



## **Attendance Policy- Updated May 2022**

### **To be reviewed Yearly**

### **Review Date: May 2023**

As a Catholic School we seek to work in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure the best possible start for each child entrusted into our care. Regular attendance and punctuality are an essential part of this partnership.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Raise pupil achievement through promoting attendance and punctuality levels of 98% and above.
- Assist parents, carers and pupils through clear procedures and expectations for staff, parents and pupils regarding attendance.
- To safeguard vulnerable children through clear measures for dealing with absence and lateness.

### **Arrival Time**

The Top and Bottom gates will open at 8.40am for all pupils and will close at 8.55am. Morning arrivals will not be staggered.

-For parents of Reception children, they should enter through the Top Gate and walk their children to their classroom. They should then walk out through Chloe's Garden and through the gate next to the car park. Staff will be on hand to assist with supporting children in saying 'goodbye' to parents

-Year 1 and Year 2 pupils should enter through the Top gate independently of their parents and go straight into class.

-Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 should enter through either the Top Gate or Bottom Gate and walk into their classroom independently.

-Bottom Gate access will be just for children.

Children should arrive no later than 8.55am. The gates will be locked from 8.55am onwards. Any pupils who are late (arriving after the gates close at 8.55am) will need to enter via the Top Gate. They will need to buzz in the using the intercom.

Please make sure that children are not left unattended outside our gates before this time as we cannot take responsibility for their welfare.





### **Notification of Lateness or Absence**

Parents should phone /email the office before 8.55am on the same day if the child is going to be late or absent. The reason for absence must be as specific as possible – e.g. eye infection rather than sick or unwell.

### **Registration Procedures**

1. Registers will be taken twice daily, once for the morning session and once for the afternoon session.
2. Morning registers will be completed between 8:55am and 9.05am; afternoon registers will be completed at 1.10pm for KS1 and 1.25pm for Key Stage 2.
3. Teachers/Teaching Assistants will mark pupils 'present' with an /or 'absent' by leaving a **N**.
4. All **Ns** will be checked against absence messages and late arrivals. First day absences who have not left a message will then be given a follow up call by 9.30am.
5. By our Office staff: Arrivals after 9.00 am are marked 'L'. Arrivals after 9:30am are marked 'U'.
6. Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons:
  - Registers provide a daily record of the attendance of all pupils
  - They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law.
  - We have a duty to safeguard our pupils and non-attendance / poor attendance would give us cause for concern and investigation.

For this reason, all registers are checked by Senior Leaders and our Office Staff for accuracy and timely completion shortly after registration closes.

### **Authorised Absence or Lateness**

Only the school can authorise an absence.

1. Where the school is satisfied with the parent's explanation for the absence and there have been no previous issues with the child's absence or punctuality record the school will authorise the absence.
2. As long as children return to school straight after emergency Doctor/Dentist appointments they are not counted as absences. The situation is the same for a child who leaves after registration for a good reason such as illness, visits to secondary schools etc.
3. Children should not be kept off for the whole day for medical appointments unless they are too unwell to attend, in which case the parent must contact the school confirming the reason for their absence the next day and it will be counted as an absence. Routine medical appointments such as dental and eye sight checks should try to be made out of term time.
4. The exceptional circumstances code will be considered for issues such as death in the family, moving house etc. Parents should contact the school in advance, wherever possible, about such requests for absence.

The admin staff will keep a record of the reasons given for all late arrivals and absences and these will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Pastoral lead on a weekly basis. Other agencies, such as the Education Welfare Officer will be involved where lateness or absence is causing a concern.





### Unauthorised Absence

The Office Staff will contact the parents to express concern and advise the Head of School accordingly when:

- No satisfactory explanation has been given to explain the lateness or absence.
- There is reason to doubt the accuracy of the reasons given for the lateness or absence.

Unsuccessful attempts to contact the home will be recorded. In the case of families deemed to be 'vulnerable', a home visit will take place. For all other families, should contact be unsuccessful, a home visit will take place on Day Two.

### Absence Escalation Procedure

Attendance and Lateness is tracked on a weekly basis by the Headteacher and the Office Staff.

<b>Absence Escalation Procedure</b>	
Initial Absence	First day calling – Phone call if no contact has been made with school. Home visits if no contact is able to be made.
Stage 1	95% and below – Initial concern letter to monitor attendance to be sent (monitor attendance for 6 weeks)
Stage 2	90% and below – Second concern letter to be sent to all. Medical proof required for all future absences (prescribed medicines, prescriptions, doctors' notes, appointment confirmation cards or texts and hospital letters). If not received, the absence will be unauthorised.
	Referral to Senior Staff at 90% - school meeting/home visit is needed – completion of Parent Agreement at 90%.
Stage 3	Further decline or 8 unauthorised sessions in a four week school period will result in referral to the Local Authority.
Stage 4	Local Authority action can result in 15 day notification. Further decline will result in court action.



<b><u>Late Escalation Procedure</u></b>	
Stage 1	90% and below – Initial concern letter to monitor punctuality to be sent (monitor punctuality for 6 weeks)
Stage 2	Continued 90% and below – Second concern letter to be sent to all (monitor punctuality for 2 weeks)
Stage 3	Further monitoring for 2 weeks. Referral to Senior Staff at continued 90% or below - school meeting/home visit is needed – completion of Parent Agreement at 90%.
Stage 4	Further decline or continued 90% or below punctuality record (will result in referral to the Local Authority).

### **Providing Home Learning**

If a child is poorly they should stay off school until they are better. If a child is off school for another medical reason and is able to still learn then the parent/carer may request some work to be sent by the child's class teacher.

### **Safeguarding**

At St Thomas' we believe in supporting the whole family; our first duty of care, however, is to the child; where there is any doubt regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child, we will report it immediately to Social Services. Our preferred option is an open and honest relationship with our parents or carers; if there are genuine problems, please talk to us.

### **Leave of Absence During Term Time**

We do not allow holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; this is in line with the Local Authority and Government guidelines.

Government Legislation from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 states schools can only grant requests for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. No holidays during term time will be authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances such as an immediate family members' bereavement. No other reasons – for example parents' shift working patterns, or parents' illness coupled with inability to take holidays count as exceptional circumstances.

Parents who take their children out of school during term time and the absence has not been authorised, may be issued with a Penalty Notice.

Absence, lateness and term time holidays will be recorded in the End of Year individual school report.



St. Thomas' Catholic Voluntary Academy  
Church View, Ilkeston, DE74LF  
[info@tho.srscmat.co.uk](mailto:info@tho.srscmat.co.uk)  
[www.st-thomas.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.st-thomas.derbyshire.sch.uk)  
[@stthomasderbys](https://twitter.com/stthomasderbys)  
Company Number 7937154



**St Ralph  
Sherwin**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust