

# St Mary's

Catholic Primary School

## School Newsletter

### Attendance Matters

**The Government states that** there is a legal responsibility for parents/carers to send their child to school every day; every child should be in school for **at least** 96% of all sessions. School is in session for 190 days a year, leaving parents/carers a further 175 days a year in which to have days out together and take a holiday.

Under the Education Act 1996 the only acceptable reasons for a child's absence are:

- that the pupil is absent with permission from the school;
- failure of school transport;
- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious group to which the family belongs and a completed request for absence was received in advance by the school.

**The Governing Body recognises that** a child who is not at school is missing out on part of his or her education. Likewise a child who is late for school is missing very important social time with friends and introductions to the learning for the day/week.

*During the academic year 2017-2018, attendance across the school was only 94.4%. 159 pupils did not attend for the expected minimum of 96%; 51 pupils did not attend for at least 90% of sessions.*

The **Classopoly** threshold this term will be moving to 96% in line with the government expectation as mentioned above. We hope that many classes will continue to roll the dice each week! Thank you again to all the families who are here on time and every day.

# Attendance Matters

## REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE FROM LEARNING IN SCHOOL TIME:

Parents do not have the right to remove a child for a holiday during term time and Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Mrs Irvine will review all requests for Leave of Absence from Learning and will only authorise those for which she is satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Requests need to be made in writing as soon as the requirement is known.

## UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

If a parent/carer chooses to take their child out of school for a holiday or other unauthorised absence of ten or more sessions (five or more school days) a Fixed Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child may be incurred, to be paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice being issued. This amount is reduced by 50% (to £60) if paid within 21 days. The Notice will be sent directly by West Sussex County Council. Please note that the school does not receive these monies.

A Fixed Penalty Notice may also be issued for the following reasons:

- When a pupil has a minimum of ten school sessions (ten half days) recorded as unauthorised in a ten school week period;
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken which has been recorded as an unauthorised absence. At St Mary's, the register is taken at 8:50 a.m.

If an unauthorised absence is longer than 15 consecutive school days then the West Sussex Pupil Entitlement Investigations team may consider that a Fixed Penalty Notice is not appropriate. In these instances the matter may instead be brought directly before the Courts.

## PUNCTUALITY:

As a parent or carer it is your responsibility to ensure that your child arrives promptly for registration.

When a pupil arrives late to school, there are many other consequences:

- He/she misses out on essential instructions given at the beginning of lessons;
- Arriving 5 minutes late each day adds up to missing 3 entire days of school by the end of the year;
- Pupils might feel awkward and embarrassed going into the classroom when everyone else is already settled;
- When one person arrives late everyone loses out as the class is disrupted and the teacher must take time away from the other pupils to explain what is going on for the lesson.

**The school day starts at 8:50 a.m.** and all children should be settled in their class by this time. The playground opens at approximately 8:30 a.m. and classrooms open at 8:40 a.m. to allow children to enter. Arrival between 8:50 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. is recorded as "Late before Registers Closed" (L); arrival after 9:00 a.m. is recorded as "Late after Registers Closed" (U). Arrival after the registers have closed is considered to be an unauthorised absence for that session.

There are legal consequences for parents and carers when children are persistently late. If your child accrues ten or more unauthorised absences (U codes) this may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

**Late Arrival:** Children arriving at school after 8:50 a.m. will need to enter through the main front entrance, where their name will be entered in the "Late Book". ***The reason for lateness should be provided.***

Give your child the best possible chance to succeed - ensure they arrive on time each day!

**The day ends at 2:55 p.m.** and all children should be collected promptly. If for any reason a late collection is likely please make the school staff aware. Children ***must*** be collected within ten minutes of the end of the day.

# Term Dates

## WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AUTUMN :-

**Attendance :** 95.2%      **Autumn 1 :** 96.8%      **Autumn 2 :** 93.9%  
**Authorised Absence :** 3.5%      **Autumn 1 :** 2.0%      **Autumn 2 :** 4.6%  
*(This includes authorised Leave of Absence, Sickness, Medical Appointments)*  
**Unauthorised Absence :** 1.3%      **Autumn 1 :** 1.2%      **Autumn 2 :** 1.5%

## ATTENDANCE BY REGISTRATION GROUP AUTUMN :-

Class	Attendance	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
St Clare	97.1	2.3	0.6
St Elizabeth	96.7	1.8	1.5
St David	96.1	2.6	1.3
St Josephine	96.0	3.3	0.8
<b>St Anthony</b>	<b>95.9</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>St Ivan</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>St Francis</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>St Cecilia</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>St Hilda</b>	<b>94.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>St Bernadette</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>St Luke</b>	<b>93.0</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>

Anything less than 90% is considered to be 'Persistent Absence'.

**Absence due to Sickness** must be notified to the school on the first day; otherwise it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

### **Requests for Absence from Learning in School Time**

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# Attendance Matters

## **PUNCTUALITY :- AUTUMN**

A total of **7,362** minutes of learning time was lost due to lateness during the 2019 Autumn term. This equates to over **122** hours, more than **22** school days!

Class	No of Pupils Late	Total Minutes of Lost Learning	Average Minutes Lost per Late Arrival
St Clare	5	182	10.1
St Ivan	6	312	10.1
St Cecilia	6	351	14.6
St Josephine	7	275	8.1
St Hilda	9	1,054	29.3
St Bernadette	10	463	10.3
St Francis	10	647	14.3
St Luke	14	1,244	12.1
St Anthony	14	652	10.5
St Elizabeth	14	1,236	12.9
St David	15	946	10.9

**Children arriving late may seriously disrupt not only their continuity of learning but also that of others.**

If your child is late to school they might:

- miss important information provided during registration times including notices;
- miss the start of the learning and the first part of the delivery of lessons which might then hinder their progress and attainment in particular subjects;
- miss opportunities to socialise with their class mates at the very start of the school day;
- develop bad habits which will impact on their attitude to work and the ability to obtain employment in the future;
- be embarrassed;
- be unsettled for the rest of the day, particularly younger pupils.

**At St Mary's children are expected to be in their classroom between 8:40 a.m. and 8:50 a.m. At 8:50 a.m. the playground gate is closed;** children then need to enter via the front lobby and will be marked in the register as late.

**Children arriving 10 minutes or more after the gate has closed** will be recorded with an unauthorised absence for the morning session. Ten or more unauthorised absences in a 10 week period may result in a referral to West Sussex, which could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

**Our Attendance Policy is available at [www.stmarysworthing.org.uk](http://www.stmarysworthing.org.uk)**