

Michaela Community School Attendance Policy

Principles

We are committed to ensuring that all families understand the importance of 100% attendance. Attendance in school is vital for academic success. Studies have shown that pupils who attend less than 95% of the time fail to achieve 5 A*-C grades at GCSE and therefore are denied the chance to a successful, fulfilling life. For these reasons, we monitor attendance patterns with vigilance and hold parents to account where necessary. We expect all pupils to attend at all times, even if they are feeling unwell.

Practice

- Pupils must arrive before 7.55am; morning registers are taken soon after arrival. Afternoon registers are taken at 3.30pm (2.30pm on Fridays and 1.30pm on Sport days).
- Pupils arriving after 7.55am will be marked as late and will receive a detention. Pupils late due to hospital appointments must provide a signed letter from a parent.
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions) the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Headmistress.
- Parents are expected to notify the school office of pupil absence. In the case of illness, parents should phone the school office on the first day of absence and then each day thereafter. The office number is 0208 795 3183.
- The school will contact parents on a daily basis if they fail to inform the school of an absence. The school must be notified of the reason for a child's absence in order to safeguard the child and protect their educational well-being.
- Family holidays and doctor's appointments are not permitted during term time. Pupils have 13 weeks' school holiday per year and further time off on teacher training days. We kindly ask parents to make routine doctor and dental appointments during these dates in order to avoid unnecessary absence.
- Pupil absence will be recorded as 'Unauthorised' when the school is not satisfied with the reasons for the absence. Continued unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice from the Local Authority (details below).
- For a day set aside *exclusively* for religious observance, pupils will be granted one day of authorised absence per religious festival, up to a maximum of three days per academic year. Time taken beyond this will not be authorised.
- The school takes seriously its duty to safeguard the welfare of all its pupils. Unexplained absences and a lack of contact from parents may cause us concern and lead us to involve other agencies such as Children's Services. We will contact Children's Services within 2 days for any child with a Child Protection Plan.
- Pupils must have strong attendance in order to qualify for the end of term 'Reward Event'. The school also rewards excellent attendance with badges and post cards.
- The school carefully monitors attendance on a daily basis and attendance is discussed weekly by the school's Senior Leaders.
- Parental meetings are held to challenge and support our parents in raising the attendance of any child the school has concerns about.
- Where a child is failing to attend school, a plan will be drawn up in consultation with the family and, possibly, external agencies, including Education and Social Welfare workers.
- Pupils who are off school for a long period due to severe illness will be issued with optional work to carry out at home to avoid falling behind.

Absence Procedures

In order to ensure the safety and educational well-being of all pupils, we have a rigorous monitoring system and follow up policy when absence occurs.

Internal Stages

- On the first day of absence each academic year, the school must be notified of the reason for the absence. If we are satisfied with the reason, we will authorise the absence. If we are not satisfied, the absence will not be authorised.
- When a pupil's attendance falls below 95% (regardless of whether absences have been authorised or not), we will issue a warning letter advising the family that continued absence may result in prosecution.
- When a pupil's attendance falls below 90% (regardless of whether absences have been authorised or not), we will issue a second warning letter inviting the parents in to meet with a member of senior team. During this meeting, support strategies will be discussed and parents will be made aware of the next stages in the procedure should their child fail to improve their attendance.
- After the parent meeting, the pupil's attendance is monitored for 8 weeks. If attendance improves during this time, we close the case and monitor in the usual way.
- If attendance does not improve during this time, we invite parents in for a further meeting where the attendance plan previously put in place is evaluated and updated.
- After the second meeting, attendance is monitored for a further 3 week period. If unauthorised absences continue after this point, the school and Brent Education Welfare Service will begin proceedings to issue legal penalty notices to parents.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

The national definition of CME is:

“all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)”.

Children are at risk of becoming CME for many reasons, such as:

1. They cease to attend due to exclusion or withdrawal: removal from roll with no destination.
2. They fail to complete a transfer between providers.
3. They are offered alternative provision but fail to access this provision.
4. They have moved into the area and are not yet registered on a school roll (possibly including refugees/asylum seekers who have relocated from another authority from outside the area).

Michaela Community School has adopted Brent Council's procedures for monitoring and reporting pupils who we believe are vulnerable and/or missing from education (CME).

Should the child be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or should the school have child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately notify Children's Services.

We will not remove any child from our roll without consulting Brent Council School Admissions Services, and the Education Welfare Service where appropriate. It is our policy to ensure that a place

has been secured and the pupil has enrolled at a new school before removing a pupil from roll when transfers take place.

Approval by Governing Body and Review Date

This policy and plan has been formally approved and adopted by the Local Governing Body at a formally convened meeting.

Signed: 
Chair of Governing Body

Date: 7 July 2016

Review date: July 2017

End of Statement