

# St Mary's Bryanston Square Attendance Policy

## General Statements

- Good attendance and punctuality are vital to children's progress in school.
- Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school.
- Even though we recognize the problems of individual children and their families, children should still be in school every day.
- Children should want to come to school and where there are problems these should be dealt with promptly.
- The school day begins at 9 am and children should arrive on time.

## Authorized Absence

- If there is no explanation from the family an absence must be regarded as unauthorized.
- Explanations such as shopping, looking after siblings or sick parents should not normally be accepted as reasons for absence. These are shown as unauthorized absences in the register.
- Some discretion should be allowed in certain circumstances for example where children are genuinely, and occasionally, needed as translators for hospital appointments. These should be considered on their merits. These absences are marked © and reasons are written alongside.
- Religious holidays are authorized but should not be extended. There are forms available, and requests for such holidays should be made in advance.
- If parents need to take a holiday in term time they should discuss it with the head teacher. In exceptional circumstances up to two weeks (10 school days) leave may be granted as authorized absence. A holiday request form must be completed. Schools are not obliged to agree holidays in term time.
- Extended holidays must be agreed with the Headteacher. A holiday request form must be completed. Normal holiday periods should be used as much as possible. Parents must be informed that there is a possibility their children will be taken off roll if they stay away too long. The LEA recommends that:

*"Leave of absence should not normally exceed two weeks. Parents should be advised that if the pupil does not return to school within ten school days of the authorized absence, and the school is not satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend by reason of sickness or other unavoidable reason, the child's name would be removed from the roll."*

(See Westminster Attendance Policy and Statement)

## Parents' Responsibilities

- It is the parents' duty to ensure that their children attend school every day and arrive on time.
- Parents must notify the school when their child is absent. They may do this in person, by phone or by letter. Ideally parents should notify the school before 9.15 on the day of absence.
- Parents who wish to take a holiday or ask for any other leave in term time must discuss it with the Headteacher.

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## Improving Attendance and Punctuality

- Class teachers should make it clear that they expect children to be in school every day and on time.
- They should always check reasons for lateness and absence.
- If there is a period of unexplained absence or pattern of absence contact should be made with the parents. If explanations are not satisfactory or the situation does not improve then the Headteacher must be informed and a referral to the EWO may be necessary.
- If a child is persistently late, e.g. 3 times a fortnight, the parents should be seen or a letter sent home. There is a standard letter available stressing the importance of being in school at the start of the school day.

## Rewards

- Children who attend school every day for a complete term are given a small award - a certificate.
- Children who attend school for a whole year without being absent are given a certificate..
- An attendance cup is awarded each half term to the class with the best attendance record.
- At certain times there may be class competitions lasting about a term that gives points to the classes with the best attendance and punctuality each week. These are recorded on a graph. The winning class gets a small reward at the end of the period.
- Stickers are sometimes given to classes that have perfect attendance for a week.