



Mary's CE Primary School
'Nurturing Success'



Date Reviewed: November 25

Date Due for Review: November 26

Attendance Policy

Advice and contact list

Name	role	Contact details
Mrs Rawlings Mrs Sayer Mrs Tennant	Members of staff responsible for day to day management of attendance	01482 868149 stmarysbeverley.primary@eastriding.gov.uk
Mr Frankish Mrs Wallis	senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school	c.frankish@stmarysbeverley.eriding.net stmarysbeverley.head.primary@eastriding.gov.uk
Mr Frankish (DSL; AHT Inclusion) Mrs Wallis (DDSL)	Designated safeguarding lead/ Pastoral lead	c.frankish@stmarysbeverley.eriding.net
Bianca O'Leary	Education Welfare Service	education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk

Definition of a parent - For the purpose of this policy, as set out within 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' August 2024 a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

DfE – Department for Education

Related legislation and guidance

'Working together to improve school attendance' August 2024

Education Act 1996

Education (Pupil registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

'Children Missing in Education,' Statutory Guidance September 2016

'Keeping Children Safe in Education,' September 2025

'Ensuing a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs,' January 2013

'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance,' February 2023

'Promoting the education of children with a social worker,' - June 2021

'Supporting Pupils at school with medical conditions,' December 2015

'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement,' September 2023

Other related policies

Absence from school in Exceptional Circumstances Policy (some schools call this 'term time holiday' policy)

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Behaviour Policy

Introduction and core principles

At St Mary's, we are committed to nurturing every child (and every adult) as a unique individual to be the best that they can be, within a safe, friendly and welcoming community rooted in Christian values. Our vision is to provide an education of the highest quality through a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which focuses on the development of the whole person. We want children to develop as happy, confident and articulate individuals who will love learning throughout their lives.

Our Attendance Policy is shaped by our vision which seeks to promote and celebrate all that is good and unique in every individual within our community. As it says in Philippians 4:

Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Our chosen key Christian values as a school of friendship, respect, trust, hope, wisdom and perseverance are at the heart of our positive and nurturing approach and underpin our relationships with others and our practice.

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils. The attendance policy should account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so schools should always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In development and implementation of their policy, schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand

these expectations, this attendance policy, based on the expectations set out in ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’ August 2024 outlines these.

The policy should be easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, including being published on the school’s website. Parents should be sent it with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.

At St Mary’s CE Primary School, we recognise the link between regular attendance and high attainment. We expect that all pupils will attend school every day that the school is open unless there is a specific reason for the pupil not attending. We are committed to applying the core principles as set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance, August 2024.

Roles, responsibilities and expectations – the table below is taken from the DfE ‘Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance,’ August 2024.

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.	Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.	Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.	Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
	Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.	
	Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.	

School Times

It is important that your child is at school for the start of the school day. The school day is made up of two sessions, a morning, and an afternoon. Registers are taken during these sessions. School times are: Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50 am and will be kept open until 9:00 am. Children arriving after 9:00am but before 9:20am will be marked as late. Children who arrive after 9:20am will be marked as an unauthorised late absence. Parents/carers must notify the school office about the reason for a child arriving into school after 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1:10pm.

If your child arrives at school after the register has closed then your child will incur an unauthorised absence mark for this session unless an acceptable reason is provided, e.g. evidence of a medical/dental appointment.

Informing the school of the reason for an unexpected absence.

You must contact the school as soon as possible to inform us that your child will not be attending school and you will be asked to provide a reason for this absence. The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence (and each subsequent day of absence where necessary) This should happen by 9am or as soon as practically possible by emailing the school office stmarysbeverley.primary@eastriding.gov.uk, sending a message via the school gateway or calling the school office on 01482 868149 from 8:30 am. There is also a facility to leave an answer phone message when calling this number. This will ensure that the absence is accurately recorded in the register.

Informing the school of the reason for a 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 and provides evidence of it. Parents/carers should request leaves of absence by contacting the school as above.

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.

Requesting leaves of absence from school in exceptional circumstances.

Please complete the school's form to request absence from school in exceptional circumstances. The form can be found on the school website (Parent Portal/Absence/Absence for Exceptional Circumstances).

If your request is not approved and your child is absent during this time then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the school may refer the unauthorised absences to the local authority and parents may be liable for a penalty notice (fine).

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. The Primary Behaviour and Attendance Partnership, the Secondary Twilight Partnership and the council agree to follow the law, which states that the provision for Headteachers to authorise absence solely for the purpose of a family holiday is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad, where evidence is provided that the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future over school holidays
- where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
- the death or terminal illness of a person close to the family
- to attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Please note: Evidence would be required in each case. If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances, but falls within the following times of the school year, the headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half-term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
- year six transition day (for pupils in Year 6)
- year six SATs week (for pupils in Year 6)
- at any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of these reasons, the Headteacher may seek advice from the Education Welfare Officer.

How the school is promoting and incentivising good attendance.

- Regular reminders in the newsletter about the importance of good attendance
- Reasons requested from parents when reporting absence
- Any unreported absences followed up by a text and then phone call on the same morning
- Parental support provided for identified families where there is persistent lateness or absence including meetings where targets are set
- Half-termly analysis of data
- Involvement of the Educational Welfare Officer

The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

All schools record their attendance registers in a school information management system. The school will analyse this data to identify trends and patterns of pupil absence and may use this to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

The school will use its attendance data to help it identify pupils whose attendance has fallen below 90%, making them at risk of becoming a persistently absent pupil or below 50% (at risk of becoming a severely persistently absent pupil).

The school will contact parents/carers to discuss their child's attendance if there are regular absences.

If a child is absent from school and the parent/carer has not contacted school regarding the absence by 9:20, the school office will contact the parent via phone call or text. If no contact is made or an appropriate reason isn't given, the school office will inform senior leaders who will decide on the next course of action. This may include calls to adults listed as other contacts for the child, calls to other professionals (e.g. a social worker) or a house visit.

The school will engage with parents/carers regarding attendance concerns and discuss support that could be implemented. This may include regular check-ins, access to ELSA and engagement with the emotionally based school avoidance resources.

Letters are sent to parents/carers of pupils who are persistently absent. These are followed up with meetings with parents where support strategies are discussed and agreed and targets are set. Close monitoring of all pupils in this category takes place on a weekly basis.

Where there is no improvement in school attendance and all support interventions both in school and out of school as outlined above have been offered, then the school will meet with the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service (EWS) and agree whether they will become involved and formal interventions may be considered. These formal interventions could include the use of a voluntary parenting contract, penalty notice, education supervision order, school attendance order or prosecution in the magistrate's court.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

As noted in 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' 2024, the school will seek the views of pupils and parents as part of the review process.