

English Martyrs Catholic Voluntary Academy
Attendance Policy



Adopted: 2012

Review: 2016



“We learn and grow as a family in the footsteps of Jesus “

Rationale

At the heart of everything we do at English Martyrs Voluntary Academy is a child's learning, but learning is compromised if they are absent or late. We therefore aim to ensure that our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of children. We have therefore adopted the following policy and procedures.

Objectives

- To improve attendance and punctuality at English Martyrs
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence and increase the percentage of complete weeks
- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
- Demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by English Martyrs
- Maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school

The Education Act 1966

The Education Act states that parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that parents meet these responsibilities. Attendance enforcement may be carried out by the LA Education Welfare Service who provide an important link between schools and families.

Pupil Registration

School is required to maintain two registers:

- An admission register (known as the school roll)
- An attendance register

The admission register contains a list of all children at school.

English Martyrs ensures that an attendance register for all children is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each child, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If a child is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence?

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a child of school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that registered children of school age attend school regularly. If attendance continues to be a problem the school may contact the Education Welfare Officer to resolve the problem. The law (from the Education Act of 1996) states that parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a penalty of up to £2500 and /or a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months, or alternatively a parenting order may be enforced.

We encourage a good working relationship with parents by regularly publishing the arrangements for notifying absence and the school's policy towards authorised absence in school's newsletters.

Procedures

Any child who is absent from school must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of the school day – 8.50am. Afternoon registration will take place by 1.00pm. Any child arriving after the closure of registration will be recorded as late. Where children are regularly late i.e. after 9am or 1.10pm, the school will write to the parents informing them of the schools concerns and offering support to help rectify the situation. If lateness is consistent and parents have not responded to support from the school then a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. Lateness is classed as unauthorised absence

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence. Where this does not happen, the school will make first day absence telephone contact. Class teachers are initially responsible for ensuring that the office is made aware when children are absent. The school office will then call the family and check on reasons for absence. This information will then be recorded and where necessary passed on to the relevant professional.

Ten Days Absence

Any child who is absent, without an explanation, for 10 consecutive days, will be referred to Education Welfare Service. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of action they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of everyone in the school community to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a child begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the family. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the school nurse if the problem appears to be medical. In other cases the school will discuss the problem with the school's Education Welfare Officer.

Frequent medical Absence

The school will discuss with the School Nurse those children who frequently miss days for medical reasons. Where necessary a medical note may be asked for to evaluate the child's health and educational needs.

Attendance Monitoring

The school monitors the attendance of all children on a weekly basis. Where the school have identified that a child's attendance has fallen below the level of 85% in any term and have had 4+ broken weeks, a standard letter will be issued to the family. This will make them aware of our concerns and the importance of consistent and regular attendance at school. If there is no subsequent improvement in a child's attendance a request will be made for a meeting with the parents and, where necessary, the Education Welfare Officer. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss expectations and try to ensure that their child's attendance improves. Support and advice will be offered where necessary. If a child's attendance continues to cause concern a letter of referral will be sent to the Education Welfare Service. The school will endeavour to work with and support all children and families wherever possible.

Holidays in term time

The school actively discourages the taking of holidays during term time. We accept there may be extraordinary circumstances where requests for absences of up to a maximum of 10 days a year may be made. This authorisation is discretionary and not a right.

Reward

To encourage improved attendance a system of rewards is in place. These may include certificates for full attendance termly, treats for the class with the highest attendance per term.

Attendance Targets

This year our target is 96.5%