

*St Margaret Clitherow Catholic
Voluntary Primary and Nursery Academy*



Attendance Policy

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Mission Statement

St Margaret Clitherow Academy is a community concerned with the growth and development of the whole person. In our community great importance is attached to every individual. The foundation of all that school does is the person of Christ, who is at the centre of the community. Our aim is to encourage individuals to grow to Christian maturity through the opportunities we provide.

'Love one another, as I have loved you.'

Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to fulfil their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained.

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Each child's attendance can be summarised as follows:

98%+	Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
94-97%	Average – Well done, strive to build on this
86-93%	Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school urgently to improve the situation.
Below 85%	Unacceptable – Absence is causing serious concern. It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. We will work with you and the Targeted Support Service to improve your child's attendance.

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Only the school can 'authorise' absence. The school will not assess all reasons as valid. Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Principles

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child is brought to school punctually each day.
- Keeping the school informed about the reason for any non-attendance from the first day of absence onwards.
- Keeping a child who is unwell at home until s/he has recovered.

Teachers/School Office are responsible for:

- Ensuring the attendance register is completed accurately and at the correct time.
- Ensuring absence is recorded if the child is away.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Following all procedures for attendance and registration.
- Providing a welcoming, secure and inclusive atmosphere.

Children are responsible for:

- Taking an increasing role in responsibility for attendance.
- Taking an increasing role in responsibility to get to school on time.

Registration Time

Children should be in the school yard for ready to line up with their class no later than 8.55am.

Registration is at 9.00am - any child arriving after 9am must report to the main entrance where they will be marked as late (L). Any child arriving after 9.30am will be marked as unauthorised late (U).

Authorised or Unauthorised

Absences at school are of two types – authorised or unauthorised. All absences are unauthorised

until a satisfactory reason for the absence is given.

The only satisfactory reasons for absence are:

- Illness
- Observance of a religious festival (please see Religious Observance below).
- Attendance at a medical appointment which must be authorised at the school office, whereby proof of the appointment must be shown e.g. doctor's medical card or letter, hospital card or letter. Wherever possible, these appointments should be made out of school time.
- Approved sporting/music activity/exam.

All other absences are unauthorised. Regular illness may need to be substantiated by a medical proof e.g. copy of a prescription, medication, appointment card etc.

Penalty notices

Penalty notices for absence from school can be issued. The following circumstances are considered as appropriate reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Truancy, including truancy sweeps
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Excessive holidays in term time
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed

A pupil has to be absent from school in one of these circumstances for at least 10 sessions in any term before the issuing of a Penalty Notice can be considered. A warning letter will then be sent to parents explaining that unless their child attends full time for the next 15 days a Penalty Notice will be issued. Where a Penalty Notice is issued, each parent is required to pay a fine to the Local Authority.

Religious Observance

St Margaret's is a vibrant and diverse school that promotes respect for the faiths, cultures and values of all its families.

For religious festivals, pupils will be granted one authorised day for each religious festival (no more than three days in any one academic year). Additional days off for shopping or for extended celebrations should be treated as unauthorised absence.

In respect of pilgrimages, we may request to see copies of flights/visas. Dates of return must be agreed prior to the period of leave.

Responding to Non-Attendance

The Academy trust has a structured response for dealing with attendance concerns.

When attendance falls below the expected level of 95% close monitoring will be put in place.

We will communicate our concerns with parents/cares if attendance falls below our expected levels. This may be in writing, by telephone or in person.

The Government class pupils whose attendance falls below 90% as persistent Absentee.

As a school we will work with the pupil and their families to improve attendance but where unauthorised absences continue to be a concern a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be completed.

Longer term monitoring related to decisions about changes in practice will be monitored through feedback to the Headteacher and Education Welfare Service. This information is then reported to the Governing Body.

Missing Children

After 10 school days, if no notification has been received, your child will be reported to the Education Welfare Service/Local Authority (Child Missing in Education – CME) as a missing child for them to look into this matter urgently.

Lateness

Any pupil who arrives in school/classroom after 9.00am is late. Pupils at St. Margaret's are expected to arrive on time. When punctuality becomes an issue of concern parents will be contacted, in the first instance via telephone call/letter/Schoolcomms and punctuality must improve considerably within a 10-day period. Where punctuality has not improved, the school reserves the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice on its behalf for any pupil registered 'late after the register has closed' five times in

a four week period in accordance with the Nottingham Local Authority guidelines. School finishes at 3.15pm so parents should ensure they pick their child up promptly from school. Foundation children must be collected by a responsible adult and cannot be collected by older siblings.

Medical Evidence

Parents should make every effort to make any medical appointments outside of the school day. Where this is unavoidable, evidence of doctor/hospital appointments will be required and/or evidence of prescribed medication.

Code of Conduct

Nottingham City Council, Children and Families Code of Conduct has been agreed and adopted by the Governors and the School.

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Penalty Notices for Truancy, Excluded Pupils, Persistent Lateness, Unauthorised Holidays in Term Time-Local Code of Conduct

Introduction

1. This Code of Conduct will govern all Penalty Notices issued in respect of children of compulsory school age who are registered at a maintained school, a Pupil Referral Unit, an Academy, a City Technology College, or a City College for the Technology of the Arts, Free Schools and those attending alternative provision within the jurisdiction of Nottingham City Council, hence referred to as the LA (Local Authority).
2. In the context of the Local Code of Conduct the term “school” will cover all the above-mentioned educational establishments including Pupil Referral Units and attendance at alternative provision arranged by the LA.
3. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that Penalty Notices are issued consistently and fairly across the LA.
4. Penalties are set at £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is paid, the absence covered by the Penalty Notice cannot be cited again.
5. The LA is responsible for the operation and administration of the Penalty Notice scheme. To ensure consistency all Penalty Notices shall be issued by the LA for and on behalf of those persons designated by the regulations as having authority, i.e. schools, limited to Head Teachers, Deputy Head Teachers and Assistant Heads Teachers, authorised LA staff, the Police, Community Support Officers and other accredited persons.
6. An unauthorised absence level of 10% or more will be used as a general trigger guide. However, the timescales may be varied depending on the circumstances of the unauthorised absence.
7. Penalty Notices that can be issued by the LA on behalf of schools
8. When a child has been absent without the authorisation of the school in accordance with paragraph 6.
9. Holidays taken in term time not authorised by the school.
10. Persistent lateness after the register has closed, where there has been no improvement following a period of review.
11. Excluded pupils failing to attend provision after the fifth day of exclusion.
12. Excluded pupils seen in a public place within the first five days of the exclusion.

Penalty Notices that can be issued directly by the LA or on behalf of other

partners

13. Cases recommended by a Legal Intervention Officer following a case recommendation.
14. As part of the LA's fast-track to attendance procedure.
15. Where a pupil has been stopped on more than one occasion during a three-month period by accredited persons having authority to do so.
16. On behalf of neighbouring local authorities in accordance with agreed protocols.

Limitations

17. A parent will be issued with no more than three Penalty Notices, relating to the same child, in any twelve month period.
18. A Penalty Notice shall only be issued in compliance with the Local Code of Conduct. Penalty Notices shall not be issued if legal proceedings under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 are under consideration or are in progress, unless used within the framework of the LA's fast-track procedure.
19. The LA reserves the right to limit or restrict the use of Penalty Notices at any time if the number of requests or court cases resulting from non-payment compromises the effective administration and/or integrity of the scheme.

Non-payment

20. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full before the expiry of the period for paying it, the LA shall institute proceedings in accordance with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Withdrawal of Penalty Notice

21. The LA may only withdraw a Penalty Notice where:
 - it ought not to have been issued i.e. it has been issued outside the terms of the Local Code of Conduct or where no offence has been committed; or
 - it has been issued to the wrong person; or
 - it contains material errors.

Service of Penalty Notices

22. Service will be by first class post and 2 days are allowed for postal delivery.

Definition of parent

23. The term "parent" used in the code of conduct is that defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 and Section 2 of the Children Act 1989.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY ENQUIRIES RELATING TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT PLEASE
TELEPHONE (0115) 876 2965**