



St Martin's School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction

St Martin's School is committed to providing the highest quality educational provision possible and prioritise safeguarding and well-being as a pre-cursor to this. We recognise that regular attendance and consistent punctuality is a key factor in achieving success in each of these areas so that every pupil can reach their full potential.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure all staff and governors are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. It is also designed to make parents aware of:

- their statutory and legal responsibility with regard to attendance and punctuality;
- the measures the school will take to record attendance and punctuality;
- St Martin's School procedures parents must follow in relation to absence;
- the protocols and sanction systems for parents who fail to comply with the procedures and expectations outlined in relation to attendance and punctuality.

Statutory and Legal responsibilities

We encourage all parents to work in partnership with the school and "send children to school regularly and punctually, properly dressed and in a suitable condition to learn" (Education Act 1944). We recognise that "Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly" (DfE 1999) and will provide a clear framework of expectations and procedures to support this. This policy, our protocols and recording systems are all designed to meet the requirements within: The Education Act 1996 (in particular sections 434 and 458); The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments to this document in 2010, 2011, 2013 & 2016.

Promotion of attendance and punctuality

St Martin's School staff, including governors, will seek to promote good attendance and consistent punctuality through the following actions:

- Ensuring this policy applies to all children including Nursery and Reception in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Creating a welcoming, nurturing environment in which pupils feel safe and secure.
- Ensuring positive, open communication in which pupils feel valued and respected.
- Establish a culture of growth mindset and responsibility for our own learning.
- Raise awareness of how consistent attendance and punctuality support learning, prevents knowledge gaps and enables children to reach their full potential.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are expected as the norm and valued as such.
- Raise awareness of pupils, parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.

School Recording Measures

All records are taken electronically using the school's Engage platform to ensure accurate up to date information is visible to all relevant staff at any time. For agreed planned absence, the office will complete the correct code in advance of registration so that teachers are aware of the absence and reason. There are occasions whereby an absence could be classed as an approved educational activity and these are considered positively in the attendance percentages. For a full list of codes we use, please refer to the [government's document on School Attendance](#). St Martin's teaching staff diligently take a registration of all children between 8.45 and 9.00am at which point, we expect that the majority of pupils would be present and again at the start of the afternoon session recorded with / (present am) or \ (present pm). Children arriving after 8.45am are considered late and recorded with an L by their teacher. Children arriving after 9.00 are considered late after registration closes which is recorded with a U by the office. For all absent pupils not recorded in advance, the code N will be used by teaching staff. The office will change this code as per the above linked document, if applicable, once we have received an explanation from parents via e-mail. We will inform parents whether an absence is authorised or not via e-mail but please be aware that absence percentages do not include this break down.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Consistent attendance and punctuality helps prevent learning gaps and offers the children the best chance of meeting their full potential. It is the responsibility of parents to:

- Ensure children arrive at school on time. The school gate is open from 8.10 until 8.45 to allow sufficient time for all pupils to arrive.
- To inform the office of any adults who are authorised to collect your child.
- To collect promptly at the end of the school day and make the office aware of any changes to the normal routine.
- To **NOT** arrange family holidays during term-time. In exceptional cases, the Headteacher/Proprietor may use their discretion to consider requests whilst applying government recommendations.
- To arrange medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance when requesting leave and the child should attend before and after the appointment.
- To complete an absence request form for any planned absences during term time at least 2 weeks in advance of the desired leave.
- To notify the school office via e-mail on the first day of absence before 9am giving an expected return date.
- To inform the school via e-mail if the absence is likely to extend beyond the initial return date.
- To provide medical evidence, where possible, on the child's return to school.
- To communicate with the school as soon as possible regarding any issues that might cause absence or lateness e.g. Parental illness.
- To support their child with any work the school provides during absences or to catch up with missed work upon their return to school.

Protocols and Sanctions

For all planned absences, a request for leave form which is available on the parent portal via the website, must be completed. If parents/carers decide to take a holiday without the Headteachers' authorisation, the child's absences will be marked as unauthorised. Fines of £100 per child will be issued for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. If a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. The school will automatically request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday. If the school office has not received an e-mail to explain an absence by 9.30am, we will phone all emergency contacts until we are able to reach a responsible adult. If we have not made contact by mid-day, we will conduct a home-visit to ensure the child's safety and well-being.

If any of the following reasons occur:

- a child is continuously absent for more than 5 days;
 - a pattern of absence develops;
 - the child's attendance falls below 95%
 - a child's lateness exceeds 5%;
- then the parent/carers will be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support. If unexplained absences continue, the decision may be taken to refer the family to the Local Authority for investigation and parents/carers may be liable for prosecution.

Children should be collected promptly at the end of their school day. As a courtesy, for exceptional circumstances, we will allow a 5 minute grace period for collection. Parents who are late dropping off or collecting their children will be charged £10.00 per child for the disruption caused. This will be raised as an invoice or, in the case of pupils who are leaving the following term, deducted from deposits held. Children left for over an hour is considered neglect and a MASH referral will be made.

Long Term Absence

In case of long term absence due to illness St. Martin's School will liaise with both parents and medical professionals including hospital education teams to ensure the minimum of disruption to the child's education. Learning will be set and assessed electronically where necessary and when the child is well enough to undertake it. This will be overseen by the Head Teacher who will also liaise the Proprietor, in her role as well being lead, on a weekly basis. A plan for reintegration to full time schooling will be agreed with parents when appropriate.

Summary

St Martin's School staff and governors recognise the potential negative impact poor attendance and consistent lateness has on children's mental health, well-being and educational progress and will take the actions outlined to promote good attendance and punctuality. We aim to work in partnership with parents to provide the best possible outcomes for every child by having this clear framework of expectations and protocols and open lines of communication. We recognise that, at Primary School age, attendance and punctuality is the responsibility of the parents and therefore whilst we will instil upon the children the importance of these traits; we will neither punish nor reward children in relation to them. We will however ensure that children continue to take responsibility for their learning and therefore support them in catching up any necessary missed work through both in class support and homework.

Written by: Mrs Mbah (Headteacher)
Date: 19th February 2024

Ratified by: Governing Body
To be reviewed: November 2024