



**Attendance POLICY**  
**November 2016**

**Review Date: November 2018**

# **ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Attendance POLICY**

This policy will be carried out with due regard to our School Vision and Mission Statement:

**Together we love- Together we hope- Together we learn**

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive, vibrant, Catholic community where we encourage everyone to share a love of learning and the love of Christ.**

**Together, we hope to inspire each other to achieve our full potential and to embrace our future with confidence.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. St Joseph's ethos encourages children to feel their presence in school is important and that their contribution to their class, and the whole school is missed if they are absent or arrive late. The policy applies to all pupils in years 1-6, and it also applies to Reception age children who are of statutory school age. Children reach statutory school age in the term after they are 5.

### **AIMS**

- To maximise the attendance of all pupils
- To provide an environment which encourages optimum attendance, and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is cause for concern and to work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely with and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following people have responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Head Teacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies over any issues
- To provide the Local Authority (LA) and Education Welfare Officer(EWO) with accurate information regarding unauthorised absences
- To provide governors with information to enable them to evaluate policy success and practice
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance

- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support for those experiencing attendance difficulties.

#### Governing Body

- To determine and approve an appropriate Attendance policy
- To monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance policy

#### Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class using the class register. (The register is a legal document and teachers are required, within their contractual responsibilities to take an attendance register twice a day, at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.)
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of attendance
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period.

#### Office staff

- To make use of specialist attendance software to record, store and monitor the schools legal responsibilities.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant reports where necessary.
- To contact parents/carers on first day of their child's absence if contact has not been made, to establish the reason.
- To ensure that a reason for every absence has been established at the end of each week.

#### Education Welfare Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance
- To work with the whole school and monitor individual children's attendance where necessary.

## **ABSENCE**

### **Lateness**

- Pupils arriving after the morning register has closed at 08.30am will be considered as late and must report to the school office so their attendance can be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after 08.50am will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be recorded as un-authorised unless a satisfactory reason is given and accepted.
- Action to address lateness will be taken to improve punctuality where necessary, in line with the roles and responsibilities of the Class and Head Teacher.

### **Sickness**

- Parents/carers are required to contact the school on the first day of sickness to provide the reason for the absence by 09.30am, and on each subsequent day of absence thereafter.
- Parents are required to provide a written explanation on their child's return to school.
- Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence by 09.30am they will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence they must inform the Head Teacher.

## **Holidays during term time**

There is no automatic right to request or take time off during term time. The Education (pupil registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 prohibit the Head Teacher of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Head teacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Exceptional circumstances

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Exceptional significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis with parents/carers

Parents/carers must always make any request for absence during term time using the exceptional circumstances application form available from the school office, and provide any supporting evidence. Parents/carers must allow the Head Teacher sufficient time to respond to the application.

The Head Teacher will consider every request individually but the following will definitely not meet the criteria:

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in UK/abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different school term times/holidays

If a child's unauthorised absence is five (5) days or more over a six (6) month period the local authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice per parent/carer per child or prosecute parents/carers in the Magistrates Court.

Sanctions

Penalty notices require each parent of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a penalty, currently £60 if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days.

If despite penalty notices being issued a parent/carer continues to take their child/children out of school during term time, the matter may then be taken before magistrates under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, where the Courts have a wider range of sentencing options, which could include a maximum fine of up to £1000.

## **Medical/dental appointments**

Parents/carers are encouraged to make these appointments outside of school hours if possible.

Absence from school for the above will be considered as an authorised absence; however parents/carers are required to provide written confirmation of the appointment when requesting time off.

## **External examinations**

Absence from school for the above will be considered as an authorised absence; however parents/carers are required to provide written confirmation of the examination when requesting time off.

## **Monitoring and Reporting**

All absences both authorised and un-authorised will be communicated to parents/carers at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

Attendance data will be collected on a regular basis and evaluated; the results will be discussed with the EWO where it is deemed necessary.

It is the responsibility and duty of the Head Teacher to ensure all unauthorised absences are recorded and reported to the EWO and Local Authority.

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