



Pupil Attendance Policy

July 2022

Date Adopted by Governors:

Date of review:

Aims

Holy Family Catholic Primary school, along with other local schools and Wigan Borough Council, passionately believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. Prompt and regular school attendance is essential for a child to benefit from the educational opportunities available to them but is also crucial for their future life chances and helps to build a positive work ethic early in life.

Holy Family Catholic Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to promote and monitor the attendance of all pupils and punctuality. As a school we will do all we can to encourage and support parents/carers in ensuring their children achieve the highest possible attendance and that any issues that affect full attendance are identified and acted on immediately.

All pupils are expected to achieve 100% attendance but when absence is unavoidable, parents/carers must inform school at the earliest opportunity and provide evidence where applicable.

This policy set outs the schools procedures relating to pupil attendance.

Key Objectives

Pupils:

As a school we expect that all pupils:

- Attend school regularly;
- Attend school adequately prepared for the school day;
- Attend school punctually;

Regular attendance is important because:

- Every child is entitled to an education by law;
- School routines are easier to follow;
- There is a direct link between under achievement and poor attendance;
- Social progress is encouraged as well as academic progress;
- Help to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded;
- Builds confidence and children become more engaged as active learners;

Parents:

Parents/Carers whose children are of compulsory school age, are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. The effects of poor attendance and punctuality seriously impedes the following:

- Educational progress;
- Can lead to low attainment and underachievement;
- Seriously impacts continuity of learning;

- Effects a child's ability to build and develop friendships within school;

Holy Family Catholic Primary School commits to working alongside parents, local community and the Education Welfare service to promote and encourage regular attendance for all children in the school. The Education Act 1996, states it is the duty of the parent/carer to ensure their children attend regular education and that if parents/carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted or served with a penalty notice (Please see Appendix 1). Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Support and encourage regular school attendance;
- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school regularly, punctually and prepared for the school day;
- Contact school on the first day of the child's absence and on their return provide a note. **Please be advised that for an absence of 3 days or more, school may ask for a medical certificate from a doctor to verify a child's absence;**
- Avoid taking holidays in term time;
- Discuss promptly any concerns or problems that deter their child from attending school with the child's class teacher or a senior member of staff.

School:

As a school, Holy Family Catholic Primary school can commit that our staff will:

- Provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Will provide termly attendance updates for all children;
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, twice daily;
- Monitor every child's attendance and raise any concerns with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT);
- Contact parents as soon as possible when unexplained and/or prolonged absence occurs and liaise with SLT;
- Keep up to date with all changes in legislation and policies concerning attendance and inform our families of their legal expectations at the beginning of each term;
- Meet with parents of children whose attendance cause concerns;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service;
- Meet with Education Welfare officer regularly to discuss any new concerns and report on the progress of existing cases.

Registers:

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as

being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

A termly check will be made of the school registers and parents will be informed of their child's attendance for that term.

The school will use a colour coded letter system in order for parents to understand their child's attendance. If they receive a letter printed on green paper, it signifies their child's attendance is 96% or greater. If they receive an amber coloured letter, it shows their child's attendance is between 90-95%. If the letter is red, it signifies that their child's attendance is below 90%. This procedure is in line with guidance given by the Educational Welfare Officer. A copy of the letters are included in Appendix 2.

Registration and Lateness.

The beginning of the school day is important as it helps settle and prepare children for the day ahead. This time at school is often used for children to respond to marking from the previous day, to complete pre- learning tasks and allows extra reading support including taking part in the Accelerated Reader Quizzes.

It is expected that children will arrive at school on time. The school doors open at 8:45 am and the school gates close at 8:55 am.

The register will be taken at 8:55 am ready for the school day to begin. If pupils arrive at school after 9.00 am but before 9.10 am, a late mark will be recorded. If a child arrives after 9:10 am, it will be recorded 'as late after close of register' and counted as an unauthorised absence for that session. Children arriving after 8:55am must sign in at the main office/reception using the electronic screen to enable us to monitor punctuality and ensures our registers are accurate in case of fire evacuation.

In cases of persistent late arrival, school will be in contact with parents to discuss the issues relating to persistent lateness to offer support and guidance where possible. Where support has been offered and no improvement is seen, school will begin the process of liaising with the Education Welfare team to implement the next steps of action. Repeated arrival after the close of registration without a valid reason will result in a referral to the school attendance lead(s) and may also result in the issuing of a penalty notice or legal proceedings.

Categorising Absence

Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Illness

Parents and carers should advise the school by telephone or in person by 8:45 am on the first day of their absence and provide an expected date of return.

Please leave a message giving:

- Your name
- Child's name
- Child's class
- Reason for absence
- Expected date of return

Absence due to illness can be authorised by the Headteacher if parents and carers follow the correct protocol for reporting absence as detailed. Parents and carers may be asked to meet with the Inclusion Team/SLT where there are repeated absences in order for school to offer support.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Absence for medical and dental appointments may be authorised by the Headteacher but parents and carers are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day or during holiday periods. When appointments are made in school time, pupils should attend school for as much of the day as possible. Parents and carers will need to provide evidence of an appointment card/text to the school to confirm the appointment. Failure to do so may result in absences being marked as unauthorised.

Other Authorised Circumstances:

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package. In order for such absence to be authorised the parent or carer must liaise with the Headteacher.

Holidays/Leave of absence

Leave of absence is not a parental right and every effort should be made to avoid holidays during term time.

The law stipulates that the cost of a holiday is not reasonable grounds for claiming exceptional circumstance. Applications should be made in writing using the Leave of Absence request form (appendix 3), with a minimum notice of 2 weeks and only where a pupil's attendance for the previous academic year reached the school target. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

Research suggests that a pupil who takes 10 days holiday will only be able to achieve a maximum of 94.7% attendance for the full academic year. This is a poor level of attendance which would result in the pupil being placed in our orange attendance band.

Penalty Notices

In cases of excessive unauthorised absence, the school may request that a penalty notice be issued. A penalty notice fine is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid after this time but within 28 days. Non-payment of a penalty notice will trigger a fast-track prosecution under the provisions of Section 444, 1996 Education Act.

The procedure for issuing penalty notices will be in accordance with the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Protocol (appendix 5). Additionally, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) 2013, pupils may be removed from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence have occurred, and both the local authority and the school have tried to locate the pupil or
- The pupil has failed to attend within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted.

The school will follow the Local Authority's Children Missing Education Protocol (appendix 6), when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

Dear Parent/Carer,

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school. If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12 week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days.

The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child). In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school.

Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a penalty notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child.

If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties please contact school and ask for support.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix 2

To the Parents/Carers of: XXXXXXX

Class: XXXXXXX

Attendance letter

Dear Parents/Carers,

The attendance figures below are from _____. The red, amber or green grading is based on your child's attendance and the box below shows their percentage for each category.

Total Attendance %	
Authorised Absence %	
Unauthorised Absence %	
Red, Amber, Green	

We do realise that many children fall ill from time to time and if your child has been ill for a period of time this will affect their overall attendance.

From the beginning of the academic year 2022/2023 these letters will be sent out at the end of each term. Attendance will also be monitored throughout each term and any concerns will trigger contact to parents.

As a school, we have a responsibility to ensure we do all we can to support families where their child's attendance has caused a concern. If you feel you need extra help with your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

Miss. C. Hutchinson

Education and Pastoral Support

Leave of Absence Request Form

Holy Family Catholic Primary School
Kendal Road, Boothstown, Manchester M28 1AG

A request for absence **MUST** be made at least a minimum of six weeks before the trip.

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Class / Teacher: _____

First date of requested absence: _____ Return to school date: _____

Reason for absence (Please give details of the 'special circumstances' that warrant permission being granted):

I understand that keeping my child off School for any longer than agreed or if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised. This may result in action being taken against me for Non School Attendance.

Parent/Carer Name:

Signature: Date

The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave:-

- The pupil's previous attendance history
- The age of the pupil
- The child's stage of education

- Time of Year (SATS/Exams)
- The nature/reasons for the absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Holidays taken for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- *Availability of cheap holiday;*
- *Availability of the desired accommodation;*
- *Poor weather experienced in school holiday period*
- *Overlap with beginning or end of term*

Office use

Seen by _____ Agreement _____ Date _____

R _____

L _____