



St. Thomas More

CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

STM Attendance Strategy 2024

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy Attendance statement and information

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy believes that all pupils should receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for every child to reach his or her potential.

Our attendance policy is a key policy and demonstrates the importance of the school working in partnership with families and external agencies to ensure that we do our best for all the young people whilst in the care of St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy.

We expect the highest level of attendance and punctuality from our pupils. Evidence clearly shows that pupils who attend school regularly (97%+) make significantly better progress both academically and holistically than those that do not. It is vital pupils attend school on time every day that the school is open.

Our whole school attendance target for 2024/25 is 97%

Unplanned Absence

All absences affect a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Pupils often find it difficult to catch up on learning that they have missed and absence can lead them to fall behind their peers. This can affect how a student feels about school and can make their attendance even worse. Statistics suggest that a student whose attendance is below 94% will drop at least one grade across all their subjects.

Parents are expected to contact the school before 8:45am on the day of the absence providing a sufficient reason for the unplanned absence and an estimated date of return.

All absences should be reported via our dedicated student absence line (01298 23167), or via email on: attendance@stm.srscmat.co.uk

If a pupil's attendance is below 95% medical evidence, such as a medical appointment card or letter or a prescription may be requested to authorise absences.

Support

If your child is facing difficulties which are preventing them from attending school every day on time, support is always available.

Please contact your child's Form Tutor or Pastoral Manager to discuss how we may support you and your child.

Lateness

All pupils are expected to be on site by 8.45am and must present at form or Celebration of the Word/ assembly by 8.50am.

If your child arrives after 8:50am, this will result in a same day 15-minute afterschool detention with a member of the pastoral team and/ or our attendance officer.

Lateness after registers close at 9.20am is recorded as unauthorised absence and a detention will be set with your child's Head of Learning.

If your child arrives after 8:50am twice in a week, this will be escalated to a 30 minute after school detention with their Head of Learning.

Minutes late per day	Equivalent of missing
10 Minutes	6 school days a year
15 Minutes	10 school days a year
20 Minutes	14 school days a year
30 Minutes	20 school days a year

Leave of Absence during term-time

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy does not authorise leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Appointments, interviews, dental etc.

A permission to leave class slip must be completed if a pupil has to leave school for some reason during the school day.

This is available in the front of the pupil diary and must be signed by the child's parent and Pastoral Manager. The absence slip is then handed into Miss Brocklesby on reception when the pupil signs out.

Advanced notice – Leave of absence request

If a pupil is participating in a Sporting Event or requires a leave of absence from school for a funeral etc. a leave of absence form must be completed and handed to Miss L Brocklesby for consideration.

Parents who need to take their child out of school during term time must apply by using the Academy's 'Leave of Absence Request Form' which is available to download on the website.

Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day and on time.

If your child accrues unauthorised absence (O & U code) or takes an unauthorised leave of absence (G code) you are at risk of a penalty notice or prosecution.

Please see the SRS Attendance Policy for more information.

What will St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy do to support you and your child?

- Celebrate good attendance / punctuality with you and our pupils,
- Work in partnership with you and support your child to make improvements in your child's attendance and punctuality,
- We may visit you at home if we are concerned about you and your child,
- Refer to outside agencies for specialist support.

What can parents/carers do?

- Talk to your children about their day and celebrate their achievements,
- Let your child know that you think attendance is important and it is not right to miss school,
- Encourage a routine at home, for example, bed times, homework and preparing school bag and uniform the evening before,
- Engage with school and outside agencies where support is offered,
- Contact school before 8:45am if your child is going to be absent,
- Avoid unnecessary absence including holidays in term time and where possible make medical appointments outside school hours.

How do we inform you of your child's attendance?

We will write to parents each half term to inform them of their child's attendance figure. This letter is colour coded to help you in identifying where on the scale their attendance currently stands.

Stage	Possible intervention	Timescale
Excellent 100-99% 190 – 188 days 0-2 days of absence	Letter of congratulation 100% attendance postcard	Half term
Good 98.9-97% 187 – 184 days 2-6 days of absence	Notification Letter List of potential supportive measures/interventions at this stage: When a child's attendance falls below 97% they will have a meeting with their Form Tutor in the first instance. Phone call with Head of Year, if there are concerns.	Half term
Slightly Concerned 96.9-95% 183-180 6-10 days of absence	Letter 1 List of potential supportive measures/interventions at this stage: Attendance report to their Head of Year. Potential phone call/meeting with Head of Year and parents. Home visits can take place.	Half term
Concerned 94.9-90% 179 – 171 days 10 – 19 days of absence	Letter 2 List of potential supportive measures/interventions at this stage: Raising Attendance Panel – Head of Year Attendance contract – signed by parents and pupil. Home visit priority. Mentoring and intervention daily/weekly. External agency support if necessary. Fixed Penalty Notice – if necessary.	Half term
Very Concerned – below 90% (Classed as 'Persistent Absentee' by the Government) 20 days or below 0 or more days of absence	Letter 3– Persistent Absentee List of potential supportive measures/interventions at this stage: Significant intervention – parents/carers meeting with pupil. Fixed Penalty Notice Afterschool catch up sessions Social care referral / External agency support	Half term

Attendance stages and possible intervention

The school follows a clear systematic process of support for pupils whose attendance falls below expected levels (97%).

We will consider intervention with parents/carers if a student's attendance is less than 97%.

Below is the stage system implemented to ensure early intervention and support can be put in place.

Possible intervention includes:

- ❖ Targeted letters
- ❖ Warning letters
- ❖ Raising attendance panels
- ❖ Contact with external agencies
- ❖ Formal Attendance Panels
- ❖ Penalty notices
- ❖ Parenting Orders