

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you that we are launching a new attendance initiative for 2016/2017. We have revised our procedures and will be working with parents and carers to improve attendance and punctuality. This is because research has shown regular attendance and good punctuality are crucial factors in pupils achieving their full potential. St. Matthew's is committed to encouraging our children to strive for excellence. Therefore, for a pupil to reach their full potential, a high level of attendance is essential.

We wish to work in partnership with parents and carers and so are seeking your full support in ensuring that your child attends school every day and on time. We are always pleased to work together with parents/carers in resolving any difficulties, but we are also committed to improving attendance levels at St. Matthew's.

The target attendance figure for all pupils is a **minimum of 97%** attendance. Based on current attendance figures your child will be placed in one of the following groups below. Your child will be informed of their Attendance Group.

Group 1: No Concern - Green Group

The child attends for 97% - 100% of the time.

Group 2: Concern - Yellow Group

The child attends for 95% - 96.9% of the time.

Group 3: Risk of Underachievement – Amber Group

The child attends for 93% - 94.9% of the time.

Group 4: Severe Risk of Underachievement – Pink Group

The child attends for 90% - 92.9% of the time.

Group 5: Extreme Risk of Underachievement – Red Group

The child attends for 0% - 89.9% of the time.

Regular attendance is not just a legal requirement, but it is vital for pupils to maximize their learning, and achieve full potential at St. Matthew's. There are a number of important steps that you can take to ensure your child maintains a high level of attendance:

- Ensure your child attends every day, on time, equipped and ready to learn. Lesson time begins at 8.25am.
- Ensure the school has up to date addresses and telephone numbers. We will contact you by text through parent mail or by telephone if your child is absent and you have not contacted the school. This ensures that truancy is quickly identified.
- If your child is ill, contact the school and provide an explanatory note on their return to school. Please make sure you telephone school every day your child is absent.
- If you wish to check that your child has arrived at school contact Mrs Clarke, the attendance officer who will inform you if your child has been registered.
- If no contact is received regarding the absence, it is recorded as **unauthorised**. Ultimately the school is responsible for deciding if the absence is acceptable or not. Only genuine absence will be authorised. You will be asked to provide medical certificates if your child has a poor attendance record.
- Ensure that medical appointments are made outside of school time.

- Avoid trivial absence such as, 'buying new shoes'. This would not be accepted as a reasonable absence.
- Holidays should not be taken in school time. Holidays will not be authorised during term time.
- Respond to school letters or telephone calls regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Contact your child's Form tutor if you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child into school.

Thank you for working in partnership with us to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality at St. Matthew's. More detailed guidance can be found on the website, and also in the Attendance Guidance booklet with this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Walsh

Assistant Head Teacher