

**Attendance Matters.** For all children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. To help us focus on attendance and punctuality we will:

- Work in partnership with parents/carers so that they are aware of their own child's attendance record and the impact that this is having on their education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively, in line with Government and Local Authority requirements, and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- Create an environment where all children are nurtured, not only in their academic life, but also in their personal, social and emotional development
- Raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

100%	Perfection
99%	Excellent
97%	Good
95%	Slight Concern
90%	Concerned
85%	Very Concerned

### Understanding different types of absence

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher - may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority
- Looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping or day trips

- Their own or family birthdays
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
- Children who arrive at school after 9:15am are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

### Holidays in Term Time

*There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday.*

In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school". The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance.

All applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school.

**We will not consider applications for leave during term time:**

- At any time in September. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class at the start of the academic year as quickly as possible.
- During assessment and test periods in the school's calendar affecting your child.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

Minutes late per day	Learning time lost in a year.
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6 ½ days
15 minutes	10 days
20 minutes	13 days
30 minutes	19 days

**Absence Procedures**

If a child is absent from school parents/carers must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 8:45am. The school has an answer phone so you can leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8:45am
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you must provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence

We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing and we monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

The contact details that parents/carers should contact about attendance in the first instance are:

School Office  
01799 523384  
info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

The full Attendance Policy can be found here:  
[www.stmaryssw.org.uk/policies/](http://www.stmaryssw.org.uk/policies/)  
Or ask the school office for a copy.



**A T T E N D A N C E**

**An information leaflet for parents.**

*Our motto is: 'Let your light shine as you grow', (taken from Matthew 5: 15-16)*

*Our vision is: 'We aspire for our pupils to be the best they can be, in an inclusive Christian learning environment'*

St Mary's (VA) Primary School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day.