

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



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Policy Renewal Date: November 2023

Policy Due for Renewal: November 2024

AIMS

As a school we want:

- Our pupils to be in school and learning every day.
- Our whole school attendance percentage to be at least 96%.
- To be given a reason for every pupil absence.
- Families to take holidays within the school holiday periods.
- Unauthorised absence to be minimal
- Our children to arrive on time for school.

Attendance zones have been set to help us consistently reward good attendance and manage attendance which needs improvement. They are:

Green Zone – 96% and above

Amber Zone – 91% – 95%

Red Zone – 90% and below

Why is Attendance important?

Your child's education is very important. Regular school attendance will help them achieve their full potential and ensure they have a brighter future.

Going to school every day will help your child learn, develop and achieve. It will build confidence, friendship and ambition.

The more your child is in school the more likely they are to succeed at exams and at life.

Going to school every day means:

- Having lots of fun
- Making friends
- Taking part in activities
- Learning through play
- Building lasting friendships
- Better exam results

Did you know?

90% attendance means that your child misses on average:

- One half day every week
- Nearly four weeks every school year
- Over one school year in a school career

2 weeks holiday in term time every year with no other absences means that your child:

- Can only ever achieve 95% attendance, which is the 'Amber' zone
- Will miss about two terms in a school career

Also being 5 minutes late every day means missing about 3 days of school every year.

What we expect from pupils:

- Have a positive attitude about coming to school
- Be willing to learn
- Help to make sure they arrive on time. The school day starts from 8.45am.
- Pupils to pride themselves on being part of the school community

What we expect from parents/carers:

- Get your child(ren) to school every day
- Don't let your child stay off for a minor ailment
- Parents are asked to contact school on the first day of absence. Good practice is to phone up before 8.45am giving details of the reason for absence and when you expect them to return.
- Keep the school updated if your child is going to be off for more than one day
- Help your child to complete any catch-up work given to them as a result of being absent from school.
- Try to make **all** appointments (for doctors, dentist, optician etc) outside of school hours
- For hospital appointments please bring your child into school for part of the day if possible
- Book family holidays during school holidays. If you do plan on taking your child(ren) out of school on holiday please complete a 'holiday request form' so we know exactly why they are absent during that time and when they will be back in school
- Attend any meetings requested by your child's class teacher/Head Teacher/Attendance Officer to discuss attendance if required
- Engage with parenting contract request
- Make sure your child understands the benefits of regular attendance at school

What we are expected to do:

- Use electronic systems to record attendance and absence. Class teachers are responsible for completing registers for both morning and afternoon sessions. These registers are taken from 8.45am and 1.00pm (Infants) / 1.15pm (Juniors).
- Record details of any holidays taken during term time. Holidays taken during term time will **not be authorised** unless there are exceptional circumstances. Should a child be taken on holiday during term time without permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

In this instance the Head Teacher may make a request to the local Authority for their consideration of issuing a **fixed penalty notice**

- Contact parents by telephone where no reason has been provided for absence on a given day. If no reason is given or the Head Teacher does not think the reason is acceptable, the absence will be marked as **unauthorised**
- Address Persistent Absence; a child becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason
- The school Attendance Officer may be asked to make a home visit or contact you where attendance becomes a concern to offer support as required
- Invite parents to participate in a parenting contract in an effort to improve attendance
- Refer to the Local Authority if attendance falls below 90% for consideration of legal monitoring
- Contact the school nurse for details of an absence where required
- Remind parents about the importance of good attendance using newsletters and any other documents produced for parents
- Keep parents and children informed of individual attendance percentages using regular letters and charts which are displayed around school and informing them of the zone they are in
- School is committed to rewarding good attendance. Each year incentives can be earned for example each term, children over 98% for that term could win a bike or another high profile prize. Each week an attendance award for 100% attendance is on offer. Classes with the best attendance can win a whole class prize (for example, extended golden time or non-uniform day)
- Ensure children are aware of their attendance and know that good attendance is key in excellent educational outcomes. It is also habit forming as children move through their education and into the work place.

Punctuality

The school day has altered and now starts from 8.45am The register is taken between 8.45am and 9.00am. Any child arriving after that time will be marked late. It is important to be on time for school as the first few minutes of the day are used to give out instructions. Basic skills are also taught during the first 30 minutes of each day after the register has been taken. If your child is consistently missing these it is detrimental to their learning. It is also very disruptive to your child's day, the teacher and the rest of the class.

Any child who has to enter the school via the front office because the gates to the yard have been shut will be marked as late. Their number of minutes late will be recorded by the office staff, which is updated to the register.

We will formally monitor children whose punctuality is a cause for concern.

Conclusion

Through the implementation of this policy we aim to achieve good attendance for all children to help them thrive, be their best and have a brighter future. Remember you can discuss any attendance issues or any concerns you have with a member of staff at any time. We believe it is the responsibility of us all to achieve good attendance.

We value your support in working with us to help maintain our school ethos.