

Holy Family Catholic Primary School



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our mission statement

' We are the Holy Family; we are united in God's love . Following in his footsteps we aim to create a safe and happy learning enviroment wherein each child is encouraged and supported to reach their full potential '

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Statement of Intent

- Holy Family Catholic Primary School is committed to providing a full and beneficial educational experience to all its pupils, if this commitment is to succeed good pupil attendance is imperative
- The School will do all it can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils
- Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed speedily
- Parents have a vital role to play in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and on time
- Individual parents will be contacted immediately if concerns arise over their child's attendance or punctuality with a view to resolving any problems that may have arisen
- The school will seek immediate advice from the Education Welfare Service should queries arise around pupil attendance

Rights and Responsibilities

- The School requires pupils to attend school regularly, on time and properly equipped and ready to learn
- The School requires good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality
- The School staff will promote matters of attendance and punctuality
- The School staff will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness
- The School will work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve issues, which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible
- Parents must ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time
- Pupils will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school
- Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on the first morning of any absence, **this must be confirmed in writing when a child returns to school.**
- If attendance problems do develop, the school requires parents to work actively with school staff to solve them
- Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record
- Parents do not have a right to take children on holiday in term time
- If a pupils attendance falls **below 90%** parents will be required to attend a **formal meeting with the headteacher**; all meetings will be documented and minuted
- Pupils will be **referred to the Education Welfare Service** if their **attendance falls below 80%** in the preceding six weeks and they have 10 or more unauthorised absences. This is the beginning of a legal process that will result in prosecution should attendance not improve
- If a pupil is absent for 10 sessions (5 days) and the parents have failed to notify the school and the school has been unable to make contact with the parents an APPENDIX A (missing child notification) will be sent to the Education Welfare Service

Registration

Type of Registration and general register maintenance

At Holy Family Primary School a manual registration system is used.

Manual registers must be marked in ink and where an alteration is necessary this must be clearly identified showing both the original entry and change. Correction fluid must not be used.

Registers will be returned to the school office at the end of the registration period for safety and will be secured but accessible in case of an emergency.

All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence will be stored on the pupil's file and retained throughout their time at Holy Family School.

Start and Close of Registration

The school will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 30 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Registration begins at 8.50 a.m. and 1.10 p.m. each school day and registers will be closed 30 minutes after these times.

If a pupil arrives after the commencement of the registration period, they will report to reception to be entered into the late record book by parent or carer, this will be entered into the register as 'L'.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for that session. This will be entered into the register as 'U'

School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carers, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Under the Education Pupil Registrations 2006 (R12) deletions from the School Roll must be reported to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, by the school giving reasons for that pupil's removal prior to deletion.

In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

The Legal Status of Registers

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised.

A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a pupil.

Registers must be kept for a minimum of 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

Staff responsible for processes

- The class teacher/LSA is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the AM session and once for the PM session.
- The administrative team are responsible for ensuring that registers are kept safely and are available for inspection to relevant professionals. They will also alert the Headteacher of any concerns.
- The Headteacher is responsible for attendance issues and will check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns.
- The administrative team are responsible for logging attendance information onto the computerised system.
- The class teacher is responsible for the maintenance of their own class register. including the following :
 - using the correct colour ink, black/red
 - ensuring each pupil is called by name when taking the register
 - ensuring that symbols used are appropriate
 - not using correction fluid
 - ensuring all mistakes are amended with the original information still clear and corrections clearly marked
 - ensuring the registers are neatly kept allowing for ease of reading at all times but especially in an emergency situation – i.e. during a fire procedure

Holy Family Catholic Primary School will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process.

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school office or leave a message on the 24 hours answerphone service as soon as possible on the first morning of the child's absence. If this contact is not made then Holy Family Catholic Primary School will contact the parent/carer by telephone or text. If this does not elicit an explanation of the absence and the absence continues, a letter will be sent.

If this letter does not elicit an explanation for the absence a second letter will be sent to the parent/carer, the school's Education Welfare Officer will be informed and /carer will be invited in to the school for a meeting with the Headteacher.

This meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved at this meeting then a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer, and a formal intervention planned.

If the pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks, in exceptional circumstances there will be provision to allow the pupil to ease back into the school system. In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence then an individual reintegration programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible.

Where a pupil is persistently late the parent/carer will be invited to a school based meeting.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The DFEE Circular Number 10/99 states that parents may not authorise absence, only Schools can do this. (Please see Leave of Absence Policy)

Absence for the following reasons could be authorised where parents have confirmed the absence in writing on the child's return to school:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances i.e. bereavement
- If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the Headteacher
- Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond statutory walking distance

Where is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school or the Education Welfare Officer may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

In the belief that pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is exciting, relevant and meets their needs the curriculum will be regularly reviewed.

Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the home school agreement, school prospectus, parent consultation meetings, newsletters and the display of relevant policies on the school website.

Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and pupil reports will be used.

Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

Pupils with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and will be set targets for improvement.

Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school.

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

- Termly celebrations of children who have had a 100% attendance and do not have a persistent lateness issues throughout the term
- The class with the best attendance is congratulated weekly in the newsletter.
- End of academic year letter sent to parents congratulating them on their child's attendance where attendance is 100%
- End of academic year pupils presented with a certificate for achieving 100% attendance
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Target Setting/Monitoring & Evaluation Mechanisms

- Targets set annually for attendance – these are regularly monitored with reports sent to Headteacher half-termly.
- A late letter sent to parents after five lates within two weeks – if no improvement is made parents are requested to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and attendance officer.