

St Francis Catholic Primary School



Attendance Policy

Jesus said 'Love one another as I have loved you'

St Francis School is a loving community, respecting every child and adult and caring for God's World, as we help each other to do our best and grow together in Christ.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.



Blackwater Partnership Attendance Policy

Information for Parents and Carers

The Blackwater Partnership believes that a child's attendance and punctuality is of great importance to maintain consistent progress and achievement in both curriculum knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills.

We want all the students to achieve the very best they can and for this they need to be in school regularly. Irregular attendance makes it harder to keep up with work, school life and events. Late arrival disrupts the education not only of the student who is late, but also of others in the class. Erratic appearances at after school clubs and social events can affect their feeling of belonging and, for some children, their ability to sustain friendships. They may miss explanations of homework, letters home or information in need of a response.

Pupils who have good attendance will become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve. They will find school routines and school work easier to cope with and are more likely to have an easier transfer to secondary school and to go on to become confident individuals who make a positive contribution to society.

Attendance target

Each school sets its own annual target for attendance, in collaboration with the School Governors, the Education Welfare Service and members of the Blackwater Partnership. The attendance target for St. Francis Catholic Primary School this year is 97%. It is expected that the whole school community will work together to achieve this target.

School hours

Morning registration opens at 8.50 a.m.

Morning registration closes at 9.00 a.m.

Afternoon registration opens at 1.15 p.m.

Afternoon registration closes at 1.20 p.m.

The school day ends at 3.20 p.m. Reception, 3.25 p.m. Years 1 - 6

Arrival after registration time and before 9.30 a.m. (morning session) and 1.20 p.m. (afternoon session) will be recorded as late.

Arrival after 9.30 a.m. (morning session) and 1.20 p.m. (afternoon session) will be regarded as an unauthorised absence.

Working in partnership to support good attendance

Role of parents and carers

Parents and carers fulfil their role and responsibilities by:

- Ensuring their child attends school every day unless they are too ill to attend or there is an acceptable reason for absence
- Ensuring their child arrives on time, prepared and equipped for the day
- Contacting the school by phone, by email or in person before 9.30a.m. on the first morning of all absences
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Informing the school in advance when it is not possible to arrange a medical appointment out of school hours and returning their child to school following a medical appointment
- Sending in a note to explain the reason for absence on your child's return after an illness
- Keeping the school updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness
- Accepting the professional judgement of the Headteacher when they consider if the absence of a child is authorised or unauthorised
- Communicating with school about their child's progress and attending meetings such as Parents' Evenings and attendance contract meetings
- Working with the school Attendance Officer or Local Authority Education Welfare Officer to help improve the situation if a child's attendance is below the expected level

Role of pupil

Pupils fulfil their responsibilities by:

- Doing their best to attend school on time and on a regular basis
- Answering the register clearly during morning and afternoon registration times
- Reporting to the school office when arriving late
- Working collaboratively and cooperatively with the school, other agencies and their parents/ carers to solve any attendance or punctuality issues

Role of school

As a school, we will do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The school fulfil their role and responsibilities using the following procedures:

- Following up unexplained absences by telephone on the morning of absence
- Writing to parents/carers requesting an explanation if no absence letter is received
- Reminding parents/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the school newsletter and the Home-School agreement
- Publishing your child's attendance rate on his/her annual school report
- Publishing our attendance rate in the school newsletter and on the school website.
- Acknowledging and rewarding good attendance termly and annually (Highest class attendance and pupils with 100% attendance)
- Informing you of any concerns we have regarding your child's attendance

Role of the Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service works in partnership with parents, carers, children and young people, schools and communities. It acts on behalf of the Local Authority in enforcing a parent's duty to provide appropriate education for their child.

Each Local Authority has a duty to ensure parents and carers carry out their legal responsibility of making sure children attend school. Local Authority Education Welfare Officers are employed to help do this and may become involved if your child has irregular attendance. Local Authority Education Welfare Officers will advise and support the school to help promote attendance and address any absences. They work closely with schools and families to resolve attendance issues and may attend school meetings or arrange home visits.

- When a pupil's attendance becomes a concern parents/carers will be contacted by the school in order to offer support to improve their child's attendance.
- If attendance does not improve a school-based attendance meeting will be requested with the parents/carers to discuss the matter further.
- If attendance does not improve after the school-based meeting a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Officer.

The Local Authority seeks your cooperation to make sure your child overcomes attendance problems and receives the education to which they are entitled. You can find out more information about the Education Welfare Service at <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Attending-School>

If you have any concerns about attendance issues, please talk to your school in the first instance.

Encouraging your child's attendance

- Be prepared - make sure your child is ready and prepared for school with the correct uniform, books and equipment needed
- Be careful about breakfast - children of all ages need a nutritious breakfast. Snacks, sweets and drinks that are high in salt, sugar or additives are not a good start to the day
- Be interested - make time to talk to your child about school each day and find out what homework needs to be done
- Be positive - reassure your child you and the school will work together to provide help and support for anything they are worried about
- Be firm - unless your child is too ill to attend then he or she should be in school. Make sure your child understands you do not approve of absences
- Be knowledgeable - keep a copy of your child's timetable. This may help to avoid any issues.
- Be supportive of the school - make sure your child follows their rules and that you are clear about the school's expectations, policies and procedures
- Talk to your child's teacher if you are concerned. They may have already noticed a change in behaviour or school work, and will offer help and support where possible

The Blackwater Partnership

Schools in the Blackwater Partnership work together in partnership to promote the highest level of education for children in Maldon. Through effective links and strategic management of resources the staff at all schools collaborate to ensure effective practice in areas including teaching and learning, assessment, emotional well-being, behaviour and attendance.

All Saints' C of E (VC) Primary School
Maldon Court Preparatory School
Maldon Primary School
Great Totham Primary School
Heybridge Primary School
The Plume School
St Francis Catholic Primary School
Tollesbury School
Wentworth Primary School
Woodham Walter C of E (VC) Primary School