

Friendship *Generosity* *Perseverance* *Forgiveness* *Respect* *Courage*
Trust *Peace* *Thankfulness* *Compassion* *Humility* *Responsibility*



St. Mary's Church of England VC Infant School

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Headteacher: Miss Verity Edey

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'Sharing, Caring, Learning and Loving with God'

Attendance

30th September 2019

You will recall I wrote to you in May about the poor attendance of pupils at our school. At our last governors' meeting in July we discussed at some length this issue as this is an incredibly important priority.

We were advised that the overall attendance in the school is 95.9% (excluding reception children), which is still below the national average.

Our previous Headteacher reported that she had discussed the fining system with other Baldock Heads. They advised that all but 2 schools have the fining system in place and those that have fining included in their attendance policy confirmed that it has been effective in improving the attendance of pupils.

Governors were asked to consider having a fining system in place. None of our school's strategies or incentives have been effective over time and attendance was a key concern raised at our last Inspection. It is our role as a Governing Body to improve attendance at St Mary's.

After asking several questions at the meeting we decided that with effect from tomorrow, Tuesday 1st October a fining system will be put into place with immediate effect.

Consequently, the fining system has been added to the school's attendance policy as shown on the school's website.

It is important for you to understand that the Headteacher will take each individual circumstance into account in her decision to levy a fine. The fine will not apply until your child exceeds 15 sessions and you will be notified when your child reaches 10 sessions. Each session is defined as half a day.

Our concerns for your children are genuine. In my letter to you in May, I pointed out the impact of poor attendance on your child's education and future success. All pupils need to be in school to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and to ensure that they make good progress.

We do hope you will do all you can to avoid unnecessary absences and so improve our attendance record in school.

Obviously if there is anything you would like to talk to me about, then I can be contacted at the School Office.

Thanking you for your support.

Andrew Watkin (Chair of Governors)

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