



Holy Family RC Primary School

Improving Attendance Policy

Rationale

Holy Family RC Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault, it may be related to religious reasons, family circumstance or in the worst cases, a safeguarding issue. We have a duty to monitor the attendance of our children to ensure they are receiving their full educational entitlement and that their welfare is paramount.

Whilst our school follows the Local Authority procedures for attendance, we have our own in school arrangements that take place every day.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2020) 'Improving school attendance'

Purpose

- To set high expectations of attendance and punctuality to ensure all children access education
- To prepare pupils for secondary school and future employment
- To ensure that parents and pupils are aware of the need for good attendance
- To maintain and develop good communication and strong relationships with our families
- To ensure early intervention is in place to support families
- To safeguard all pupils



Guidelines

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and procedures of the school, and distributing these to parents.

The Learning Mentor will:

- Monitor the attendance of all children daily.
- Where a child is absent from school and notification has not been received The Learning Mentor will contact with their parents.
- Follow up absences by text message to inform you of your child's attendance.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through text messages, phone calls, letters, parent conferences, and pupil annual reports.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality through our Dojo reward system and letters.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.
- Ensure there is a consistent and fair approach for all children and families.
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance and punctuality. We will arrange a meeting to discuss support with this if needed.
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer, who works with the school to review and support attendance and punctuality issues.

The School Administrator will:

- Ensure the attendance register is correct and reasons for absence noted.
- Provide reports for Learning Mentor and Senior Leaders to review weekly.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

We ask that parents:

- Support your child to arrive on time for school and encourage good attendance.
- Absence should only happen when your child is ill and therefore unfit to attend school.
- Contacting school before 9.30am on each day of absence to give the reason for absence and an indication of when they will be returning to school.
- Arranging all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Providing appointment cards or hospital letters for all appointments during school hours. This will enable school to authorise the absence.
- Ensure that all contact details are correct and updating the school if their details change.



Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”.

Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Where there is no explanation for an absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory absence will be recorded as ‘unauthorised’. The Education Welfare Officer may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. **Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action.**

Persistent absenteeism:

- A child is missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason.**

Pupils at risk of persistent absence

The SLT will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Ensure the appropriate support is in place if required. Eg. Early Help.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Having a weekly review.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.

Punctuality

It is essential that children arrive on time to school. The first part of the school day is used to prepare your child for the day. It is also a time when additional support may be given to your child address misconceptions through early morning work.

Morning registration is at 9am. The school doors will be open from 8.50am. Arriving late can disturb learning and be unsettling for your child. Arrival after the close of registration will be marked late. Arrival after 9.30am is marked as an unauthorised absence.

Exceptional Leave - Term Time Leave of Absence



Please note: There is **no entitlement** to time off during term time. Leave of absence is only granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body.

- At Holy Family, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- The headteacher will be unable to authorise holidays during term time.
- The headteacher will only be able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made in advance.
- Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
 - Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any [unauthorised absence](#)
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

If term time leave or holidays are taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and you may be liable for a fixed-penalty fine.

Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her learning and will impact on their education and progress.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School) parents are asked to:

Give the school comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.

When pupils leave and we do not have information, about where they have gone, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try and locate your child.

Monitoring and Review:

- The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- Holy Family's attendance target is **97 percent**.
- This policy is reviewed every two years by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is March 2023.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

Conclusion

The implementation of this policy will ensure regular school attendance is a priority with a clear system in place for absenteeism. Through regular monitoring of attendance and robust tracking, the welfare and education of the children will remain a high priority.