



*'Learning together through love, friendship, forgiveness and faith.'*

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction**

The staff and Governors of St. Michael's CE Primary School are committed to providing the finest education possible. We believe that means enabling every pupil to learn to use their basic skills as well as to promote achievement in a wide range of other subjects. This takes place in a school where everyone believes in the importance of taking an increasing degree of responsibility for ones behaviour and learning.

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of all aspects of school life, acquire the skills they need and develop good habits.

The school has a collective commitment to ensure it provides an inclusive education for all pupils. In order to benefit from this education pupils need to attend school regularly and punctually. It is recognised that there are many reasons for poor attendance and this attendance policy outlines the strategies adopted by the school to encourage all children to attend school on a regular basis. There is a clear correlation between regular attendance and achievement; as attendance deteriorates, so will performance and achievement.

### **Our Aims**

- To encourage children to maintain high attendance and punctuality at all times
- To encourage parents to support their children in achieving 100% attendance
- Improve the attendance of those pupils whose attendance figures fall below the school/local authority guidelines

### **School Attendance Policy**

Attending school is vitally important for all children to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them at St. Michael's School. It is the legal and primary duty of every parent to ensure that their children receive an education by attending school regularly and punctually. However, promoting attendance and tackling absence is the responsibility of schools and agencies within the local authority. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Parents/carers are at risk of prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 if they fail in their duty to ensure regular attendance.

# **St. Michael's CE Primary School Sunninghill**



## **Key Commitments**

### **What the School will do to achieve this:**

- When a child's attendance falls below 96% a letter will be sent to parents.
- If absence continues to drop then parents will be invited in to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.
- Weekly Class Certificate for 100% attendance.
- In the event of no contact being made by telephone regarding a child's absence the parents will be contacted by the school office on the first day of absence unless concerns have been previously raised.
- The school will remind parents who do not provide a reason for absence.
- Only the headteacher can approve absence and if the school is not informed of the reason for the absence then it will be classed as unauthorised.
- Should attendance continue to drop despite the above interventions then the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve any problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **What the Local Authority will do to achieve this:**

- support the School and identified pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.
- support parent/carers through the individual casework undertaken by the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and other agencies.
- prioritise the attendance of Looked After Children, accepting its role as a corporate parent.

### **What parents should do:**

- It is the parent's responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible.
- Parents should ring the school on the first day of absence as early as possible and before 8.55am.
- If the absence is prolonged, interim information would be appreciated, so that the school can help with homework or other necessary arrangements.
- If a reason has not been given, absences may be unauthorised.

## **Early Years - Reception Class**

Although many children are below statutory school age when starting school, good attendance is expected on the same basis as school age pupils.

# St. Michael's CE Primary School Sunninghill



## Registration

Under Regulation 3 of the Pupils' Registration Regulations 1956, all schools must keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. The 1991 Regulations also state that registers must state whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

The session times for St. Michael's School are:

|                   | Reception & Year 1 | Year 2 & KS2 |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Morning session   | 8:55 -12:00        | 8:55am-12:15 |
| Afternoon session | 1:00 – 3.15pm      | 1:15 -3.15pm |

The register is closed 30 minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions.

(The school can provide fuller details of the registration practice).

## Lateness

The school policy is to encourage punctuality and to actively discourage lateness as it can seriously disrupt lessons and adversely affect the child's progress. If a child is late and misses registration, a late mark will be recorded (this is classed as an unauthorised absence). Obviously the school will be sympathetic if this is for a good reason. If, however, a pattern of lateness starts to emerge, parents will be invited to discuss the matter with the class teacher/Headteacher in order to reach a satisfactory solution. **Late is 30 minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions.**

## Leave of absence

### The Law

Penalty Notices and Legal Action

Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) 444 (1A) states that

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

(a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special needs he/she may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Failure to do so may result in legal action taken against the parent under the above legislation.

### Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

**'The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are where requests are rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.**

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Sunninghill**



Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

**The penalty is per parent per child and will be £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 & 28 days.**

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in writing in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parent will be informed in writing of the Headteacher's decision.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expect to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

This is a statutory policy reviewed by the School Committee and subsequently approved at the Full Governing Body Meeting on:

Date: May 2017

Signed: .....B Smith (Chair of Governors).....  
Review Date: May 2020