

**Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**December 2017**

**Introduction**

Good attendance and punctuality are the cornerstones of a positive attitude to school and subsequent effective teaching and learning. At St Mark's CE both issues are treated with great importance.

**Aims**

- To ensure that children are given their full entitlement to learning opportunities
- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of our children
- To encourage good and excellent attendance and punctuality
- To assist parents and outside agencies in ensuring the well-being of our children.

**St Mark's System**

There are many strategies in place within the school to facilitate the monitoring of attendance and punctuality.

- All registers are marked by staff in class between 8.55am and 9.00am
- The registers are then sent to the school office at 9.00am
- Any children who are not present when the register is taken will be marked with the symbol 'N'
- All children arriving after 9.00am must report to the school office; at this time they are given a 'late card' to take to their teacher as proof that they have signed in; the clerk enters an 'L' symbol on the register
- Children who arrive after 9.30am are considered 'extremely late'; the clerk enters a 'U' symbol on the register
- Children who are regularly late will have a letter sent home to parents/carers
- We work very closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), who visits school once per academic year to monitor attendance and punctuality.
- If a child is absent from school. Parents/carers must telephone the school office before 9am to register the absence.
- All absences causing concern are followed up by phone calls, letters or visits
- Attendance is reported to parents as part of the end of year report form
- In the event of a fire/fire drill staff carry out a headcount of pupils

**Authorised/Unauthorised Absences**

**Holidays Taken in Term Time**

Term dates are posted on the school website. At St Mark's, we strongly discourage parents/carers from booking holidays during term time. We feel that there are many other opportunities outside the school year when holidays may be taken. Any application for absence in term time following a child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday must be submitted in writing and the Headteacher will only authorise an absence if he is satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional.

We expect parents to follow a set procedure when requesting absence:

- A letter must be sent into school giving details of why this absence could not be taken outside of term time, and asking the permission of the headteacher to keep the child away from school for this period.
- The headteacher will consider the request and respond accordingly in writing

- If a request has not been received, school will telephone or send out a letter asking for an explanation of the absence and a decision will be made by the Headteacher as to whether the absence should be authorised.
- If an absence has been authorised by the headteacher a letter will be sent home and the pupil will be given the appropriate mark in the register, depending upon the reason for absence
- Unauthorised absences may, at the discretion of the Headteacher, be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued if a pupil's attendance falls below 96.4% for the previous two full academic terms and the term or part thereof up to and including the unauthorised absence.

### **Information for Parents**

Parents are informed of the procedures for requesting absence on the school website. It is made very clear to parents that all absence requests must be submitted in writing and the Headteacher will only authorise an absence if he is satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional.

### **Poor Attendance and Punctuality**

Attendance and Punctuality are reviewed each half term and any parents of children whose attendance is below 90% or who have poor punctuality will be contacted and invited to a meeting with the Headteacher where an agreed plan of action to improve attendance and punctuality will be discussed.

### **Conclusion**

The Senior Leadership Team and Administration Staff are aware of all procedures regarding attendance and punctuality, and are familiar with legal requirements. It is expected that pupils attend school regularly and understand the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. If we are to give our children every opportunity to succeed and encourage in them a sense of responsibility, it is essential that we, as a caring community, monitor attendance and punctuality, investigate reasons for absence and support families in addressing difficulties.

**Approved by the Full Governing Body on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017.**

**To be reviewed December 2018**