attendance of pupils.

The Education Act 1996, section 7 states that, "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that, 'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.'

Improving and maintaining good school attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the school community.

The School

- Record attendance of each pupil for both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Follow up absences and identify authorised/unauthorised absences.
- Ensure any safeguarding actions are taken.

The Parent and Carers

- Ensure their children attend school on time each day.
- Inform the school of any reasons for a child's absence as soon as possible, this can be done on the school's absence line or by email to admin@stmichaelsn6.com

To nurture and inspire our children to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be



- Request any planned absence during term time to the Head of School.
- Provide any proof of absence as required.
- Inform the school of any medical needs on the child's return from an illness where necessary.
- If the child has been involved in an accident and on their return their mobility has been affected, the parent should make an appointment with the Assistant Head of their child's phase to complete the necessary risk assessment so that the child can safely participate prior to the child returning to the school.

Attendance procedures

Late pupils will be met by a member of staff who will record their attendance and then escort them into class or assembly.

Pupils arriving after 9.30am when registration closes are marked as absent for that session. Code U

Parents of any absent pupils who have not notified the school on the morning of their first day of absence will in the first instance receive a reminder to contact the school by email and a follow up call may be necessary.

Pupil attendance is monitored each half term by the Education Welfare Officer and the Head of School reporting to the Executive Head of School.

Communication procedures

Step One - Children with attendance between 95 – 96 %

Initial contact will be made by school to inform them of their child's attendance levels and discuss any issues and illness.

Step Two - Children with attendance between 93 – 95%

A letter will be sent to arrange a meeting or telephone conversation to find ways to improve attendance. (Appendix Letter A)

Step Three - Children with attendance between 91 – 93%

A letter will be sent inviting parents or carers to attend a Clinic Meeting 1 with the Head of School to improve attendance. (Appendix Letter B)

Step Four

Persistent Absentees 90 or below% Clinic meeting serious concern 2

Where the school's actions have made limited impact and the attendance is still

To nurture and inspire our children to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be

of concern, parents will receive a further letter from the school medical evidence will be required. Parents may be asked to meet with the Head of School or the Deputy Headteacher and a meeting with EWO.

If there is no further improvement a Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents.

Improvement of attendance

If a pupil's attendance improves, the school will contact the family in writing to thank them for working with them to increase attendance to an acceptable level. (Appendix Letter D)

Procedure for Exceptional Absence request

The Head of School will decide whether to authorise parental requests for leave of absence in term time on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the year group of the child, attendance history, previous requests for leave, the impact of leave on the child's educational outcomes, the reason for the request and the time of year. Holidays taken during the school term are actively discouraged as they will impact negatively on a child's ability to achieve and will not be authorised.

Request should be made to the Head of School using the Request Form **ten days** prior to the date. Parents and carers will receive a written reply informing them of the Head of School's decision.

If *Exceptional Absence* has been authorised a return to school date will be given. Failure to return without an explanation a Fixed Penalty may be issued.

Staff Roles

The Head of School ensures registration procedures, monitoring of attendance and punctuality, clear record keeping, parent letters and referrals to appropriate staff/EWO are made.

Class teachers promote good habits of attendance and will remind pupils and speak to parents regarding any concerns in the first instance; parents are informed of their child's attendance during parent consultation meetings and final end of year report.

Senior leaders and governors monitor the school's attendance data and look for any specific patterns or concerns so that appropriate actions can be taken.



Children Missing in Education

If the school is not notified of a reason for absence and contact cannot be made with the family then after 10 days the school will refer the child to the local authority as a child missing in education.

They will remain on the schools register until the child is enrolled in a new setting or the family informs the school that the child is being 'home-schooled'. The local authority must be informed of any correspondence with the family.

Education Welfare Service Referrals

The school will inform the LA of any pupil whose attendance is a concern and pupils will be referred to the EWS if:

- a child is on the Child Protection Register with an unauthorised absence and/or if the Designated Teacher for Child Protection has concerns over the reasons given by the parent/carer for absence;
- a pupil for whom the school has concerns and/or if the family cannot be located;
- a pupil whose attendance is below 95% and has been recorded with unauthorised absences;
- the school has not been able to contact parents and carers and the pupil has been absent for 10 continuous days;
- after 10 sessions of authorised absences in a 5-week period that is not supported by medical evidence.
- a pupil fails to return after a fixed term exclusion;
- a parent/carer has notified the school in writing that they are educating their child at home;
- the school is notified that a pupil will be unable to return to school for a (long) period of time due to medical reasons and where Medical Needs Tuition may be needed.



Appendix

Letter A – Meet to discuss AHT

Step Two - Children with attendance between 93 – 95%

Dear

As you will know, the school tries to encourage good attendance because it can impact positively on children's wellbeing and learning. Research shows that there is a clear link between high levels of attainment and good attendance. Pupils are expected to attend for at least 97% of the school year and we have advised all parents and carers that we would be writing to inform them if their child's attendance has dropped below. Currently, XXXXXXX s attendance is XX%.

If there is anything I can do to support you, please come in to see me, so that we can work together to ensure excellent attendance. Therefore I have arranged a meeting for

Please contact the school on 0208 340 7441 to inform us you have received this letter and will be attending the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Letter B – Meeting with Head of School

Step Three

Dear

Clinic Meeting 1.

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to invite you to a meeting as your child's current level of attendance has not improved since our previous communication.

Overall School Attendance is
Of which Authorised Absence is
Of which Unauthorised Absence is

We would like to discuss this with you as a matter of importance. An appointment has been made on xxxxx at school with the Head of School. At this meeting we would like to agree a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance.

Please contact the school on 0208 340 7441 to inform us you have received this letter and will be attending the meeting.

We look forward to meeting with you.

To nurture and inspire our children to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be



Yours sincerely,

Letter C – Meeting with EWO and HofS Step Four

Dear

Clinic Meeting 2.

We are writing to invite you to a meeting as there has been little or no improvement to your child's attendance and this has fallen into the category of a Persistent Absentee.

An appointment has been made on xxxxx at school with myself and the Education Welfare Officer.

At this meeting we would like to agree a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance.

Please contact the school on 0208 340 7441 to inform us you have received this letter and will be attending the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Letter D - Improved attendance thank you letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: (child's name)

Current attendance percentage %

We recently met on (date) to discuss (child's name) poor attendance. We have been monitoring (child's name) attendance since we met and we are very pleased to see an improvement. (Child's name) has had no further absences since our meeting. We look forward to seeing further improvements in their attendance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting our commitment to improving the attainment of your child and working closely with us.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Links with other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection;

To nurture and inspire our children to develop a love of learning in a supportive Christian community and become the best they can be



- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023);
- Equalities;
- Exclusion;
- Administration of Medicines;
- SEN/D
- Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions.