



Mater Ecclesiae

Catholic Multi Academy Trust

'One Family in Christ'

TRUST ATTENDANCE STATEMENT

Document Control

This document has been approved for operation within:	All Trust Establishments		
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**“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty”
(John 6:35)**

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1. Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi Academy Trust Mission Statement

We are 'One Family in Christ' delivering the Catholic mission of the Diocese of Lancaster and serving the family of Catholic schools in the Preston area, under the patronage of Mary the Mother of the Church - Mater Ecclesiae.

Our vision is to work together to meet the needs of all and strive for excellence. Within our family, members of our community are loved and valued as unique individuals, made in the image of God. They are respected and cherished and given every opportunity to grow together.

As 'One Family in Christ' we embrace, celebrate and inspire our diverse communities to achieve their full potential.

2. Aims

Our attendance statement aims to:

- Encourage the highest levels of attendance and punctuality across our Trust family of schools
- Enable and empower school leaders and staff to strive for and achieve the highest levels of pupil attendance
- Support pupils and their parents/carers to achieve this
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Ensure attendance meets government, local authority and Trust targets

3. Being at School

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Attending school encourages peer interaction and good social skills and develops understanding of our core values of 'Compassion', 'Confidence' and 'Community'. It also enables schools to deliver key principles of Catholic Social Teaching, namely: human dignity, the common good and the preferential option for the poor.

In addition, as a Catholic Trust, we strive to ensure that our schools are vibrant places for learning. We want all our pupils to enjoy being at school, and to be enthused and motivated by their learning.

Our schools will work in partnership with parents and carers to make their child's education a success and to ensure that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a Trust, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child/ren arrive at school promptly.

4. Expectations

Mater Ecclesiae expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact school **daily** whenever their child is unable to attend school
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details

Our schools will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe, stimulating and vibrant learning environment, and one which is enriched by our Catholic values and beliefs.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Regularly inform parents of the attendance percentage of all pupils.
- Regularly review attendance data as a school and within the Trust to track patterns and address any key issues including persistent absence and use of suspension.
- Engage in research on best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other research to support disadvantaged students and their attendance.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly, referring irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to their named contact at Lancashire County Council's (LCC) School Attendance Support Team. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set out LCC's School Attendance Support Team may result in legal action being taken.
- Notify the School Attendance Support Team after 20 unexplained or unauthorised absences in a set period.

5. Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Arriving at school on time is crucial. Lateness in school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore, that all pupils arrive at school on time.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. Registration takes place at a time determined by the school and pupils who arrive after that time will be recorded as late to school.

- After Registers close, any lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by the school but may also be referred to LCC's School Attendance Support Team and may be subject to prosecution by the local authority
- Afternoon registration is taken after lunch
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality are recorded on their report.
- In addition, our secondary schools take registers at the start of every class so that we can be sure your child is safe, in school, and ready to learn at the start of each lesson.

6. Pupils Leaving during the School Day

- During school hours, school staff are legally in '*loco parentis*' (in the place of the parent) and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Wherever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter, note in planner or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving and the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving school and sign back in on their return.
- When a parent is collecting a pupil from the school, the parent should collect their child from the school reception in person.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission, their parents will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the police and register the pupil as a missing person.
- If a pupil is missing from a lesson, staff will inform reception and checks will be made, including a sweep of the school site. If, after such checks have been made, a pupil is still missing, parents/carers will be contacted.
- Pupils should be registered formally twice each day and in each lesson in secondary school setting.

7. Leave of Absence

- The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed on the dates, but they may be subject to change.

- In line with the government's amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, leave of absence during term time will NOT be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances and the leave of absence has been agreed by the Headteacher.
- In exceptional circumstances, permission may only be granted for a maximum of five days (ten sessions – am and pm).
- Where a leave of absence is to be considered, a leave of absence form must be requested from the school reception and submitted for consideration. Schools are encouraged to meet all families requesting this in person to consider this.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

8. Attendance and absence

Evidence indicates that only 1 in 20 (18%) of severely absent pupils, those with attendance of 50% or below, get five good GCSEs. For those who are defined as having persistent absence (above 10%), this leads to 36% gaining five or more good GCSEs. It is clear that nationally those eligible for free school meals are more likely to have higher levels of absence.

In contrast, 78% of students who were rarely absent got five or more good GCSE grades.

Such routines in educational engagement are formed at an early stage and it is therefore essential to promote high attendance and engagement from the earliest stages in a child's educational life.

A score of 90% sounds like a great success, yet for attendance, this would mean missing one day every fortnight or 19 days, equating to nearly a month of the academic year.

Policies and practices related to pupil attendance are regularly reviewed and evaluated against the very latest research and national best practice.

Each school is responsible for tracking attendance and absence. The Trust will also monitor this data to support schools and identify strategic patterns, trends and issues to engage with.

9. Changing Schools

- It is important that, if families decide to send their child/ren to a different school, they inform the school as soon as possible.
- A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:
 - The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
 - The address of the new school
 - A new home address if appropriate
- The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school.
- If the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Child Missing Education (CME) Team at Lancashire County Council.