

St. Matthew's C of E Primary School

Policies

St. Matthew's
CofE Primary School



"Let all that you do be done with love." 1 Corinthians 16:14"

Our Policy: Attendance

Approval Date: September 2026
Review Date : September 2027

ST. MATTHEW'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

At St. Matthew's C of E Primary School, we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences, school places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents.

COMMUNICATION

Information on the importance of everyday attendance, and the procedures involved is given to parents at different times of the school year e.g. in the School Brochure, at pre-school induction meetings, meet the teacher, through the Home/School agreement and during "in year" admission meetings. Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents.

ATTENDANCE TARGETS

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. These will reflect both national and Bolton LA attendance targets. The school reviews its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its targets. This policy will outline the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Any child who is absent from the school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as reason not yet known (N). All parents are asked to contact school if their child is absent. This should be done by telephoning or calling into the school office. A record is kept in the attendance section of BromCom. Where deemed necessary, the school may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence in order for absences to be authorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of the school day at 8.50 am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes until 9.20 am. Any child arriving after this time will be marked as having a Late (after registers closed), unless there is an acceptable explanation.

Reception	The afternoon registration will be at 12.45 pm
Year 1	The afternoon registration will be at 1:00 pm
Year 2	The afternoon registration will be at 1:15 pm
Year 3	The afternoon registration will be at 12.30 pm
Year 4	The afternoon registration will be at 12:30 pm
Year 5	The afternoon registration will be at 1:15 pm
Year 6	The afternoon registration will be at 1:15 pm

Children arriving after the start of school, 8:50, but before the end of the registration period, 9:20, will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close.

First Day Absence

Parents are asked to contact school on their child's first day of absence before 9:00am. If no notification is received, the Office Staff will contact the parents/carers by phone or parent texting. Whenever possible, this will be done daily. All information, received, is recorded in the office books or directly onto BromCom and the class books to inform the teaching staff, who complete the registers. In exceptional circumstances for poor attenders this will be logged onto CPOMs.

Continuing or Frequent Absence

If a child is regularly late for school or is often absent then the Office will notify the Pastoral Manager who will visit the child at home and discuss any issues with their parent. If this persists, then the school attendance champion or pastoral manager registers their concern and will invite the parents in to discuss the reasons for the absences. If there is an urgent concern then the class teacher talks to the Headteacher immediately. The school attendance champion and Pastoral manager works closely with the office on a weekly basis to track the attendance.

If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, who then contacts the parent, and the Pastoral Manager. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parent then the Headteacher talks to the child concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher and appropriate action is taken.

Children Missing Education

If a child is absent beyond 10 days and the school has been unable to make any contact with the family and their whereabouts appear to be unknown then the child will be referred to the CME (Child Missing Education). The school will liaise with EIS until the situation is resolved.

A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register.

Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE August 2024) [Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121111/Children_Missing_Education_-_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)

A Welcome Back

On return from an absence or arriving late it is important that all children are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that children are helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been given to the other children

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absences are scanned on the relevant child's linked documents in BromCom. Office books, which contain notes of verbal explanations given by the parents, will also be stored. If there are concerns about absence for a child, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period of time.

Attendance Rewards

The Headteacher, School Council and staff decide on appropriate rewards to celebrate good attendance. The current rewards are as follows:

- The classes with the highest monthly percentage gets the attendance trophy to keep in the class for the month
- Certificates for children with 100% attendance at the end of the school year are given an appropriate award.

Date of Policy:	April 2025
Date agreed by Governors:	April 2025
Next Review Date:	April 2026

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS/TIME OUT OF SCHOOL

Holidays or time out of school is damaging to a child's education. It is often assumed that parents/carers have the right to take up to 10 days term time holiday each academic year. This has never been the case and from April 2013 Headteachers may only authorise time out for **exceptional circumstances**.

All schools now have yearly targets for attendance and they are held accountable for attendance by the Department of Education and Ofsted. Schools falling below an overall target of 95% are issued with a Notice for Improvement (this indicates the school is failing).

The Governors of St. Matthew's C.E. Primary School, recognising the crucial importance of attendance, have drawn up the following information for parents.

All "time out of school" **must be requested in writing** (request forms from school) at least 4 weeks in advance. Holidays must **not be booked** before receiving authorisation because they may not be authorised and if parents still choose to take the time, they may be issued with a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool.

Therefore, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead.

This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Authorised time out of school

Amendments to the 2006 regulations make it clear the Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are either special or exceptional circumstances. Parents who feel their circumstances are exceptional will be able to present their request to the Headteacher in writing. Medical or other proof may be needed to strengthen the request. Family situations which occur at short notice will also be considered by the Headteacher.

It is very important for school and parents to work together to achieve good, regular attendance for all of the children in our care.

Leave of Absence in Term Time Request Form

Parents **do not have the right** to take their child/ren out of school during term time. By law parents must ask permission for their child/ren to miss school. Failure to get authorisation for time out of school will lead to a warning letter after 5 such absences (please note 1 day = 2 absences) and a penalty fine after 10 such absences.

Leave of Absence in Term Time Request Form

Parents do **not** have the right to take their child/ren out of school during term time. By law parents must ask permission for their child/ren to miss school. Failure to get authorisation for time out of school could lead to a penalty fine. (Please see attached information sheet from Bolton Council for more information).

Parent Section

Name of Child										
Date of Birth					Class					
Name of parent/Carer										
Address of Child										
Postcode					Telephone Number					
Information about the request for your child's leave of absence	Reason for the absence in term time									
	Is your child in Reception, Year 2 or Year 6?								Yes	No
	Is their attendance already below 95%?								Yes	No
	Is the requested absence for an exceptional circumstance?								Yes	No
	Have they had any leave during term time in previous years?								Yes	No
	If so how many days?									
	Would the absence be for more than 5 days?								Yes	No
	Does your child have any siblings for which you are requesting absence in term time in other schools?								Yes	No
If you have answered yes to the previous question please state which school your other children attend										
Length of Absence (school days)			From Date				To Date			
Emergency Tel contacts	1st					2nd				
Parent/Carer signature										

School Section

The cost, convenience or availability of a holiday must not be taken into consideration										
Is the child in Reception Year 2 or Year 6?								Yes	No	
Is the child's attendance below 95%?								Yes	No	
If this request is approved will the child's absence exceed 5 days in this school year?								Yes	No	
Was this child granted an absence in the previous school year?								Yes	No	
Has the child got siblings in another school for which an absence has been requested?					Yes	No	Has the school been contacted		Yes	No
Head Signature							ABSENCE APPROVED		Yes	No

