

St Martin-in-the-Fields High School for Girls

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY
Service Compassion Justice Perseverance



ATTENDANCE POLICY ADDENDUM COVID-19 JUNE 2020

APPROVED: November 2018
DATE TO BE REVIEWED: November 2020

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Approved: June 2020
Review: November 2020

Christ is at the centre of our Church of England school community where we live, love and learn together within an inclusive and equalities framework, and where students of all faiths and none are welcomed into our Anglican Christian community. In all that we do, we seek to show God's care for our students. We value, respect and celebrate all faiths and cultures because we are inspired by a welcoming, inclusive and loving God, seen in Jesus Christ and lived out through the Holy Spirit alive in every person.

Our vision is to create a safe, caring, happy and inclusive community underpinned by our Christian values of service, compassion, justice and perseverance and our motto CARITATE ET DISCIPLINA - WITH LOVE AND LEARNING which come from the story of St Martin of Tours. Central to this is our school Bible verse from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.
1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Student attendance during COVID-19 Addendum to Attendance Policy (June 2020)

School attendance is once again mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term. This means that from September the usual rules on school attendance will apply; see the rest of this policy for details.

The usual rules include:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered student at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

The school will support any students who remain anxious, reluctant or are on the shielded patient list to return to school. A meeting will be held to discuss any health professional advice with the parents to determine any additional measures and to provide a care plan where necessary.

Where a student is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/public health advice, we will offer them access to remote education. Further details can be accessed in the [Guidance for full opening](#)

No one with symptoms of Covid-19 should attend the school for any reason. Should any of the school community test positive for the Coronavirus, the school will implement the procedures as set out in the Health and Safety Risk Assessment for full opening. Further information can be accessed on the DfE website [Addendum recording attendance during Covid-19](#)

From the beginning of the new academic year, schools should return to using the attendance and

absence codes in use before the outbreak (set out on page 9 of the [School attendance guidance](#))

Introduction

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. The level of attendance and punctuality expected from all our pupils is included in our school's Home School Agreement, which parents must sign following their child's admission to the school and on a yearly basis. (Appendix 1) The home school agreement has been amended and a covid related addendum must be signed by parents/carers. This can be found at Appendix 2 and in the behaviour policy.

The person responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy is Chantel Grant, Associate Assistant Headteacher in charge of Attendance.

This attendance policy is also consistent with the following school policies:

- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Behaviour for Learning
- SEND
- Teaching and Learning

This policy will be annually published in writing for all staff, parents and students via the school website.

1. Rationale

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and students all play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- statistics show a direct link between underachievement and absence below 95%.
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between school, and higher education, employment or training.

2. Promoting good attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- provide information on all matters related to attendance in our regular newsletter and on our school website
- report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events
- set targets for the school and for classes for attendance and display these in the school

3. Roles and responsibilities:

Progress Leaders, Form Tutors and all members of staff are responsible for regular liaison with the member of the school senior team responsible for Attendance and the School Attendance Officer responsible for attendance.

Responsibilities of the Form Tutor:

- Completing the register accurately, on time and monitoring pupils' attendance in an attempt to identify irregular patterns of attendance.
- The general identification and monitoring of all pupil registration and attendance.
- The monitoring and registration of pupils at form time and assemblies.
- Discussing with pupils any unexplained incidence of absence or lateness.
- Informing the Progress Leader when unexplained absences occur.
- Monitor attendance of known truants carefully including the signing of attendance reports.
- Taking ownership of the tutor group; monitoring, praising and rewarding and encouraging good attendance.

Responsibilities of the Progress Leader:

- Overseeing Form Tutors in their year group with regard to pupil attendance.
- Developing strategies where a regular pattern of poor attendance has been identified.
- Identifying with the form tutor failing attendance and rewarding positive attendance.
- Organising with Form Tutor, contact with parent/carer/guardian and issuing attendance reports where appropriate.
- Discussing with students incidents of absence, truancy or regular lateness.
- Organising support for pupils where long absence is authorised to assist reintegration to school.

Responsibilities of the Attendance Officer:

- Identifying and monitor Persistent Absence (PA) .
- Arranging School Attendance Panels and Medical Panels for identified pupils.
- Initiation of CAF (Common Framework Assessment)
- Monitor and report pupil attendance to School Attendance Leader and Progress Leaders.

- Undertake home visits.
- Preparation for court cases.
- Liaison with social services and external agencies.
- Attendance at TAC meetings/ Core Group meetings/ CP Conferences.

Responsibilities of the school's attendance leader:

A member of the senior leadership team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties. They will be responsible for day to day implementation of this policy and specifically:

- Have weekly oversight of whole school attendance statistics for monitoring and comparison to local and national targets.
- Set attendance targets with the Lambeth Education and producing attendance data for reports to governors
- Monitor attendance figures below 90% closely with a view to identifying pupils where attendance is deteriorating.
- Meet regularly with the Progress Leaders to discuss attendance.
- Meet regularly with the Attendance Officer to discuss attendance statistics and individual student attendance.

Responsibilities of staff

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately.
- Promote and reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the attendance leader on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at Student Services if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Responsibilities of parents/carers:

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/carers will:

- inform the school on the first day of absence
- discuss with the Form Tutor/Progress Leader any planned absences well in advance
- support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or email on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable or they do not have access to email.

- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance. This does not include weddings or family holidays

4. Recording attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day, by the Form Tutor, and again for the afternoon session by the period 5 class teacher.

The revised times of the school day (to facilitate social distancing and ensure students stay in their year group “bubbles”) are as follows:

Years 7 and 8

School starts at 8.30am and finishes at 2.30pm

Year 9

School starts at 8.50am and finishes at 2.45pm

Years 10 and 11

School starts at 8.50am and finishes at 3pm

Years 12 and 13

School starts at 8.30am and finishes at 3pm

Lateness/punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons is vital to set the expectations for learning and to immediately engage your child in their learning. If your child is late they can miss work time with their class teacher, miss getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can lead to cycles of possible further absence.

All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary. Arrival after the close of registration (10 minutes after the school start time, in relation to the staggered start time, and leniency with regards to limited public transport) will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence. If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action (see Section 6 for further detail).

5. What to do if your child is absent?

First day absence

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent you must:

- contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by calling 202 96745594
- send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us or you can call into school and report to reception. If your child is self-isolating due to coronavirus you must let the school know in accordance with government guidelines.

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. This will be done by our truancy call system and will be either a text message on your mobile phone or a voice message on your home telephone.

Third day absence

Please note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence the school is required to start 'child missing in education' procedures. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends, wider family and the Attendance Officer may undertake a home visit if necessary.

Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is missing from education. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

6. Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education.

Interventions for persistent absence

- Truancy call sent home
- Phone call home by attendance officer
- Contact home by Form Tutor and Progress Leader
- Absence letter sent

- Follow-up phone call made by Attendance officer and further communication by letter if necessary
- Meeting arranged with Progress Leader and Attendance Officer and Attendance Support Plan completed
- CAF form completed
- Meeting with the Education Welfare Office and Attendance Officer
- Parent and student to attend School Attendance Panel or Medical Panel (including our school nurse) where poor attendance may be linked to chronic or repeated incidences of illness.

Attendance Support Plans and Common Assessment Frameworks (CAF) will be used to support students identified as having problems with school attendance which may lead to the involvement of other agencies and external resources.

If persistent absence continues and falls below 90%:

If attendance falls below 90% the school will follow Lambeth's procedures

- The school office will telephone or text the parents/carers on the first day of absence if the family has not made contact .
- The school will continue to call every day until the fifth day of absence.
- On the fifth day of absence the school will send a first school warning letter requesting the parents to respond to give a reason for absence and when their child will return to school.
- If the warning letter is not responded to after three days, the parent will then be sent a second school warning letter.
- The Home School Liaison Officer will contact home and arrange a home visit and or a School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting
- If no response has been received and no meeting has taken place with parents/ carers and student, then a first court warning letter will be sent at the end of the second week.
- If the situation persists (for a further two weeks) where there is no adequate response from phone calls, home visits and 'failure to attend' letters, then a second court warning letter will be sent.
- The school will continue to monitor via phone calls, home visits and invitations to attend a SAP.
- If after a further 14 sessions there has been no contact with the family a second home visit will be conducted.

Referral to the Local Authority (LA) for Legal Action

If the situation persists despite letters, phone calls and failed visits then the following will apply:

- Referral to court proceedings (school and LA)
- Letter sent to home and to court's officer
- Court panel is arranged/court action
- Dependent on response, file is referred back to court's officer
- Summons to attend court as necessary.
- Penalty Notices applied

Reintegration

If there are ongoing issues the school may consider one or more of the following alternative provision:

- A phased reintegration back to school

- An amended timetable/personalised learning programme
- Mentoring support in school
- External support and counseling for the family

7. Request for leave of absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence should write to the Headteacher in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and fixed-penalty fine or other legal action may be taken in accordance with our attendance policy.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

8. Understanding types of absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

Authorised absence:

Is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. During the pandemic there may be students who have to remain at home due to underlying health conditions and are shielding. Appropriate medical evidence will be required to authorise the absence.

Unauthorised absence:

Is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request.

This includes:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays or to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

9. Study leave

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, and students will be expected to attend school in the usual way. Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 students during the time of the GCSE examination period and at the time agreed, according to the examination timetable. Should any students wish to attend school (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so. The school will work within the legal requirements, ie: study leave should only be granted to students in Years 11 , 12 and 13 and never to those in other year groups. It should never exceed 15 school days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, ie not before the beginning of that period. It should be used sparingly, taking account of an individual student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study.

10. Teenage pregnancy

Support will be directed to keeping a student in school and, wherever possible, her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. A student who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

11. Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years.

Associated Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection and (Covid-19 Addendum)
- SEND Policy and (Covid-19 Addendum)
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Medicines in School Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- DfE School website [School Attendance Guidance document August 2020](#)

Associated Guidance

- [Section 2 of Full opening of DfE schools guidance](#)
- [RCPCH shielding information for children and young people](#)

Appendix 1 - Home-School Agreement

It is the responsibility of the school:

- To provide a Christian environment in which students will develop the spiritual and moral values of service, compassion, justice and perseverance
- To provide a safe and secure environment in which students can fulfil their full academic, sporting, moral and cultural potential
- To establish effective partnership and communication with parents
- To enable students and staff to uphold the four expectations of the school

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

It is my responsibility as a parent/carer:

- To support the spiritual and moral development of my child
- To ensure my child attends the academy in full uniform and is properly equipped for the day
- To support the academy in upholding the four school expectations
- To take an active role in my child's education by supporting them at home in their studies and by attending parents' evenings and other relevant activities
- To ensure that I am fully aware of the academies policies and latest news by referring to the school website
- To work in cooperation with staff to resolve any issues that may arise and let the school know of any issues that may affect my child's work, behaviour or attendance

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer)

It is my responsibility as a student:

- To respect and support the Christian values of the school
- To be ready to learn
- To treat everyone with respect
- To be proud of my school
- To choose to do the right thing
- To strive for 100% attendance and punctuality

Signed: _____ (Student)

Appendix 2 - Home-School Agreement COVID-19 ADDENDUM

Owing to the very different expectations placed on daily life for our students, staff and parents as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic it is important that our home school agreement is reviewed and that a refined version is in operation for this period. This home school agreement takes into account the very specific requirements and responsibilities placed on students, staff and parents during this time to ensure that everyone is kept safe and well and that education is prioritised.

For our students: it reinforces the knowledge that they will be encouraged and supported both at home and in school in their aspirations and endeavours

For our parents/carers: this partnership provides a clear understanding of how they can support St Martin's in helping their daughter continue with their learning and access a full range of excellent learning opportunities

For our staff: it encourages them to continue to raise the expectations and aspirations of our students and parents so that our students grow into confident and resilient young adults who achieve the very best results in all areas of their lives.

To help students succeed, we each have responsibilities and a role to play and these are particularly pronounced at this time. Working in partnership is the crucial ingredient to success.

As a student I will:

- Arrive to school on time each day at the designated time for my bubble and go straight to my the designated meeting point
- Wear my lanyard everyday as this will identify my year group/ bubble and will keep my lunch card safe
- Practice active social distancing on my way to and from school and be considerate towards other members of the community
- Go home directly at the end of the day and not congregate in the local area (neither before school)
- Follow the instructions regarding PPE and hygiene on arrival at school, removing any PPE and sanitising my hands
- Wash my hands regularly for 20 seconds and as directed by staff
- Tell a member of staff if I feel unwell or am concerned I have COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow all instructions given by members of staff at all times
- Take responsibility for my own behaviour and respect the rules of social distancing by not mixing with students outside of my social bubble
- Follow instructions given regarding seating plans
- Follow the systems in the school and not enter any areas that are closed to my bubble
- Only use the toilets and facilities designated for my bubble
- Complete all work that is set for me in lessons and for homework, asking the teacher or teaching assistant for help if I need it
- Check my St Martin's school emails and google classroom once a day for messages from staff and for work
- Not attend school if I feel unwell or have been instructed to isolate in line with guidance
- Adopt "catch it, bin it, kill it" for sneezes and coughs and avoid touching my mouth, nose and

eyes with my hands

- Not touch others' belongings or have unnecessary physical contact
- Come to school in clean uniform and with all necessary equipment which I understand cannot be share

As a parent/carer I will:

- Ensure that my daughter attends school every day at the correct time for her bubble
- Support my daughter in getting to school safely and ensure that she comes directly home at the end of the school day following social distancing guidance in the community
- Contact the school if, for any reason, my daughter is unable to attend school
- Not send my daughter to school if she has any symptoms of COVID-19 and seek medical guidance
- Actively support the school's behaviour policy
- Encourage my daughter to behave responsibly and follow the school rules on social distancing and hygiene for her safety and the health and safety of those around her
- Understand that if my daughter does not follow social distancing guidelines she may be sent home to ensure the safety of others
- Support my daughter's learning and contact my daughter's teacher, form tutor or progress leader if there are any concerns
- Keep my daughter's uniform clean and ensure that she has the correct equipment with her in school every day
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact information for me including a telephone number and email address
- Check the school website regularly for updates

As a member of staff I will:

- Monitor and encourage good attendance and punctuality to school and to lessons
- Follow up concerns about attendance and punctuality as necessary
- Sanitise my hands on arrival in school and ensure that I follow the school's hygiene procedures
- Ensure that students sanitise their hands on arrival and follow the school's hygiene procedures
- Have high expectations of students about social distancing rules and ensure that they are staying within their bubbles
- Challenge any inappropriate behaviour or disregard to our systems and procedures
- Model social distancing expectations including respecting systems in the school
- Provide clear and consistent expectations of behaviour in line with school policy
- Maintain a fixed seating plan in my classes, taking into account the needs of students
- Be consistent and fair in my treatment of students celebrating good choices that students make
- Mark and assess students learning as appropriate
- Set appropriate work for students and ensure that this is posted to Google Classroom
- Contact parents/carers if there are concerns about a students' work
- Read all staff information and updates to policy and adhere to school and government guidelines to help students adhere to these rules

I have read and understood the St Martin's Home School Agreement September 2020

Name of Student.....

Date.....

Signed
Student.....Parent/Carer.....
.....

Signed HeadteacherDate
.....