

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attending school regularly and promptly are some of the most important things you as parents/carers can do to help your children flourish and be successful in life and we want to support you in achieving this. Below is a summary of the main points from our Attendance Policy, which can be found in full on our [website](#).

**Do you know these facts about absence and attendance?**

Research suggests that a pupil who misses 17 days of school a year will drop 1 GCSE grade in attainment. (DfE)

Percentage attendance	How many days of learning missed in a year	How many weeks of learning missed in a year
95%	equates to half a day off every two weeks in a school year	2 weeks (10 days) missed over a school year
90%	equates to a day off every two weeks in a school year	4 weeks (20 days) missed over a school year
85%	equates to one and a half days off every two weeks in a school year	6 weeks (30 days) missed over a school year
80%	equates to one whole day off every week in a school year	8 weeks (40 days) missed over a school year

***“Better attendance at school by pupils improves their educational achievements and, in turn, their lives and prospects. Even a small reduction in absence would result in many pupils receiving greater benefit from their education.” The National Audit Office.***

Legally the school register must be taken twice a day. At St Michael’s School the register is taken at 8:45am and 1pm. Pupils arriving after 8:45am will be marked as late. Pupils arriving after 9:15am will be marked as unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Did you know that being 15 minutes late each day is the same as missing two weeks of school over the year. Lateness is just as serious as nonattendance and could also lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice. The start of the school day is an important time for children to develop their social skills with their peers, as well as preparing them for their learning. We start teaching at 8.45am and ‘late’ children miss out on vital skills such as phonics and/or basic number work.

We want to work with you to help your child be in school every day and on time. We want to understand the barriers children have which stops them achieving full attendance, so we can help to remove them and help children feel safe and happy in school all day. By working together we can make sure children have the best possible chances in life.

We will contact parents to address and improve attendance where:

- A pupil's attendance falls below 95%,
- A pupil has more than 3 weeks where they haven't achieved full attendance in a term (In Wiltshire there are 6 terms in an academic year)
- A pupil has more than 4 recorded late marks in a term
- A pupil has a regular pattern of absence

#### **Potential consequence for continued non attendance/lateness**

If attendance does not improve we are required by the Local Authority to hold a formal School Attendance Meeting, which parents will be invited to. This is followed up by a formal review and if concerns remain we are required to make a referral to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service. This may result in the below actions, with further details on the [Wiltshire Council website](#):

- The parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice, which currently carries a fine of £160, per parent, per child. This is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days of issue. If not paid at all, court action will be initiated.
- The local authority may initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, imposition of orders such as Parenting Orders or even imprisonment.
- In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

#### **Absence due to illness**

We know that illness is unavoidable and to be expected. Please notify the school via Reach More Parents when your child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first and subsequent days of absence. Parents should make contact with school before the start of the school day.

We thank you for your support and please do get in touch if you should have any questions.

With kind regards,



**Ben Everitt**

**Headteacher**