

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

RATIONALE

Children should enjoy attending school. They should be interested in the opportunities on offer and be able to contribute to the school as a Catholic community.

It is essential that the school's effectiveness in terms of curriculum activity be maximised through a high rate of attendance and good punctuality. Children who are persistent absentees or who are persistently late for school are placed at a disadvantage compared with their peers and are less likely to achieve their full potential.

PURPOSE

To ensure that all children attend school whenever possible

To safeguard children

To ensure that all children arrive in school ready and equipped for the start of the school day

To ensure that all those with responsibility for improving attendance work together to achieve their targets

GUIDELINES

Types of truancy

There are four identified forms of truancy:

blanket truancy, post-registration truancy (or runners), parentally -condoned truancy, and near truancy (switching off and presenting poor behaviour in school).

Examples of poor attendees can be pupils:-

- whose parents have recently separated.
- who have recently moved to the area.
- who join a school midway through the school year.
- who have recently missed a lot of school time through illness.
- whose sibling (and/ or parents) have been poor attendees.
- who are low academic achievers.
- who may be victims of bullying.
- who have difficulty accessing the curriculum yet do not have a statement of SEN.
- who are persistently disruptive.

- who have previously been excluded.
- who are under pressure from their work.
- whose parents are experiencing severe financial hardship.

Registers

1. Registers are legal documents and should be marked twice a day.
2. If a pupil is absent or late, the appropriate text message is sent to parents when no reason for lateness or absence is received by 9.30am on the relevant day.
3. Parents must always give reasons for their child's absence to the school.
4. The Headteacher determines whether absence is authorised or unauthorised using guidance from the table below.

Authorised	Unauthorised
Illness	Absence without valid reason.
Medical/ Dental Appointment	Latecomers beyond 30 mins after session starts.
Family Bereavement	Persistent lateness within the first 30 minutes of the day
	Minding the children, brothers or sisters.
Religious observance	Shopping during school time.
	Special occasions, e.g. birthday.
Excluded children	Extended holidays
Sport/ Music/ Exams	Holidays - except in exceptional circumstances
Agreed other educational reasons at the discretion of the Head teacher	

The school seeks to improve general class attendance and to improve the attitude of persistent offenders as appropriate by;

- a) Setting challenging yearly attendance targets.
- b) Awarding of termly certificates to pupils with 100% attendance and punctuality
- c) Award of a certificate to the class with the highest percentage attendance each term
- d) Awarding certificates to pupils with 100% attendance and punctuality at the end of the academic year

- e) Awarding certificates to pupils who have more than one consecutive year's 100% attendance
- f) Informing parents of their child's attendance and punctuality record via their child's end of year report.
- g) Regularly reviewing children's attendance and talking to parents whose children are in danger of becoming persistent absentees i.e. 85% or less over the course of a school year.
- h) Other incentives are used at the school's discretion
- i) Persistent offenders must be followed up or reported to the Headteacher to co-ordinate the school response with the LA Attendance Officer. This may result in the forming of a Parenting Contract and may eventually lead to a period of formal monitoring and a fine in Court.

Daily Admin Attendance Routines

- List the pupils who are late and send texts to parents to inform them as appropriate.
- Ensure that parents are contacted if no reason is given for an absent child by 9.30 a.m.
- After having received phone call/ made contact with parents, mark the register for missing pupils with appropriate reason e.g. ill or medical appointment.
- Print attendance information when requested by Head teacher

Head teacher's Weekly Attendance Routines

- Deal with any concerns reported by teaching, classroom or adult staff.
- Check attendance of all pupils where attendance is less than 95% - check reasons for absence (this may include an interview with the parents)
- Check attendance of all pupils where more than 3 sessions in any one term have been entered as late – check reasons for lateness – send a letter to parents and follow up with Attendance Officer on next visit.
- Where attendance /lateness does not improve , the Head teacher will arrange in school meetings, these to be followed up with a Parenting Contract.
- Monitor impact of Parenting Contract and thank parents for their collaboration where improvements achieved or move to legal proceedings where child's education continues to be detrimentally affected by attendance / lateness.
- Take appropriate actions after unauthorised absences taken including, if necessary, asking Local Authority Attendance Officer to arrange an Attendance Panel.
- Refer to outside agencies where parents need any type of parental support. Work within the St Mary's family of schools to maintain transition interaction and liaison to benefit all pupils in a family.

Reintegrating Long Term Absentees

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so staff may wish to arrange a phased or gradual return, allocation of a 'Key Adult', consider whether Special Needs support is appropriate, ensure that all staff are aware of the situation and nominate a key person to monitor the child's reintegration into school. All children must feel welcomed back and know from whom they can seek help.

Improving Punctuality

Repeated absence at the beginning of a school session can amount to failure to attend regularly for the purpose of 1993 Education Act. The school seeks to improve general punctuality and to improve attitudes of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and offer ways of helping combat lateness.
- b) Contacting parents of latecomers, and reporting persistent lateness to the Attendance Officer if no improvement.
- c) Praising and acknowledging latecomers who improve.
- d) Ensuring that staff set a good example by arriving punctually for lessons.
- e) All children and parents must understand that lateness is actively discouraged, although sensitivity may be appropriate in some cases.

Review: May 2016

Next review: Summer 2018

This policy has the full ownership of staff and governors
of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School