



# St. Walburga's Catholic Primary School

MALVERN ROAD, MOORDOWN, BOURNEMOUTH, BH9 3BY

Telephone: 01202 528811 Fax: 01202 532875

email: [office@stwalburgasprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@stwalburgasprimary.co.uk)

website: [www.stwalburgas.bournemouth.sch.uk](http://www.stwalburgas.bournemouth.sch.uk)



Headteacher: Veronica Woodward

6<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

## Attendance News

As we have come to the end of the Autumn Term and are now beginning a new one, I thought it was appropriate to remind our existing families and also to inform any new families that have joined us this term, of the attendance expectations at St Walburga's and to share our latest attendance news.

At the end of Autumn Term 2, our school attendance was **95.73%**, which is below our 96% target. It is also lower than it was this time last year, at 96.04%. We looked at the very last week of term and the attendance for that week (16<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> December) was 90.26% which is considerably low and impacted the whole term. We recognised that there were many illnesses towards the end of term, and we hope those affected children feel better, but we need to highlight that there were also some avoidable unauthorised absences too. It is important to remember that every school day matters, even if it is coming towards the end of a term, so we hope to see improvements on this in the future.

Here is a breakdown of our whole school attendance by year group:

Year Group	Attendance	Absence by no. of sessions		No. of Lates
		Authorised	Unauthorised	
Reception	94.77%	359	59	48
Year 1	96.18%	268	59	125
Year 2	95.67%	332	44	97
Year 3	96.19%	268	67	109
Year 4	95.78%	331	43	48
Year 5	95.81%	310	60	68
Year 6	95.66%	327	53	20
Whole School	<b>95.73%</b>	<b>2195</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>537</b>

We would like to celebrate the fact that 74 children across the school had 100% attendance over the term. This means they were able to come to school every day and we've sent a Marvellous Me sticker home to those children so you can share this with them!

It's important to keep in mind that the government has stated that the expected attendance for a child at school is 96% or greater. This means that each child should aim to have no more than 7.5 days of absence in a complete academic year. It might be tempting to think that missing a day or two won't make a difference, but the table below shows how even a small percentage of absence can add up to a significant amount of lost learning hours by the end of the academic year.

Description	Attendance	Whole days absent over the academic year	Lost hours of learning over the academic year
Excellent	100% - 99%	0 - 2	0-10
Good	98% - 96%	4 - 7.5	20 - 37.5
Requires improvement	95% - 91%	9.5 - 17	47.5 - 85
Persistent Absentee	90% - 86%	19 - 27	95 - 135
Critical	85% - 80%	28.5 - 38	142.5 - 190

Not only are learning hours lost, but also opportunities for social interaction, school trips, visitors to school and time spent with friends are missed. Of course, it's important to prioritise a child's health and well-being, so it's understandable if they need to stay home when they're really unwell. However, it can be challenging sometimes for parents to determine when their child is too ill to attend school. This is why I recommend you look at the useful tool in the link below, which

offers advice to help you make that decision. Don't forget, children can come to school if they are on antibiotics, if they are well enough, you just need to complete a request form for us to administer medication in school, which you will find in the School Office and on our school website.

<https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/parents/carers/worried-your-child-unwell/child-unwell-ok-go-nurseryschool>

### Lateness

Children who arrive late in school not only miss valuable settling-in time and directions for the first lesson but may also find that their lateness contributes towards their attendance percentage. All children must be in school by 8.40am at the latest. Our gates open at 8.25am, giving you a 15-minute window to drop your children to school on time.

The gates close promptly at 8.40am, when the bell goes, therefore if you arrive at school late, you will need to access the school via the office. A member of the office staff will sign your child in and will ask you for the reason for your child's late arrival at school. Late arrivals to school between 8.40am and 9.10am will be marked as 'late' on the registers. Arrivals to school after 9.10am will be marked down as an 'unauthorised absence'. This type of absence may lead to outside agencies becoming involved with the family to offer help if it happens regularly.

Our school day ends at 2.50pm and children should be collected promptly. If there is an occasion where you are unexpectedly running late, you must phone the School Office to let us know, and if you are going to be more than 15 minutes late you should make other arrangements for someone else to collect your child so they are not waiting at the office. Children do feel unsettled and anxious when they are collected late. It is not acceptable for you to collect your child late regularly. If we notice this happening we will speak to parents to find out more about the situation.

### Unexpected Absence

Please contact the school on 01202 528811 by no later than 9.00am to report your child absent. You will need to do this each day they do not attend. If your child needs a significant amount of time off for illness, we may ask for medical evidence to support their absence.

### Holidays/Absence in Term Time

Please remember that the Government has forbidden absence in term time, except in exceptional circumstances. Should you need to take your child out of school for any reason, please consider the impact it will have on their learning, progress and what they might miss before you request a leave of absence. Any requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher at least 10 school days in advance. Exceptions to this 10-school day requirement would include, but not be limited to, bereavements, funerals etc, at our discretion.

Holidays in term time cannot be authorised and as you will be aware, unauthorised absence will result in the Local Authority issuing a penalty (fine) or, in some cases, a prosecution. You can find additional information regarding penalty notices on our school website.

### Your Child's Attendance

It's always important to keep track of your child's attendance throughout the academic year. Parents are informed of their child's attendance level at the end of each term. This information is published on your child's report card at the end of the Autumn Term and Spring Term, and their final report in the Summer Term. It's a great way to stay informed and see if your child is on target. You should have an idea of your child's attendance from their recent Autumn Term report card which you should have received on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

If at any point in the year we have concerns about your child's attendance we will get in touch with you either by phone or by letter, particularly if your child's attendance falls below 90% and into the 'Persistent Absentee' category. Our primary goal is to notify you if your child's attendance level has fallen below expected and to determine if there is anything you or your child requires support with. Each child and family are treated as individuals and we really value having open conversations regarding pupil attendance, attitudes to school, and children's wellbeing.

If you need any support or advice or would like to discuss your child's attendance or punctuality at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us. You are more than welcome to speak to your child's class teacher; Mrs Symes, our Pastoral Support Worker; Miss Prince from the School Office; Miss McKinley, our Inclusion and SENCo Lead, Mrs Crutchley, our Deputy Head; or myself. Our children's well-being and education are of utmost importance to us and our whole school team works together to support families to ensure that children attend school regularly, so they can reach their full potential. Thank you for working with us.

Yours sincerely



Veronica Woodward  
Headteacher