



**ST PHILIP HOWARD CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

# **Attendance Policy**

**Approved:**

May 2018

**For review:**

Summer 2021

## **Our attendance policy aims to:**

- Encourage the highest levels of attendance and punctuality
- Support pupils and their parents/carers to achieve this
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

## **Being at School**

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Attending school encourages peer interaction and good social skills and develops understanding of core values of co-operation and respect.

In addition, as a Catholic school, we strive to ensure that our school is a vibrant place for learning. We want all our pupils to enjoy being at school, and to be enthused and motivated by their learning.

We will work in partnership with parents and carers to make their child's education a success and to ensure that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child/ren arrive at school promptly.

## **Expectations**

### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day

### **We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact school **daily** whenever their child is unable to attend school
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details

### **As a school, we will:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe, stimulating and vibrant learning environment, and one which is enriched by our Catholic values and beliefs.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of

long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.

- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly, referring irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set out by Education Welfare may result in legal action being taken.
- Notify Education Welfare after 20 unexplained or unauthorised absences in a set period of time.

### **Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Arriving to school on time is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. Registration takes place at 8.40am and pupils who arrive after that time will be recorded as late to school.

- Registers close at 9.30am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by school but may also be referred to Education Welfare and may be subject to prosecution by the local authority
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.25pm
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report.
- In addition, we take registers at the start of every class so that we can be sure your child is safe, in school, and ready to learn at the start of each lesson.

### **Pupils Leaving during the School Day**

- During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Wherever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter, note in planner or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving and the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving school and sign back in on their return.
- When a parent is collecting a pupil from the school, the parent should report to the school reception before the pupil leaves the site.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission, their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the police and register the pupil as a missing person.*
- If a pupil is missing from a lesson, staff inform student reception and checks made, including a sweep of the school site. If, after such checks have been made, a pupil is still missing, parents / carers will be contacted.

## **Leave of Absence**

- The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed the dates, but they may be subject to change.
- In line with Government's amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, leave of absence during term time will NOT be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances and the leave of absence has been agreed by the Headteacher.
- In exceptional circumstances, permission may only be granted for a maximum of five days (ten sessions).
- Where a leave of absence is to be considered, a leave of absence form must be requested from Student Reception and submitted for consideration.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

## **Changing Schools**

- It is important that if families decide to send their child/ren to a different school that they inform the school as soon as possible.
- A pupil will not be removed from school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:
  - The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
  - The address of the new school
  - A new home address if appropriate
- The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school.
- In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Education Welfare as a Child Missing in Education.