



Attendance Policy

**Implementation date- 2021
Review date- 2023**

Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy Statement:

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims:

St Michael's Community Academy is actively involved in promoting and improving attendance through this policy which aims to:

- To improve the overall percentage of pupil's regular school attendance and achieve annually agreed targets for attendance
- To create a culture in which good attendance is "normality"
- To demonstrate to pupils, parents and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To be consistent in the implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- To be socially, culturally and educationally inclusive and to value the individual

Objectives:

- To involve the children more in school attendance matters using the School Council and any other initiatives
- To improve communications with parents about regular school attendance and provide translations and interpreters as necessary
- All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children's attendance and make the Family Support Worker aware of any possible problems
- To recognise the importance of the role of class teachers and the Family Support Worker in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- To ensure time and organisation within the school to enable the aims and objectives to be met
- Effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service

and the reporting of half-termly figures to the service

- To be aware of children's social, cultural and religious beliefs and, where possible, take these into consideration with regard to attendance.

Targets:

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To discuss the setting of targets for the school with the Education Welfare Officer
- To ensure such data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO
- To agree specific targets for classes and the whole school in a context of all known relevant factors
- To write a report for the Governors at the end of each term, detailing all aspects of attendance for that term
- To target resources and implement them where most appropriate and to undertake this within a reasonable time frame
- To keep parents, pupils and Governors informed of policy and practice
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as looked after children or children from certain ethnic origins.

The Parents/Carers:

Parents/carers will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- When children first start at our school
- Through home/school contracts
- Through newsletters
- At parents' evenings/consultations
- In the school prospectus

The Children:

Children will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- In assemblies
- In the classroom during appropriate areas of the curriculum
- Through the school council

Procedure:

- Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence.
There are two types of absence:
 - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
 - Unauthorised (where the school does not approve absence)
- It is expected that parents will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent on the first day the absence occurs. School will be informed of a reason for absence by 9am on the first day of absence and this can be by

letter, telephone, text or personally at the office. School should be updated of any on-going absences on a daily basis.

- If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parents or carers, then the school will contact the home by either text message and/or telephone on the initial day
- If absence continues without explanation, school will telephone, send a letter or in some circumstances undertake a home visit.
This contact will be recorded in the register.
- The Head teacher will regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Children or young people with 100% attendance each term will be rewarded with a certificate and the Attendance cup is awarded to the class with the best attendance weekly.

Identification & Referral

- Identification is made by the class teacher (cause for concern)
- Concerns are passed to the person responsible for contacting parents (Office or Family Support Worker)
- Person responsible will contact parents by letter stating that their child's attendance has deteriorated and that there will be a period of monitoring for two weeks when a significant improvement will be expected.
- Following the letter, there will be two weeks' monitoring of the child or young person's attendance
- If there is no improvement, at this point, a further letter may be sent and parents can be invited in for a meeting
- School may, after two weeks' further monitoring, inform parents that they will refer to the Education Welfare Service
- Reinforce parental duty to ensure full school attendance
- If attendance has improved over the last four weeks, school may continue to monitor attendance
- At this point school would refer to Education Welfare Service if attendance has not improved.
- The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parents and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate

Completing the Register

- St Michael's Community Academy operates a computerised registration system and the registration commences at 8:45am in the morning and 1:00pm in the afternoon. Morning register closes at 9:00am and afternoon register at 1:15pm. Our Nursery registers are taken at 8:30am for the morning session and 12:30pm for the afternoon session.
- The twice-daily requirement to register pupils can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children or young people formally from home, and serve as an introduction to the session

- The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost
- For schools with computerised registers the Governing Body is responsible for registering with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998
- Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school
- The register should be marked using the symbols advised by DfE

Lateness

The school gates open at 8:35 am and are closed at 8:45am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Morning register closes at 9:00am and afternoon register at 1:15pm

If children arrive after the school gates are closed all parents must bring their children to the main entrance to be separately signed in.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken. The Education Welfare Officer can issue a fixed penalty Notice if a child is late (after the register closes) for 10 sessions or more over two consecutive half terms.

Leave of Absence (exceptional circumstances) during term time

The amendments make clear that **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. The amendments give **parents no entitlement** to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time

The Head teacher and Governing Body will determine what the exceptional circumstances are

- The parent with whom the child resides must apply in writing to the school
- The letter/application must explain the exceptional circumstance surrounding the request for the leave of absence
- The Head teacher will determine whether the exceptional circumstance ruling applies, if not the application will be declined

Should the application be declined and the parent still takes their child on holiday, The school may then follow the option of applying to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued

What can parents do to help?

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child or young person is away
- Send a note when your child returns to school

- Try to make appointments outside school time
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary

If you are worried about your child’s attendance at school what can you do?

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple
- Talk to the Head teacher and staff at the school
- Talk to the Education Welfare Service

You may contact the Education Welfare Officer, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation.

The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parents need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Parents need to be aware that St Michael’s Community Academy works in co-operation with the Education Welfare Service.

Parents need to be aware that Cheshire East Council in conjunction with Schools are operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non attendance.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire East is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority. This aims to improve the attainment of minority pupils across Cheshire East. Schools are aware and take into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parents and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

PENALTY INFORMATION

Penalties for unauthorised absence		
Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per parent

After 28 days	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	You will receive a summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your children's regular attendance
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Website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ews