



*'Learning together through love, friendship, forgiveness and faith'*

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## The Importance of Attendance

Dear Parents and Carers,

Many of our children across the school, arrive on time and most importantly come to school every day. We all know COVID has not helped and continues to impact on us all, where we have had to and continue to isolate. It has certainly been challenging and continues to challenges us.

The Pandemic has impacted greatly on our children's education. Staff at St Michael's, continue to assess, adapt, teach and review the children's learning every day. This is not an easy task, when much of the education has been disrupted. Therefore, it is vitally important we make every school minute count.

We ask you, to ensure your child is in school every day. Children who attend school regularly will achieve their full potential. Parents and Carers have a legal responsibility to provide an education for their child. It is an offence not to have your child attend school regularly. Your child must attend the whole school day, every day, on time and be ready to learn unless the absence is completely unavoidable. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and vital information and news for the day. Late arriving children can also sometimes disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

The national average attendance for a child in Britain is 96.5%. St Michael's expects attendance of at least 97%. Attendance falling below 95% is therefore cause for concern. Absence of under 90% falls into the category of 'persistent absenteeism' and is referred to the Local Authority with possible warnings, fines, parental orders and court action applied. The school will do its best to support families to prevent action being taken this far.

Good or Very Good		Of Concern		Serious Concern	
The <b>best</b> chance of success in learning.		Less chance of success. Makes it harder for your child to make progress and socialise		Your child will find it <b>very difficult</b> to make progress and maintain friendships.	
No absences	10 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence	38 days absence	47 days absence
190 Days of education	180 Days of education	171 Days of education	161 Days of education	152 Days of education	153 Days of education
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%

There are 365 days in a year  
A School year is only 190 days

That leaves: 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments

If your child cannot attend school on a given day, please contact the school office, before 8.55am, on the first day of absence. Please leave a message with the child's name, class and the reason why they cannot attend. If they are ill, please give a clear explanation of their condition. Any illness that requires home rest and in general is not treated by prescribed medication will be authorised on a 'day by day basis' to the maximum of two days only. On the third day of illness, parents/carers, must take their child to be medically assessed. Supporting evidence will be required in order to authorise from this point. Parents who have a child diagnosed with a contagious disease, should alert the school as soon as possible. Parents will be advised on a case by case basis. Children with an existing medical condition previously recorded by school still have to follow the same attendance criteria.

Medical appointments, where possible should be made outside of school hours or in the holiday period. This includes routine dentist appointments. If this is unavoidable, your child should still attend school before/after the appointment where possible. Any session missed that was deemed reasonable to attend will be marked as unauthorised leave. Any sibling should attend school as normal. Emergency, doctor/dentist appointments will be authorised with supporting evidence. All referred clinic/hospital appointments must be made in advance and be supported by an appointment letter in order to authorise any missed sessions.

Extended leave is not a parental right. Avoid taking any holidays during term times. Just for your information, we have had a number of families not in school for the following reasons, which is **not** acceptable,

- Shopping visits
- Care for family members
- Days out to theme parks or to attend concerts/shows
- Parents' work commitments or business trips
- Holidays taken in term time (including long weekends taken on Fridays and /or Mondays)
- Parental illness
- Buying and picking up a pet
- Birthday treat
- Got up late, so taking the rest of the day off

This list is not exhaustive.

Please, remember your child needs to be in school every day. There will be some occasions, where e.g. bereavements, family problems etc. where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school, we will be sympathetic to such needs.

We hope this letter will remind you of the School's expectations on attendance. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Again, it is only a minority, but we have a duty of care to send out reminders.

Thank you.

Regards,

Mrs T Ball  
Interim Headteacher