



Mrs Alison Pope, Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

June 2026

### **The Importance of Good School Attendance**

At St Martins School, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil receives the very best education possible. A key factor in achieving this is excellent attendance.

We are writing to remind all families of the importance of regular school attendance and to outline our expectations moving forward.

#### **Why attendance matters**

There is clear national evidence that attendance directly impacts achievement. Research from the Department for Education shows that pupils with higher attendance consistently achieve better academic outcomes than those who are absent more frequently. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

In particular:

- Pupils with attendance above 95% are significantly more likely to achieve strong GCSE outcomes.
- Missing just 10 days of school can reduce the likelihood of achieving a Grade 5 in English and Maths by half.

Attendance is not just about being present—it is about securing future success.

#### **What attendance percentages really mean**

The school year is approximately 190 days. Even small percentages of absence quickly add up:

Attendance	Days missed per year	Equivalent learning time lost
90%	19 days	Nearly 4 weeks of school
80%	38 days	Over half a term
70%	57 days	Around a full term

In lessons, this equates to:

- 90% attendance = around 100+ lessons missed
- 80% attendance = around 200+ lessons missed
- 70% attendance = around 300+ lessons missed

This level of absence has a significant impact on progress, knowledge retention and confidence, and ultimately on GCSE outcomes.

#### **ST MARTINS SCHOOL**

Moors Bank  
St Martins  
SY10 7BD  
01691 776500  
[reception@stm.318education.co.uk](mailto:reception@stm.318education.co.uk)



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### Holidays/Appointments during term time

Due to our current attendance levels, and in line with national expectations, the school will not authorise holidays taken during term time.

There are 175 non-school days each year available for holidays, family time and appointments, and we ask that families plan accordingly.

Taking holidays during term time disrupts learning, creates gaps in knowledge, and can place pupils at a disadvantage compared to their peers.

Requests for appointments during the school day without any medical or appointment evidence will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

### Attendance and illness – NHS guidance

We understand that children will sometimes be unwell; however, national NHS guidance is clear:

- Children can attend school with mild illness, such as:
  - a runny nose
  - a sore throat
  - a slight cough
- Pupils should only remain at home if they have a high temperature or are too unwell to attend. [\[nhs.uk\]](https://www.nhs.uk)

Evidence shows that many absences due to minor illness are unnecessary and attending school where possible helps ensure continuity in learning. [\[educationherald.com/log.gov.uk\]](https://www.educationherald.com/news/education-herald-log-gov-uk/)

### Working together

We recognise that some pupils may face genuine challenges with attendance. Where this is the case, we are committed to working in partnership with families to provide appropriate support.

However, improving attendance across the school is a priority for us, and we will:

- closely monitor attendance for all pupils
- intervene where attendance falls below expected levels
- apply our policies consistently

### Our expectation

Our expectation is that all pupils aim for at least 96–100% attendance.

Every day in school matters. Every lesson builds knowledge. Every absence is a missed opportunity.

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Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that all pupils at St Martins School attend regularly, achieve highly, and thrive.

If you have any concerns about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact our Attendance Officer Martine Grieve [martine.grieve@stm.318education.co.uk](mailto:martine.grieve@stm.318education.co.uk) or Assistant Head Hannah Weaver [hannah.weaver@stm.318education.co.uk](mailto:hannah.weaver@stm.318education.co.uk)

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads 'Alison Pope'.

Alison Pope  
Headteacher

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