



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our Attendance Policy reflects the vision and aims of Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School. We aim to maximise attendance rates and secure high levels of punctuality in order to ensure that all pupils are able to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them. All staff are concerned for the children's welfare and happiness and everyone plays a part in promoting good attendance.

Regular and punctual school attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. The importance of attendance and punctuality is discussed at our annual Induction Evening. This reiterates that children are expected to arrive at school, on time to ensure the best possible start to their day. This is also explicit in our Home/School Agreement. In line with the Education Act 1996, we expect all children on roll to attend school every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so (in line with our Health and Safety policy).

School Hours

Gates open	8.30am
Registration	8.45am
Lunchtime	12.00pm – 1.00pm*
Afternoon registration	1.00pm
School finishes	3.00pm

**(lunchtimes currently staggered between 11.40 am – 1.15pm, due to COVID best practice)*

Registration

School commences at 8.45am (gates open from 8.30am) and registers close at 8.55am. Children that arrive between 8.55am - 9.15am will be marked as late. Children that arrive after the register has closed at 9.15a.m., will be marked as an unauthorised late absence. The afternoon session commences between 1-1.15pm, depending on class start times and the register closes 10 minutes after.

ABSENCES

In the case of any unexpected absence parents/carers should inform the school immediately on the morning of absence or by the latest, 10.00am. Contact can be made by telephone, e-mail or ParentMail. In the event that a parent/carer has not contacted the school to provide a reason for absence, the school will contact the family using text message and/or email and telephone numbers provided. In the event that a family has not been contactable for 48 hours, and no reason has been provided for a child's absence, the school will contact the Education Welfare Officer and a home visit may be undertaken. Where the school has concerns about the welfare of a child or where they are already being monitored by the school for attendance or safeguarding, this may happen earlier.

Each morning and afternoon session will be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. The reason for each absence is recorded and the relevant code saved on our online register. A separate whole school Daily Absence Sheet is completed, stored in the office file and shared with the class teachers. First Aiders and Breakfast & After School Club are also copied into relevant information.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness of the pupil, unavoidable medical/dental appointments, days of religious observance or exceptional family circumstances, such as a bereavement.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been requested beforehand
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Parents taking children on holiday during term time when permission has not been sought beforehand and/or permission has not been granted

Absence through Illness

Margaret Roper School maintains close links with parents/carers in the case of chronic illness/long term sick/medical treatment. To continue momentum of learning, education will be provided as appropriate, to accommodate the child's medical condition and in consultation with the medical professionals.

Attendance and Punctuality Concerns

(details may be amended in light of the COVID pandemic and to reflect government guidelines)

Attendance that falls below 95% (the current Ofsted recommended level), raises concern as impacting upon a child's education. If there are concerns regarding a child's attendance/punctuality the Headteacher and Attendance Officer will examine the circumstances. In line with the Local Authority's recommended Staged Intervention approach, parents/carers of children whose attendance falls below this level, will be alerted on a half-termly basis by letter. If a child has developed a pattern of short-term absences, parents/carers will be asked to provide medical proof (appointment cards/letters etc) to ensure all is being done to support the possible underlying medical issue.

Attendance that falls between 80%-90% is of extreme concern. Where necessary, parents/carers will be asked to attend an informal discussion and are encouraged to work alongside staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Authority.

Late Collection – If parents/carers are persistently late to collect their child from school, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service. If the situation does not improve, a referral will be made to Social Services. In exceptional circumstances, any child remaining in school at 6.30pm will be referred to Social Services.

Requests for Holidays during Term Time

Family holidays should be avoided during term times. The possible detrimental effect on children's continuity of learning needs no elaboration. However, if unavoidable, a Notification of Absence Form must be obtained from the school office, completed and returned prior to the requested date of departure. This will be examined alongside the child's attendance record. At the Headteacher's discretion, a maximum of 5 school days may be authorised but only in exceptional circumstances.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is in operation and may be issued. If families take children on holiday in term time without authorisation from school or if a child arrives late (after the register has closed at 9.15 a.m.) more than 8 times in any half-term period, without prior notice of a medical/dental appointment etc, a Fixed Penalty Notice referral will be sent from school to the Local Authority, families will be informed that this has taken place. Penalty Notices will be issued without further warning by the Local Authority and range from £60 to £120.

Children Missing from Education

As defined by the Department for Education "a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)". In Croydon, referrals for CME are accepted after 10 consecutive school days of absence and after reasonable checks have been carried out by the school and their Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Rewards

Recognition for good attendance and punctuality forms an integral part of the school programme to demonstrate the importance and relevance to the children's education and personal development. At our weekly celebration assemblies on Friday morning, classes with 100% (or nearest to) attendance are congratulated and awarded a certificate to hang in their classroom. Also any class who has managed to attain 100% punctuality are also rewarded with a certificate.

At the end of each term, pupils who have attained 100% attendance will be awarded a certificate in assembly. Parents/Carers are also informed of this process in the school newsletter.

Policy of Equality Statement

The Board of Governors and Margaret Roper School are committed to a policy of equality. We aim to ensure that no employee, pupil, job applicant or member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnicity, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

Date Autumn Term 1 2021- Review date Spring Term 2023