

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Attendance Policy



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1. School Mission

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School our Mission is:

TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS
BY
LEARNING TOGETHER
LOVING OURSELVES
LOVING EACH OTHER
LOVING ALL PEOPLE
LOVING LIFE ITSELF
AND
CONSTANTLY STRIVING FOR
EXCELLENCE
WORTHY OF OUR GOD GIVEN GIFTS.

2. Principles

St. Mary's Catholic Primary believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential.

Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

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

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

3. Our Rationale

- To demonstrate a strong whole school attendance ethos
- To have a clear, known policy on absence
- To have effective systems in place for monitoring attendance
- Use attendance data and other information to improve school and student performance
- To promote the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents and carers
- To provide early intervention and work with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- To have support systems in place for vulnerable pupils
- To reward and celebrate good and improved attendance

- To make best use of additional support for pupils and parents with greatest need
- To have a system in place for registration in the event of an emergency evacuation

For educational purposes, the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within The Education Act 1996 Part V1, Section 444 and contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

4. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. [Education Act 1996](#)
2. [Equality Act 2010](#)
3. [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(As amended\)](#)
4. [Children and Young Persons Act 1963](#)
5. [DfE \(2022\) 'Keeping children safe in education'](#)
6. [DfE \(2016\) 'Children missing education'](#)
7. [DfE \(2022\) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'](#)

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, the Complaints Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

5.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs A. Davis and can be contacted via 0121 464 2141 or enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

5.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs A. Davis and can be contacted via 0121 464 2141 or enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

5.5 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for using SIMS to record attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- Staff must notify SLT of any emerging attendance concerns.

5.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Phone and/or email parents to obtain a reason for absence when a reason has not been provided
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the senior leader with responsibility for attendance in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

5.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

5.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast or attended breakfast club
- To talk to a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

6. Recording attendance

6.1 Attendance register

- We keep an attendance register using SIMS.
- We take our attendance register at the start of the school day and after lunch break too.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:00am.
- The register for the second session will be taken at 1:30pm and will be kept open until 1:45pm.

See appendix A for the DfE attendance codes used.

6.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

6.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should show their child's appointment card/confirmation text or email to the office staff who will note on SIMS that evidence of the child's appointment has been seen.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents/carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. (Go to section 7 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise).

6.4 Lateness and punctuality

The gates open at 8:30am and close at 8:45am.

Registration is at 8:45am.

School registration closes at 9:00am.

Where a pupil arrives between 8:45am and 9:00am, this will be classed as an authorised late absence (code L as per DFE compulsory attendance codes – see appendix A).

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes, this will be classed as an unauthorised late absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes – see appendix A).

Any student arriving after 8:45 will be recorded as late unless an explanation given is accepted as grounds for authorising the late arrival. Pupils who are late can only enter school via the main door due to the closure of the security gates to the playground.

Parents of children who have a pattern of lateness will meet with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance who will remind them about the importance of their child being on time for school or provide some advice on how to get to school earlier.

Failure to improve attendance patterns will result in the ‘fast track to attendance’ procedure being followed.

6.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil’s parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If contact is made, staff will:
 - Identify whether the absence is approved or not
 - Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
 - Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will follow the ‘fast track to attendance’ procedure.

- If no contact is made:

Day 1

- School will continue to attempt to make contact throughout the day.
- Other emergency contacts will be called as well to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil.
- In the case of a child in care (CIC/LAC), the child's social worker will be informed of any unexplained absence on the first day.

Day 2

- If the child does not attend school the following day and no contact is made, this is then recorded on My Concern and the pastoral team and/or DSLs are informed.

Day 3

- If by day 3, a child has not attended school and no contact is made, a home visit will be carried out as part of safeguarding procedures.
- If by day 3, parents have left messages giving a reason for absence but no verbal contact has been made, the school office will call to speak to parents in person.

Day 5

- If no contact has been made with parents by day 5, BCC Children Missing from Education procedures would be followed.
- It is good practice for schools to inform their local authority of patterns of absence where they have concerns, or feel it is appropriate, regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Regular patterns or long periods of absence can identify that a child has other needs which would benefit from the authority's intervention. For example, schools and local authorities have a duty to provide education for children with medical needs.

6.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels:

Autumn term – attendance print out at parents' evening

Spring term - attendance print out at parents' evening

Summer term – attendance print out with school report

7. Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office (see appendix C). The headteacher may require evidence, such as flight tickets, to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

7.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school rewards attendance in the following ways:

- The winning class for best attendance is highlighted in the school newsletter and rewarded with a trophy in our Gospel prayer and liturgy assembly.
- Each term, pupils who have 100% attendance for the term, are given a badge to recognise their excellent attendance.
- Those who achieve 100% attendance for the year, up to and including the last day of term, will be rewarded with a very special certificate.

The school uses a traffic light system to measure the impact of attendance: -

How Good Is Your Attendance

Attendance %	<u>Missed Education</u>	<u>Impact</u>	Attendance %
	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Weeks	
96 – 100% Green	Your child is taking full advantage of his/her learning!		
85 – 95.9 % Amber	9 – 19 days	2 – 4 weeks	Satisfactory. Your child will need to spend time catching up with their work.
	19 – 29 days	4 – 6 weeks	Your child is in danger of underachieving

			and will need your help and support to keep up with his/her learning.
	29 – 38 days	6 – 8 weeks	Your child's poor attendance will be having a significant impact on his/her learning.
Below 85% Red	38 days plus	8 weeks plus	Your child is not getting a wide and varied education. You are in danger of being prosecuted.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, the pastoral team and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Attendance data is reported at Full Governing Body meetings as part of our Safeguarding report and is reviewed regularly in pastoral meetings. Data for children's attendance falling below 90% is highlighted. Data may be highlighted, if there is a significant cause for concern, for such groups as: Gender, SEN, 'Looked after Children', Free School Meals, and English as an Additional Language.

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance e.g. Early Help
- Follow the 'fast track to attendance' procedure

10. Safeguarding Procedures

- All staff must be alert to pupils at risk who are absent and/or missing in education. Concerns should be immediately directed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). No child should be removed from the school roll until they are registered with another education establishment OR

parents/guardians have officially taken the alternative route of Home Education OR the family are re-locating abroad.

- Parents are required to meet with the Headteacher stating their intention to re-locate abroad.
- For children who are going to be educated within the UK the *Pupil Movement Form/In-Year Notification of Pupil Movement* form is completed and sent into the LA – School Admissions Dept.

11. Children Absent from Education including Children Missing from Education (CME)

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues.

Children Missing from Education (CME) are pupils on roll at school, who are absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown. This might be:

- A child who is not at their last known address and:
 - has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:
 - has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown.

Schools have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils and they should investigate any unexplained absences.

If a child is absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown, schools have a duty to carry out reasonable enquiries, jointly with the local authority, to ascertain the whereabouts of the child.

In these instances, all schools should ensure the following actions are taken and recorded:

- Consider the likely reason for the absence – has the family been granted leave of absence or is the school aware of an extended trip abroad; has the child been absent due to sickness or unavoidable cause? If not:
 - Make a first day of absence call to the parents to establish the reason for the absence and to confirm the child's whereabouts
 - Check with all members of staff who the child may have had contact with
 - Check with the child's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school or other schools
 - Make enquiries with other professionals who have been involved with the child
 - Make telephone calls to any numbers held or identified
 - Conduct a visit to the last known address of the child within the first five days of the child's absence
 - If appropriate, enquire of neighbours about the location of the family
 - Send a letter to the last known address and record the outcome

- If required, call the CME Team who will conduct ‘background checks’ on the family
- Refer the child to the ‘CME’ team within the first five days of the child’s absence

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum biannually by the designated senior leader for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

Appendix A: DfE Attendance Codes

DfE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated Off Site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity



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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or Dental etc appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical / Dental Appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix B: Outstanding unexplained absence letter

Dear parent/carer

Student name and class

It appears from our records that has been absent from school since . We have not heard from you regarding this absence and have not been successful in contacting you to discover the reason why.

It is very important that parents inform the school by telephone, letter or personal visit, of any absence on the first and each subsequent day that your child is absent.

There is a twenty-four hour answer line available for all pupil absences to be recorded on. Please call the school number and leave a message so that the office staff can pick it up, inform the class teacher and record officially.

I would also be obliged if you would complete the form below and return it to the school office as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke

Headteacher

.....
Please Return to the School Office

Child's name _____ Class _____

Reason for absence:

Parent name _____ Signature _____

Appendix C: Leave in Term Time Request Form

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST

(to be completed by parents/carers only)

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

I request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Dates of absence

From To No of school days

Address where we will be staying.....
.....
.....

Email address.....

Phone Number.....

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

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- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

Parent/Carer Name	Parent/Carer Name
DOB	DOB
Address	Address
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

Request **agreed / denied**

Signed

Date

Head Teacher

Appendix D – Leave in Term Time – Approved

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES - AUTHORISED

This contract is an agreement between

The Parents/Carer ofand the school.

We have agreed that will be absent from school

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

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from (date).....to (date).....

The absence is due to exceptional circumstances and needs to take place at this time because

.....

He/she will return to school on or before

The address he/she will be staying at whilst on leave is

.....

The email address we can be contacted at is enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

The phone number we can be contacted on is 01214642141

It is understood that if he/she does not return by the agreed date:

- the Local Authority may take legal action/issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each absent child;
- he/she may be reported to the Local Authority as a missing child and/or removed from the school register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Parent's/Carer's signature:

Head teacher's signature:

Date:

Appendix E – Leave in Term Time – Denied

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES - UNAUTHORISED

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

Please be aware that where schools are concerned about a child/young person's absence levels, whether absence is authorised or unauthorised, it is important that the school act to improve attendance levels at the earliest opportunity. School will be required to follow the 'FAST-track to Attendance' procedure where there are concerns about unacceptable levels of individual pupil absence.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L. Yorke
Head Teacher

Appendix F – Leave in Term Time – Denied (LD1 letter – more than 10 sessions of absence)

LD1

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»

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Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



«City»

«PostCode»



Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

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/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

If you decide to take the leave the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

We are sure you would not wish to jeopardise your child's academic progress by taking them away at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L. Yorke
Head Teacher

Enclosure: copy of 'Leave of Absence Request Form'

Appendix G – Leave in Term Time - Denied (LD2 letter – no absence request made by parents)

LD2

Ref:



Archdiocese of Birmingham

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

This letter is sent to parents/carers whose child is/has been absent from school due to possible unauthorised leave in term time.

Although you may have contacted school after the leave commenced to explain the circumstances, or, asked a friend/relative to notify the school, please be aware that the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment) 2016 do not allow for retrospective authorisation of leave in term time. In addition, if you asked a friend/relative to contact the school on your behalf, their explanation could not be accepted as parents must contact the school directly themselves.

If it was not unauthorised leave but illness which caused your child's absence you will need to provide medical evidence to the school in order for it to be authorised. This could include:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist
- Evidence of a positive Covid-19 test

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required unless the child has been treated abroad.

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/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'. Unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action being taken against you.

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Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



I would also advise that if your child is still currently absent, you must return the child to school with immediate effect unless you have medical evidence that the child is too ill to attend.

If you haven't already done so, please contact the school urgently regarding the circumstances of your child's absence.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L. Yorke
Head Teacher



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Appendix H – School Attendance Letter BCC

School Attendance – a very important message for all parents/carers

September 2023

Important - please read!

Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is an important update about school attendance for the 2023/24 academic year. St Mary's Catholic Primary School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance.

A big thank you to the majority of parents who make sure their children attend school regularly, particularly during the current cost of living crisis impacting families.

Your efforts, working in partnership with the school, will ensure that your child will have the best chance to achieve their academic potential and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. It will also enable your child to:

- access the lessons needed to achieve their expected grades
- maintain friendships and develop new ones
- have access to social and sporting events offered by the school
- explore potential careers
- develop work habits such as good punctuality which are essential to thrive in the world of employment

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons

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If you are worried about your child/children's attendance the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with the school directly. The school has specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed. If you have concerns about mental health; domestic abuse; parenting; bereavement; finance; problems with drugs and alcohol; you can find help and support from the 'From Birmingham with Love' webpage: [From Birmingham with Love](#)

Additionally, Birmingham City Council provides online information and guidance to parents on school attendance which you can access here: [School Attendance Information for Parents](#)

It may be tempting to book a family holiday in term time to save on costs during the cost of living crisis. Parents have also told us that the impact of industrial action in schools and the recent pandemic has made them even more likely to book holidays during the school term.

However, now is not the time for children to miss even more school. Family holidays in term time are not allowed in law and are very unlikely to be authorised. Taking children on leave without applying for authorisation may mean the school has to report your child as 'missing' to the local authority and holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively in law. Adding even more absence to the time children have missed because of school closures only means that the children miss even more lessons that will not be repeated.

Family emergencies also need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Notifying the school of leave due to a family emergency does not mean it will be authorised.

Please note that where parents fail to ensure their child attends school regularly, legal action, including penalty notices, may be considered.

We wish you and your child/children all the best for the new academic year.

Kind regards

Education Legal Intervention Team
Birmingham City Council

Mrs L. Yorke Head teacher

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Appendix I – Punctuality Letter

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
 «AddressLine1»
 «AddressLine2»
 «City»
 «PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName»

Your child, «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» has been identified as having poor punctuality at «School_name» School.

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

Poor punctuality can lead to your child...

- Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends
- Missing the beginning of vital lessons
- Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day
- Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future

If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss, contact me immediately. If you have other concerns about your child or other difficulties you would like support with,

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please contact the school who may be able to assist in the form of an early help assessment.
You can also find help and support here:

[From Birmingham with Love](#)

Your child's punctuality must now improve or the school may have no option but to take further action against you.

If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and telephone number and I will call you back.

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke
Headteacher



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Appendix J – Medical Absence and no Authorisation Letter

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

Your child's poor attendance at school this year is causing serious concern as **he/she** has been absent for **number** of sessions out of a possible **number** of sessions. This will make it much harder for your child to achieve good results in their school work. **Most/All** of the absence has been due to illness or for medical reasons.

Unfortunately, due to the high levels of absence from school, **the Head Teacher can no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by medical evidence.** If you have concerns about your child's health and wellbeing, we are able to make a referral to the School Nurse with your consent if we haven't done so already. High levels of illness absence may also warrant a discussion with your GP to rule out any underlying medical conditions and we would urge you to make an appointment at the earliest opportunity.

Should **Pupil's name** have any further sessions of absence because of illness or medical reasons you are strongly advised to provide one of the following which may enable the Head Teacher to authorise your child's absence:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
- Letters concerning hospital appointments

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- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required. Please do not request these from your GP as s/he will not be able to provide one.

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996 Section 444).

We work with parents to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you have other concerns about your child or other difficulties you would like support with, please contact the school who may be able to assist in the form of an early help assessment. You can also find help and support here: [From Birmingham with Love](#)

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance please contact me. If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number and I will call you back.

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke
Headteacher

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Appendix K – Head Teacher Concern Letter

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

I'm writing to you to express concern about **«ChildFirstName»** attendance in school. As you may be aware, it is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure children attend school regularly.

We work with parents/carers to help improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve their potential in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- are less likely to earn high wages as adults

If you feel your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues, we can arrange for a referral to the school nurse. You are also advised to approach your doctor urgently and to inform the school of the outcome. If there are other difficulties affecting your ability to ensure your child attends school regularly, we may be able to help and offer an early help assessment so please contact us urgently to arrange a meeting. You can also find help and support here:

[From Birmingham with Love](#)

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance, please contact the school. If you call and there is no one available, please leave a message and contact telephone number and we will call you back.

I hope this is helpful to you and we look forward to seeing **«ChildFirstName»** in school more regularly from now on.

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke
Mrs Louise Yorke
Headteacher

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Appendix L – Attendance Support Letter

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

I'm writing to you to express concern about «ChildFirstName» attendance in school.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts to support you, including inviting you to a school attendance review meeting, it appears that «s/he» still has unauthorised absence from school.

We have been advised to notify the local authority of our concerns. Therefore, someone from the Education Legal Intervention Team will be in contact with you shortly. I would urge you to use the opportunity to discuss your concerns with the officer in order to resolve matters without the need for legal action to be instigated, and to ensure your child has no further unauthorised absence.

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/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.*

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing «ChildFirstName» in school more regularly from now on.

I hope this is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke

Headteacher



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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



Appendix M – Invitation to School Attendance Review Meeting

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

FAST-track to Attendance Invitation to a School Attendance Review Meeting

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

There have been continuing difficulties concerning the attendance of your child «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» at «SchoolName».

To assist you, the school have tried to engage with you to offer additional support such as Early Help to improve «ChildFirstName»'s attendance and prevent the need for legal action.

In an attempt to resolve issues regarding attendance, a formal School Attendance Review Meeting has been arranged at «SchoolName» on «AppointDate» at «AppointTime».

It is very important that you attend. Your co-operation is essential.

This meeting is an opportunity for you to discuss any matters of concern. If you now require Early Help, you must attend the meeting after which an assessment can be arranged.

Failure to attend this meeting and further unauthorised absence could result in you being prosecuted in court or a penalty notice being issued.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Section 444, Education Act 1996).

Please contact me urgently on the telephone number provided if you are unable to attend. If I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke (Headteacher)

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Appendix N – School Attendance Review Meeting – Record Sheet

School Attendance Review Meeting Record Sheet

(If the parents/carers do not attend, please go straight to page 7 and complete the sheet)

Meeting held on:

At:

Attended by:

.....
.....
.....

IMPORTANT: Before we start the meeting, do you, your child or any member of your household currently have symptoms of Covid-19?

Y N

If yes, and the meeting is being held in person, you must end the meeting and check that the family is following the most current advice from Public Health England and the Department for Health and Social Care. The family must be advised to seek an urgent Covid 19 test and provide the school with a copy of the test outcome as soon as it is available.

Introduction

Thank you for attending this School Attendance Review Meeting. The meeting will provide you with the opportunity to explain why your child/ren has/have had unauthorised absence. *(if there is more than one child in the family, record information on separate sheets from page 2 onwards).*

Child Name.....	Child Name.....
DOB.....	DOB.....
Address.....	Address.....
.....
.....

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Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Relationship to child/ren	Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Relationship to child/ren
--	--

If only one person attends the SARM:

Do you have a partner who lives at this address? If so what is their name?

Parent/Carer Name

DOB.....

Relationship to child/ren:

.....

For a parent who lives at a different address from child/ren describe all contact they have with child (how often/do they stay overnight/are they involved regarding their child/ren's education etc)

.....

.....

.....

“You now have an opportunity to explain why your child has poor attendance. I am going to ask you some questions. Please answer them as fully as possible.”

(Note that it is acceptable for staff to assist parents in answering the questions if necessary)

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1. Have you or any of your family had Covid 19? If yes what happened?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Are there any members of your household who were previously shielding? If so, now that shielding has ended, is that related to your children's non attendance in school?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Has your child been too ill to attend school for reasons other than Covid-19 on some or all of these periods of absence? (Show copy of attendance printout)

Y N

If yes:

What illness has the child had?.....
.....
.....

Have you taken your child to a GP or Consultant?

Y N

What advice did they give you?.....
.....
.....

Do you have medical evidence i.e. a medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, doctor's note (not required), medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of a prescription, print screen of medical notes, letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence? **Handwritten notes or telephone calls from parents are not acceptable when attendance is of serious concern.**



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Y N

If a doctor has not been consulted, why not?

.....

.....

Do you consent to a school nurse referral if needed?

Y N

If yes, what is the name of your child's GP and which surgery are they registered with please?
If no, what is the reason for this?

.....

.....

.....

4. Are any other agencies or professionals (involved with) working with your family?

Y N

If yes, who are they and what work are they doing with your family?

.....

.....

.....

5. Has your child been bullied?

Y N

If yes, who have you reported this to in School and what action was taken?

.....

.....

.....

If this has not been reported, why not?

.....

.....

.....

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Is this matter now resolved?

Y N

6. What actions have you taken to get your child to attend School?

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. Are there **any other reasons at all**, such as difficulties at home, housing problems, illness or disability issues, relationship or behaviour difficulties etc., which you think may be affecting your child's ability to attend School regularly?

Y N

If yes, could you please outline the difficulties the family is experiencing?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Would you like some assistance from relevant services in order to help to resolve these difficulties via an Early Help Assessment?

Y N

8. Are there **any travel issues affecting your** child attending School regularly?

(Discuss transport arrangements at this point if pupil is in receipt of home / school transport)

.....
.....
.....
.....

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Action Plan

"We are now going to agree on an Action Plan."

(All paperwork must be legible and signed, photocopied and a copy given to each parent at the end of the meeting - all 5 pages of this document. Send a typed copy of the Action Plan if writing is not easy to read).

Actions by parent/carer

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school and handing them over to a named person if necessary. (If the parent is required to hand the child over to a member of staff / School Reception, please record arrangements here:)
.....
.....
- Contact school on the first day of every absence **before 9.30am** stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.
- Take your child to the doctor if unwell and provide the school with medical evidence i.e. an appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a relevant professional, hospital letter concerning appointments, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes or any other medical evidence which enables the Head Teacher to authorise the absence as illness or medical appointment. School will not authorise medical absence without this evidence. **Handwritten notes or telephone calls from parents are not acceptable when attendance is of serious concern.**
- Contact the school if your child is experiencing any difficulties preventing regular attendance.

Any other actions agreed;

.....
.....

Actions by School

- To respond to parental contact promptly.

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- To continue to monitor attendance.
- To complete Early Help assessment (*delete as appropriate*)
- To complete a school nurse referral (*delete as appropriate*)
- To **only** authorise absence due to illness when provided with medical evidence. (Handwritten notes or telephone calls from parents are not acceptable when attendance is of serious concern).

Any other actions agreed:

.....

.....

"Is there any further support we can offer you?"

Y **N**

.....

.....

.....

Statement

I must advise you that any further unauthorised absence is likely to lead to legal action.
 The law states that your child must attend school on every occasion that it is open unless there is a reason that enables the Head Teacher to authorise the absence under the Regulations. The law also states that it is parents' responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

Statement read to the parent(s)

Y **N**

School representative

Signed.....Dated.....

Parent Statement

I confirm that I have read these notes and understand the contents of this meeting.

Parent/Carer.....Signed..... Dated.....

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Parent/Carer.....Signed..... Dated.....

'Parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of him/her.

Have copies of the School Attendance Review Meeting Record Sheet been given to the parent at the end of the meeting?

Y N

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School Attendance Review Meeting - Record sheet to be used when parents don't attend the SARM

Meeting held on:

At:

Child Name DOB Address	Child Name DOB Address
Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Relationship to child/ren	Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Relationship to child/ren

Did the parents notify you that they couldn't attend the SARM? If yes, what was the reason given?.....
.....
.....

Did the parents request the meeting be re-arranged? Y N

Rearranged date and if the parents attended:
.....
.....
.....



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Appendix O – Formal Warning Notice

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»

«AddressLine1»

«AddressLine2»

«City»

«PostCode»

Fast-track to Attendance Formal Warning Notice

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER. TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

Your child/ren, «ChildFirstName» has/have been identified as having poor attendance at «SchoolName».

To assist you, the school have tried to engage with you to offer additional support such as Early Help etc.; have invited you to attend a formal School Attendance Review Meeting; and have provided you with advice to improve your child's attendance.

Despite this, there is now a significant amount of unauthorised absence. 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/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.*

This is a formal warning notice advising you that the Local Authority may consider issuing a penalty notice/taking legal action against you should there be any further unauthorised absence.

To avoid this you **must** prevent any further unauthorised absence. You are reminded that you need to provide medical evidence in order for the school to authorise any illness absences. Details of the medical evidence required is included on the attached leaflet.

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I would strongly advise that you read the attached leaflet which will provide further guidance on getting your child to school and advice as to your legal responsibilities.

Most attendance problems can be sorted out by parents. **If your child/ren is/are having any difficulties please contact the school immediately and ask for an Early Help assessment.**

Yours sincerely,

L. Yorke

Mrs Louise Yorke

Headteacher