



Attendance Information for parents and carers



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FAITH as a FAMILY. Thriving for all our
FUTURES enabling us to FLOURISH**

Attendance at SMFR

St Mary's Farnham Royal CE Primary School places a high priority on regular attendance & punctuality. The impact of poor attendance on the progress and happiness of children cannot be underestimated

With this in mind we want to share this information so that we are all aware of expectations around attendance and to share advice in helping your child to gain the most from their education. Attendance plays a very big part in the progress of your children and we want the best for all

We rely heavily on parents to work in partnership with us to support pupils in attending school and hope that the information provided will support you with any issues which may affect your child's attendance and punctuality.

It is important that we help the children develop their own positive experiences of school to ensure they achieve their full potential.

SMFR Target Attendance

St Mary's targets 97% each year as the attendance percentage for the whole school. If this was achieved, it would significantly exceed the National Average for primary schools. It is only with your support that we can achieve this.

The DFE expects schools to record percentages of attendance for pupils and to inform parents when there are concerns that attendance is low or there are patterns in absence. Schools have a legal responsibility to follow guidelines to ensure the attendance of children and to report concerns to agencies if attendance continues to be poor.

SMFR expects all children to have an attendance percentage of 95% or above. This is classed as 'Good' by the DFE. Attendance of 97% or above is classed as 'Excellent'. Attendance below 95% is classed as 'Poor' and so may need to be actioned.

Days missed from school add up to 'Lost Learning'

Every School Day Counts

<u>365 Days in a Year</u>	<u>190 School Days in Total</u>	<u>Absence for the year</u>
100% attendance	190 days attendance	0
95% attendance	180 days attendance	2 weeks absence
90% attendance	171 days attendance	4 weeks absence
85% attendance	161 days attendance	6 weeks absence
80% attendance	152 days attendance	More than half a term absence
75% attendance	143 days attendance	9+ weeks absence

'Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve'.

St Mary's Farnham Royal monitors attendance closely and parents are informed regularly about any concerns or patterns in absence. If concerns continue then families are invited to a PCM meeting to look at what can be done to support issues with attendance.

If attendance issues continue, then SMFR follows Buckinghamshire procedures to ensure attendance improves.

Persistent Absence

Persistent Absence is defined as any pupil's attendance percentage that is below 90% across an academic year. St Mary's Farnham Royal monitors attendance and informs parents when there are concerns and a formal letter is sent to any family of a pupil who has been classed as persistently absent across a school year.

It may also be necessary to make a referral to Social Care in instances where a pupil's attendance has been below 90% across 3 consecutive terms.

Lateness

It is always so important to be prompt in life and there are times when something means we are all a little late on occasions. But it is consistent lateness that is of major concern to SMFR as it begins to raise concerns, not only on the impact this has on the learning and ability for the child to feel settled and relaxed at the beginning of the day, but also may be pointing to there being a need to support a family in other ways.

Pupils arriving to school after the gates have closed at 8.50am are recorded as 'late'

at SMFR. Pupils arriving after 9.30am are recorded as late but this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session. Lateness adds up and does have a negative effect on well-being.

Every Minute Counts

<u>LATENESS</u>	<u>LOST LEARNING each year</u>
5 mins late each day	3 days lost!
10 mins late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 mins late each day	10 days lost!
20 mins late each day	13 days lost!
30 mins late each day	19 days lost!

Attendance Concerns

SMFR monitors attendance closely and parents are always informed when attendance reaches a concerning level (below 95%) and then when it would be classed as persistently absent (90% or below).

Following Buckinghamshire County procedures, SMFR looks to support families as much as possible to improve poor attendance and improve the situation and develop happy and healthy attendance routines.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance then please do talk to Mr Farmer who, as our Pastoral Support Leader, will see how school can help in any way they can. By working together things can always be made better.

Reporting your child's absence from school

It is very important to let school know of any absences and give a reason for the absence so that this can be recorded. Schools are expected to monitor and record reasons for absence and also, if a reason has not been recorded, to follow this up.



The procedure for reporting absence is:

On the **first day** and **every other day** of absence, **parents contact the school office** to inform school of the reason for the absence and to advise of a date for their return.

You can inform us by phone **01753 644471** (answer phone for messages) or by email to **office@smfr.co.uk**

The School operates a system of First Day Calls which means if you fail to contact school and your child is absent, you will be contacted by the school by phone to investigate why your child is absent. This is a safeguarding measure and very important.

If a family is working with school to improve poor attendance they may be asked to provide medical evidence of absences or medical appointments.

Some common illnesses and recommended guidance:

Infection	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or childminders	Comments
Covid	Current guidance states to isolate for 3 days	Guidance may change frequently
Chickenpox	Five days from the onset of rash	Vulnerable children and female staff
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted over and healed, or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	48 hours from last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting	
Conjunctivitis	None	Over the counter treatment available
Head lice	None	Treatment is recommended in cases where live lice have been seen.
Threadworm	None	Treatment is recommended for child and household contacts
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes but most are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic
Ringworm	None	Treatment required
Warts and verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gymnasiums and changing rooms

Tips for Good Attendance

As with everything we do at SMFR encouraging good attendance is all about ensuring the very best for the children. Here are some useful tips to help improve and help promote 'good' attendance:

- Make sure school uniforms and bags/lunches/homework are ready the night before to avoid panic/ lateness in the mornings.
- Find out who else lives nearby, so if you or one of your children are unwell they may be able to travel to school with another family.
- As far as possible, make all doctors, dentists or other appointments for after school or at the weekend so as not to affect their attendance. An absence for an appointment is still an absence.
- Think carefully about whether your child is really too ill to attend school. If you are unsure, let the school make the decision - bring your child to school and if they are unwell the school will contact you to collect them.
- If you are worried your child does not want to attend school talk to them and the school to check there is nothing else going on or any issues that can be resolved.
- Talk to your child about their learning, taking an interest in all they do at school. Praise and reward their achievements.

To support and promote good attendance at school, SMFR run:

The Weekly Attendance Cup

Each week in our Friday 'Achievement Assembly', class attendance percentages for the week are shared with the children. The class with the highest attendance percentage for the week receives the 'Attendance Cup' which they proudly get to display in their classroom for the following week.



The Awesome Attendance Raffle!

Every 2 weeks, all pupils who have managed 100% attendance for the previous week are entered into the Awesome Attendance Raffle. 100% attendance means they have been in school every day and have not been late.



2 winners are chosen at random in assembly and they receive a £5 amazon voucher as a prize. This acts as motivation and models to all that attendance is important.

The Government regard 95% as the minimum acceptable level for attendance at Primary School in England.

Parents who fail to meet expected attendance figures can be fined up to £2,500 and even be faced with a prison sentence.

Having **one** day off every 2 weeks will lead to an attendance percentage of 90%.

The only legal acceptable reasons for being absent from school are illness, holiday approved by school or a day of religious observance.

Having 80% attendance is just like having a day off every week.

Prolonged absence from school can affect your child's wellbeing. It can make it harder to socialise and to make stronger connections with friends and other peers.

As it is the school who decide to authorise an absence or not, including that of illness, a reason provided by the parent is necessary to help the decision making. Consistent illness maybe required to be evidenced by a doctor's note.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is attendance so important?

Evidence shows that if a child does not attend regularly.

- They cannot keep up with their classwork.
- They do not achieve results they should
- They miss out on the social side of school and can have problems maintaining friendships.

My child has 90% attendance, that is good isn't it?

No, in relation to the amount of days absent over a year it would equal 19 days' absence, nearly four weeks off school. 90% and below is classed as Persistent Absence

My child has odd days off now and again, surely they are not going to miss too much?

These odd days can surprisingly add up and during this time they could be missing out on crucial learning.

My child is only absent when he or she is ill.

If your child is ill, you need to contact school to let them know. If your child is persistently absent due to illness we may request medical confirmation e.g. Doctors certificate.

What difference does it make if my child is a few minutes late?

Arriving late causes disruption and can be embarrassing for the child. e.g. Walking into class when everyone is working.

By arriving late they can miss the initial teacher input which would make it difficult for them to understand the lesson.

I would like to book a holiday in term time, am I entitled to 10 days' holiday?

No. Leave of Absence will not normally be authorised during term time, except in very exceptional circumstances. Family holidays are not considered.

Thank you for your ongoing help and support.