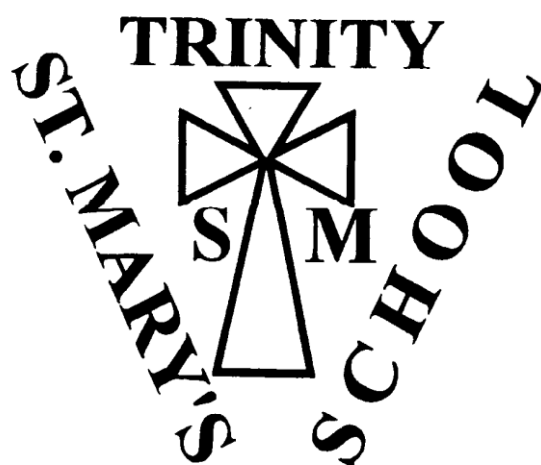


**TRINITY ST. MARY'S C. OF E. PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

**PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY  
POLICY**



**AUTUMN 2009**

# **TRINITY ST. MARY'S C. OF E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

At Trinity St. Mary's Primary School we aim to create a calm, caring Christian ethos and environment where children will be happy and safe and which will actively encourage them to attend school regularly.

Trinity St Mary's Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all its pupils. We believe that good attendance is crucial. Without it children cannot get maximum benefit from the opportunities for learning which are available to them. By law, all children of compulsory school age (between five and sixteen) must receive a proper full-time education. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.

As a school, we will do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

- Trinity St Mary's Primary School expects pupils to attend school regularly, on time and ready to learn.
- Trinity St Mary's Primary School will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- Trinity St Mary's Primary School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Trinity St Mary's Primary School will work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve issues, which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Trinity St Mary's Primary School will include in their annual report to parents, their child's attendance/punctuality record
- Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Pupils can expect to be welcomed and receive assistance following periods of absence in order to catch up.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child regularly and punctually attends school, properly dressed, equipped and in an appropriate condition to learn.
- Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on the first morning of any absence.

- If attendance problems do develop, the school expects parents to work actively with school staff and the Education Welfare Service, to solve them.
- **Parents do not have a *right* to take children on holiday in term time.** Where possible any leave of absence must be granted in advance by the school – Appendix 1 contains the Authorised Application for Absence from School form. Authorisation for absences will only be granted in the exceptional circumstances detailed in the section '**Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**' in this policy.

## Registers

Twice daily registration is a legal requirement. The register will be taken at 9.00am and 1.00pm. The register will be taken in class and sent to the School Office

## Information for Parents

All parents will be informed of our procedures when their child is admitted to school. Updated information and reminders will be sent as appropriate. A summary of each child's attendance and punctuality record will be sent home with the annual written report at the end of the summer term.

## Registration

At Trinity St Mary's Primary School a manual registration system is used. On Friday afternoons the registers will be entered onto the School computerised record and it is important that they are complete.

Registers are marked in ink first thing in morning and afternoon and sent to the school office. Where an alteration is necessary this must be clearly identified showing both the original entry and change. Correction fluid must not be used.

Registers will be returned to the school office at the end of the registration period for safety and will be secured but accessible in case of an emergency. All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence will be stored on the pupil's file for the current academic year.

## Start and Close of Registration

Trinity St Mary's Primary School will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 30 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Registration begins at 9.00am and 1.05pm each school day and registers will be closed 30 minutes after these times.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they should report to reception to be entered into the late record book. This book will be taken out by a member of the office staff in the event of any school evacuation, together with the book in which are recorded the names of children who are sent home during the day unwell.

Pupils arriving after the register session has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

## Use of symbols

The symbols as detailed in Appendix 2 are used in the registers.

### **The Legal Status of Registers**

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils' attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised.

A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Educational Supervision Order in respect of a pupil.

Registers must be kept for a minimum of 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

### **Staff responsible for processes**

The Headteacher is responsible for attendance issues and will check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The Headteacher will meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The office team are responsible for logging attendance information onto the computerised system.

The class teacher is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the am session and once for the pm session.

The class teacher is responsible for register maintenance of their own class register, including the following:

- Using the correct colour ink
- Ensuring that symbols used are appropriate
- Not using correction fluid
- Ensuring all mistakes are amended with the original information still clear and corrections clearly marked
- Ensuring the registers are neatly kept allowing for ease of reading at all times but especially in an emergency situation – i.e. during a fire procedure

Trinity St Mary's Primary School will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Each pupil should be called by name when the register is being taken.

### **Procedures for following up absence/lateness**

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. If this contact is not made then we will:

- Contact the parent by telephone, or if the parent is unobtainable –
- Write a letter requesting information

If the above actions do not elicit an explanation for the absence and the absence continues, a further letter will be sent to the parents/carers.

If this letter does not elicit an explanation for the absence a second letter will be sent to the parent/carer, the school's Education Welfare Officer will be informed and the parent may be invited in to the school for a meeting by the Headteacher. This meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending

school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirement regarding school attendance.

If the pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks, in exceptional circumstances there will be provision to allow the pupil to ease back into the school system. In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence then an individual reintegration programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible.

Where a pupil's attendance falls below 90% or if a pupil is persistently late the school will write to the parents/carers. If the pupil's attendance or punctuality does not improve the school will write to the parent/carer inviting them to a school based meeting. The school's Education Welfare Officer will be informed and this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school or from attending school on time.

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

**THE DFEE CIRCULAR NUMBER 10/99 STATES THAT PARENTS MAY NOT AUTHORISE ABSENCE, ONLY SCHOOLS CAN DO THIS.**

#### **Application for authorised absence from school**

The application form for authorised absence from school should be completed by the parent/carer at least FOUR weeks prior to the child's proposed absence from school where the absence is known in advance. The form is included within this policy as Appendix 1. For unexpected absences i.e. sickness and unavoidable medical/dental appointments, parents must notify the school by telephone or by letter on the morning of the first morning of the child's absence.

#### **No authorisation for absence will be granted unless for the following exceptional circumstances:**

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances i.e. bereavement
- If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the Headteacher
- Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond statutory walking distance

Absence may be unauthorised when due to:

- Shopping
- Haircuts
- Slept late
- No uniform
- Missed bus
- Birthdays
- Unapproved holidays
- Looking after brothers or sisters or unwell parents

It may be necessary for the school or Education welfare Officer to ask the parent/carer to provide the school with written evidence of reason for absence e.g.

- Appointment cards/letters
- Medical certificate
- Letter from GP

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school or the Education Welfare Officer may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

### **Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality**

- In the belief that pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs the curriculum will be reviewed regularly.
- Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.
- Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the Home School Agreement, School Prospectus, School Profile, Parents' Handbook and through the Headteacher's weekly newsletter.
- Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and pupil reports will be used.
- Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Pupils with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and set targets for improvement.
- Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.
- All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school.
- Trinity St Mary's Primary School will have regular meetings with the Education Welfare Officer, in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

### **Target Setting**

The target set for our school's overall amount of absence is suggested by Essex County Council and agreed by the school with our governing body. For the school year 2009 – 2010 the target is 3.50%.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

Our attendance is monitored as follows:

- each week by the office and Headteacher.
- each month the class with the highest attendance is awarded a certificate. Attendance is reviewed monthly by the Senior Leadership Team so that any necessary follow up action can be taken promptly.
- termly by the Senior Leadership team to see which class/es have high and low attendance figures and to review impact of any follow up action taken.
- our Pupil Attendance Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

## **Reward Systems**

The school awards a weekly class certificate and Attendance Cup to the class with the highest attendance figure for the previous week. They are displayed in the classroom and given out in a whole school assembly by the Headteacher.

- The Headteacher informs parents of the class with the highest attendance in her weekly newsletter.
- At the end of each month the class with the highest overall attendance is given a laminated certificate to display in their class.
- The Headteacher informs parents of each class's attendance for the previous month in her weekly newsletter.
- At the end of each term the class with the highest attendance can select a reward from a designated choice e.g. additional Golden Time, additional play session, additional use of play equipment.
- At the end of each term children with 100% attendance and punctuality are given a certificate and mentioned in the Headteacher's weekly newsletter.

## **Children Missing from Education and Deletions from roll**

All children have a right to a suitable education and to have that right protected. Schools have a statutory duty to make reasonable enquiries to locate a pupil following unauthorised absence from school and, after 20 school days of unauthorised absence, to transfer the pupil records using the statutory electronic Common Transfer File (CTF).

If a child goes missing from school without any explanation for their absence the school will follow the procedures outlined in the Essex Guidance 'Missing education – missing out' paragraph 2.4.

Schools are required to inform their Local Authority of possible deletions from the school roll as soon as they become aware of the circumstances and before any deletion is made. Accordingly, Appendix I will be completed and sent to the Education Welfare Officer before deletion from roll takes place, and as soon as the grounds for deletion have been met.

**This policy will reviewed on an annual basis and updated as appropriate.**

**Signed by the Chair of the Governing Body, Autumn Term 2009:**

**Date:**

**Review date: Autumn Term 2010**



