



## **ST MARY'S CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL**

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **General principles**

What is an attendance policy? Under the Education Regulations 1995 the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present. The register must also indicate why a pupil is absent. Our new policy aims to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and ensure the school's legal responsibility is met.

#### **What has changed?**

From 1<sup>st</sup> September new Government attendance regulations removes reference to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. Headteachers determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

#### **Working in Partnership**

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. If you have any concerns about your child's attitude to school please talk to your child's class teacher.

#### **How are attendance figures worked out?**

A register is taken in school at 8.55am (KS2) and 9.00am (Foundation and KS1) each morning and 1.15pm each afternoon. A child will receive a 'mark' for each session; these marks are totalled by school and given as a percentage (e.g. if a child attends school all week they will receive 100%; if a child is absent for one day they will have an attendance of 80% for that week.

Attendance figures are therefore calculated solely at two attendance points each the day. Therefore, for example, if a child arrives in school in the morning and then leaves school for an appointment at 11.00am and then arrives back in school prior to the start of the afternoon session, the register will show that the child was in attendance for both school sessions.

#### **How is lateness recorded?**

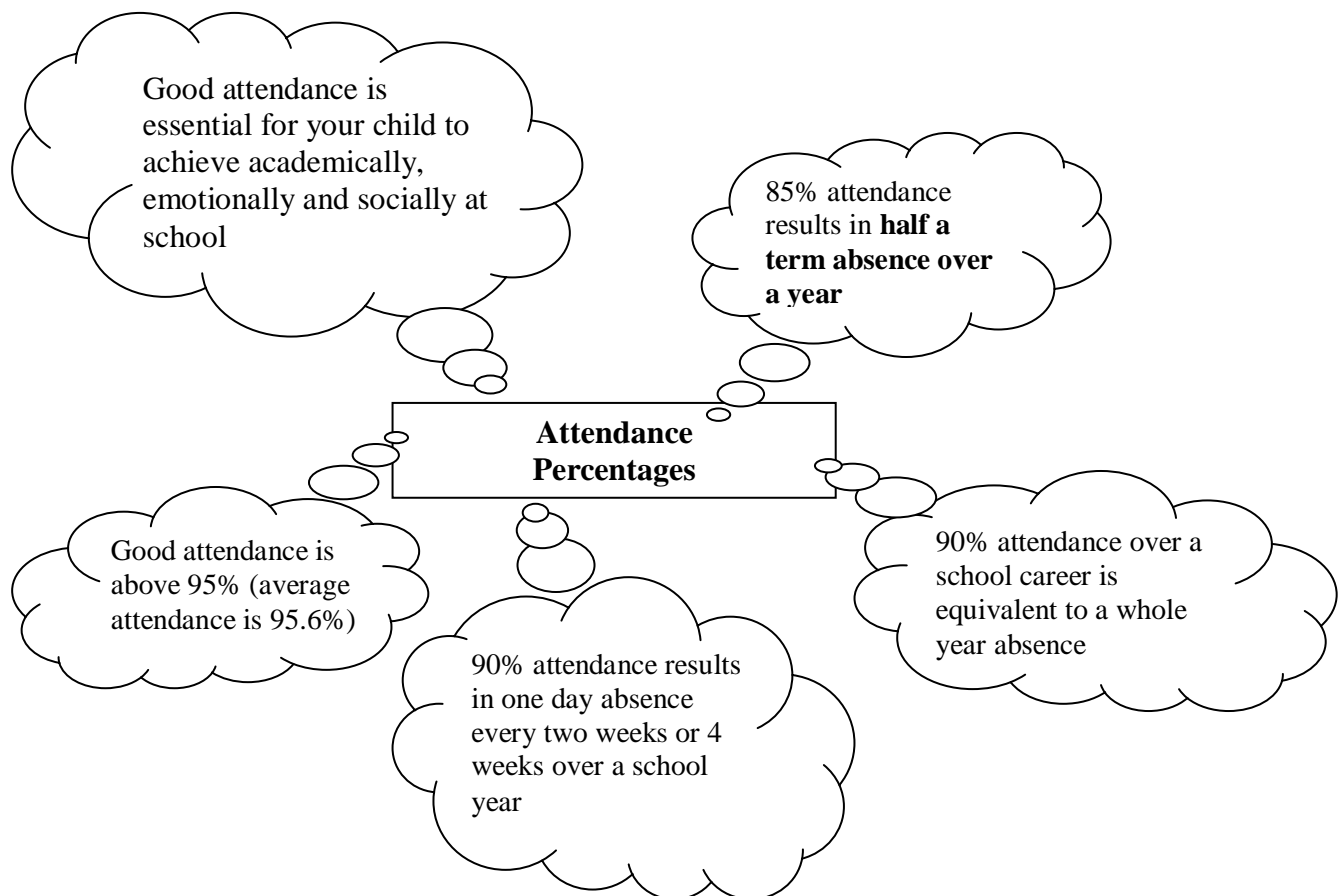
If a child arrives 'late' after 9.00am, but before 9.20am, the child will receive a 'late' mark but will be considered as 'attending' the morning session. If a child arrives in school after 9.20am the child is considered to have been 'absent' for the session.

### What is considered good attendance?

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning, promoting positive relationships and developing good attitudes to education. Good attendance is considered above 95%, or approximately no more than one day of absence each half term.

### What is an acceptable absence?

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason. Only the school can make an absence authorised. An absence is classified as unauthorised when the school believes a child is away from school without good reason; for example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours. **School will not authorise an absence when no prior notice has been given to school**, (unless in very exceptional circumstances).



Staff and parents will work together to ensure good attendance.

#### **Parents will:**

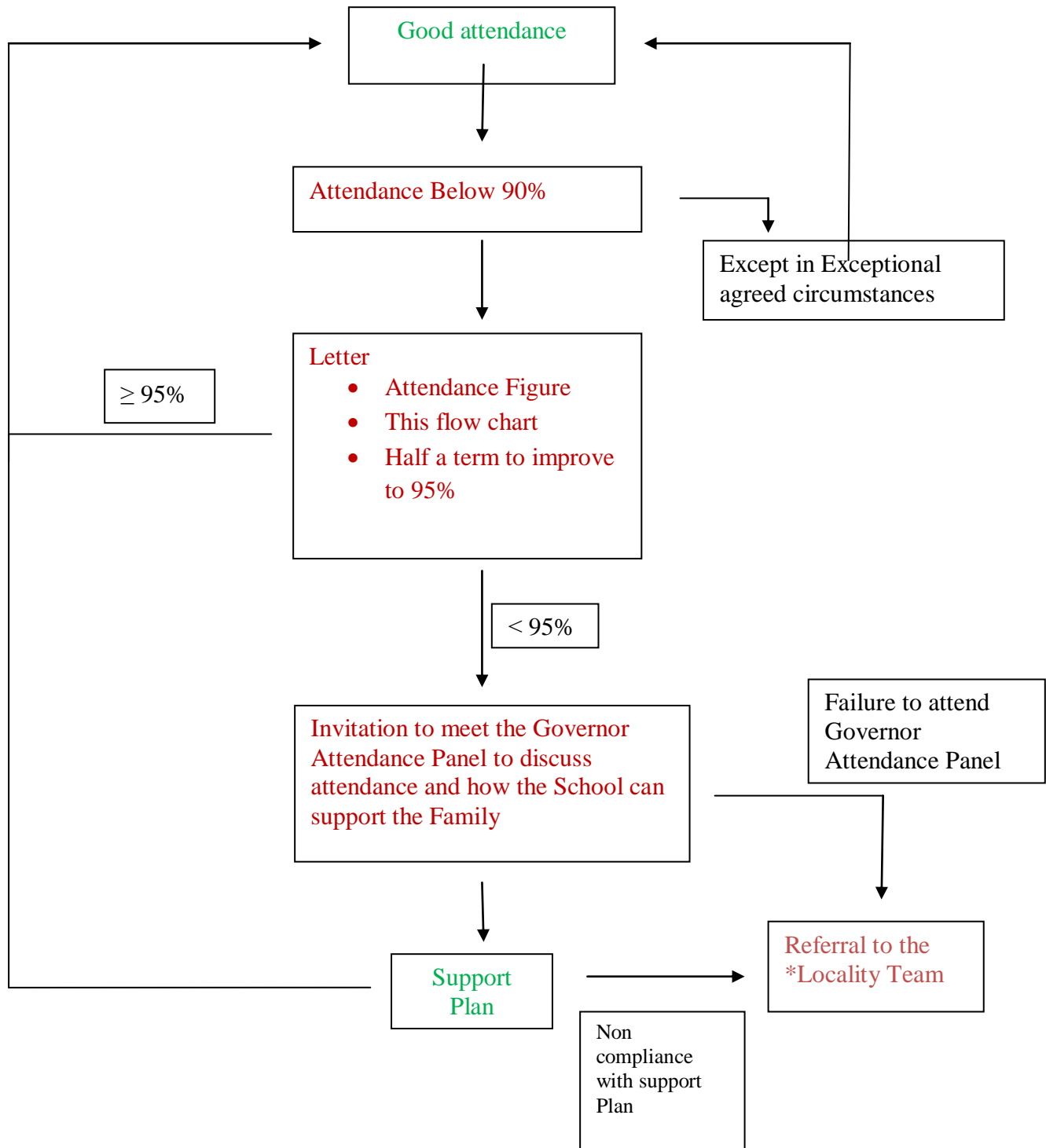
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time;
- Ensure any child arriving after the start of school accesses school via the school office;
- Contact the school on the first day of any absence before 9.20 am, (reasons will only be accepted from parents / carers of child concerned);

- Contact the school in advance if their child will be absent for any reason (e.g. medical appointment);
- Make any requests for leave of absence on a leave of absence form available from the school office or school website.

**School will:**

- Take registration each morning and afternoon (two sessions per day);
- Consistently record reasons for absence and indicate if absence is authorised or not
- Our school day starts at 9.00am for Reception and KS1 and 8.55am for KS2.
- Record an attendance as 'late' after 9.00am; (arrival after 9.20am is deemed 'late after registers closes' and is classified as an absence for the morning session)
- Contact parents / carers on the first day of any absence if no reason is given by 9.20 am;
- Contact parent / carer if attendance becomes a concern (below 90%) and invite parent / carer to school to discuss ways that attendance can be supported and improved; (see School Response to Attendance Concerns flowchart below)
- Ensure that parents are aware if their child's attendance has the potential to become a concern by informing them if it falls below 90%.
- A letter will be sent should attendance figures dip below 90%. If attendance does not then improve to 95% over a certain time period, parents will be invited in to attend a Governor Attendance Panel meeting.
- If attendance falls below 90% and parents refuse to attend a Governor Attendance panel meeting, the school has the right to bring in the locality team.
- School will only grant applications for leave of absence in term time in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays are not considered an exceptional circumstance.

## School Response to Attendance Concerns



\* **Locality Team** – The West Dorset Early Intervention Locality Team is responsible for supporting children, young people and families with additional needs in the District. 'To improve outcomes for children, young people and families, with a particular focus on those who need support, by developing and delivering an early intervention and prevention service'

***This policy has been reviewed in line with the 9 principles set out in the Single Equality policy and an initial screening Equality Assessment has been carried out.***

Signed: .....  
(Chairs of Governors)

Date: .....12<sup>th</sup> October 2016.....

Next Review Date: Oct 2017