

St. Joseph's RC Primary School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed October 2021 by Effectiveness. Next review Autumn 2022

"I came so that you may have life, and have it to the full."

– John 10:10



Faith

Respect

Confidence

Resilience

Empathy

St. Joseph's RC Primary School

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Attendance Policy

Rationale

At St Joseph's we believe that our students will gain the greatest benefit from their education if they attend school regularly and punctually. In order to safeguard our student's education, we will work in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) service to ensure that any problems which may impede regular attendance are acted on as quickly as possible.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children's attendance at school as required by law (*ref Section 7, 1996 Education Act*).

Good/Excellent Attendance, 96% - 100%

St Joseph's Primary has an attendance target of 96%. We believe a student achieving 96% attendance and above will gain the most from the education we provide.

We encourage attendance by:

- Rewarding those students who have achieved 96% attendance or above at the end of each half term.
- Rewarding the class who have achieved the highest percentage attendance during the well-done assembly each week.
- Whole school 96% attendance per half term – whole school reward.
- Each class that achieves 100% attendance will receive a reward.
- Excellent punctuality for a year group will be rewarded each half term.

Cause for Concern Attendance, 90% - 95%

Students' attendance that falls below 96% will be closely monitored and early interventions may be necessary to ensure that attendance does not deteriorate further.

Early interventions may include:

- Letter home to notify parents of the drop in percentage attendance.
- A meeting at school to discuss any problems which may affect good attendance.

If after early interventions the student's attendance does not improve or deteriorates further, your child may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

90% and below

A student with under 90% attendance is classed as a Persistent Absentee (PA) and is not attending school regularly. Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to any child's education and places you at risk of prosecution.

All PA pupils and their parents may be invited to an Attendance Panel.

Attendance Panel:

- Parents invited by Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Attended by the Attendance Lead and other key members of staff or bodies e.g. School Nurse, Headteacher, SENDCo.
- Panel will identify issues preventing regular attendance.
- Actions resulting from panel will be recorded as a parenting contract or individual attendance plan, whichever is most appropriate.
- Achievable targets will be agreed.
- If additional needs are identified a referral will be made to the appropriate agency and a Family Assessment may be agreed (CAF).
- A review will take place after an agreed monitoring period (usually 6 weeks).

If after the above interventions have taken place and attendance does not improve the EWO may consider the full range of legal interventions available to the Local Authority (LA).

Punctuality

8.45am The school gates open.

8.45am Parents/carers and students are encouraged to arrive at school by which time members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are available for parents to speak to if required.

All children can go straight to their classroom, where their teacher will be.

9.05am The register will be taken promptly and the school day will begin. Any student arriving after 9.05am will be recorded as late.

9.30am Student arriving after this time will be recorded as U in the register; an unauthorised absence. 10 sessions (am or pm) or more of this type of absence may incur a fixed penalty notice.

Students arriving late after 9.05am must report to the Reception where they will be registered with their name, class, time of arrival and reason for being late. Students will then wait in the Reception until they can be escorted to their class.

Students who are showing a concerning number of lates will be contacted by school and may be invited to a punctuality meeting. Based on the outcome of the meeting,

support/incentives or a CAF family assessment may be arranged. Close monitoring will follow and if no improvement is made further punctuality meetings will be arranged.

Absences

There are many reasons a student may be absent from school and some of those are reasonable and may be authorised by the Headteacher. It is essential that school is notified of any absence.

Absences from school come under the following categories:

- Authorised
 - Medical appointment
 - Other circumstances
 - Illness

- Unauthorised
 - Holiday
 - Late arrival after 9.30am
 - No reasonable reason for absence

If a student will be absent from school for any reason the school must be informed before the morning register is taken at 9.05am. Parent/Carers must phone school and leave a message with a member of the office staff or on the answer machine, or contact through the App. The message must include the name of the student, the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school. If dropping off a sibling parents can inform a member of staff at the office in person.

If contact with school to inform us of an absence is not made, the following procedure will be carried out by the Attendance Lead.

Day One - Phone call home, message left, text sent.

Day Two - Phone call home, message left, text sent.

Day Three – Phone call home, call other emergency contacts, home visit, Safeguarding Lead is informed.

If a student returns to school following an absence without a reason, an attendance slip will be sent home for parents/carers to fill in. If after a week there is still no reasonable reason for the absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. 10 or more unauthorised absences (sessions) may incur a fixed penalty notice. Please note 1 day am and pm equals 2 sessions.

Medical Appointment

Every effort should be made to ensure appointments are made out of school time. However, if this is not possible then the school office should be notified beforehand. In order for school to authorise this as a medical appointment, you will be asked to provide evidence of this, i.e. an appointment card, prescription or hospital letter.

Siblings attending an appointment not intended for them will not have their absence authorised. Alternative arrangements must be put in place to ensure a siblings attendance e.g. Breakfast Club, other family member to drop off/pick up etc.

Illness

Everybody is unwell from time to time, absences due to illness for a reasonable time will be authorised. If your child has had 10 sessions (five days) of *authorised* illness, school will require medical evidence in order to authorise any further absences due to illness. This may be a prescription, medical note or appointment letter/card.

Absence due to Other Circumstances

Absences may be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. Parents/Carers must complete an exceptional circumstances request form from the office. You will receive a written response.

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. The Head Teacher will decide whether an absence should be authorised.

Head Teachers will only authorise absence in term time when there are exceptional reasons and attendance is over 96%.

Holidays in Term time

Holidays in term time will not be authorised, if you remove your child from school for the purposes of a holiday you may receive a Penalty Notice. A penalty notice from the Local Authority is £60 per parent per child and will rise to £120 if not paid within the allocated time. Failure to pay this fine could result in you being prosecuted for the non school attendance of your child.

No reasonable reason for absence

If the school does not receive an appropriate reason for a student's absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. If a pattern of this type of absence emerges then parents/carers may be invited to a meeting. 10 sessions (five days) or more of this type of absence may result in a penalty notice.

Attendance policy and procedures will be regularly reviewed in line with the rational, the schools vision and values, safeguarding policy and equalities scheme.