



Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Adopted by Governing Body : 5th December 2018

Signed Chair of Governors

To be reviewed : December 2020, or dependant on any legislative changes

Safeguarding Statement:

'Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff, parents and volunteers to share this commitment.'

Our Vision

As a Catholic school that puts Christ at the centre, we are committed to encouraging everyone to 'Be the Best They Can Be'

Values and Ethos

We believe that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and we value the equality of all, reject discrimination of any kind, and welcome the diversity of different cultures.

Introduction

At Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School we recognise that regular attendance by pupils is an important factor in raising achievement. We also consider that the prevention of unauthorised absence forms an integral part of our policy to promote good behaviour, discipline and pupil wellbeing.

Children of school age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend that school regularly. Regular, punctual attendance is important, not just because the law requires it, but because it is the best way of ensuring that a child makes the most of the educational opportunities which are available to them. When a child is absent from school he or she misses not only the teaching provided on the days when absent, but is also less prepared for future lessons. There is a consequent risk of underachievement which Headteachers and parents will both wish to avoid.

There may be occasions when a child has to miss school ~ for example, if unwell. Any other absences should be kept to a minimum. **In particular**, parents should avoid taking children out of school during term-time in order to go on holiday.

1. AIMS

- To ensure that every pupil receives their full educational entitlement.
- To encourage, secure and increase punctual attendance levels to meet the Local Authority annual absence/attendance targets.
- To reduce the incidence of unauthorised absence
- To reduce the number of term-time holidays
- To reward good or significantly improved attendance
- To regularly monitor attendance at school and individual's progress levels
- To enhance opportunities for all pupils
- To improve punctuality

2. RATIONALE

In the development and implementation of this policy we have identified the following as important elements.

- The use of a computerised attendance system
- The maintenance of close working relationships with the Local Authority Attendance Team
- Raising the profile of attendance across the whole school (Early Bird Events)
- The support and involvement of parents
- The involvement of the school's Pastoral Manager who will liaise directly with families

3. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education.

We believe that the involvement of parents is one of the key issues in addressing issues surrounding improving attendance. We will ensure that parents are made aware of their responsibilities with regard to attendance in line with government guidance, i.e. parents should ensure that children attend school regularly, arrive on time and are properly attired and in a condition to learn.

- Parents are required to let school know by 9.10am each day when a child is absent and provide a reason. This is made clear to them on admission to school and also in our newsletters. We expect notification on the first day of absence and on every subsequent day of absence.
- Absences are monitored and unexplained absences are followed up with a request for an explanation.
- In cases where unacceptable reasons are given, e.g. parents have taken a child shopping; the school will record the absence as unauthorised. If the absence is repeated we will involve the Children and Families First Service at the Local Authority.

4. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Section 16 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016, Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should

undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

School has a responsibility to ensure that parents are informed if their child is not present in school. Therefore, if a parent has not contacted us by 9.10am to tell us why their child is absent then we will make direct contact using the three emergency contact details held by the school. There may be times when a member of staff visits the home to enquire about the child's whereabouts. Any absences that are unexplained will be recorded as 'unauthorised' and the Local Authority will be informed .

5. ABSENCES

We believe that by working with parents and others to overcome barriers to attendance children will access their full entitlement to education enabling them to achieve their full potential in life.

5.1 Leave During Term Time

We comply with Government legislation and will not authorise holidays during term time. Parents are required to complete a blue 'Leave of Absence Request Form' if their child will be away from school. (see appendix A) . The Headteacher arranges to meet the parent and discuss the request. An agreement is made at that meeting regarding whether the request is granted or not. The Headteacher notifies the parent in writing of the outcome of the meeting.

Issues Parents need to be aware of:

- Should the school not agree to grant absence and the parents take their child on holiday regardless, then this will be counted as unauthorised absence.
- Should a child fail to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date and there is no contact from the parents, the school may remove the child's name from the school roll. The school will also inform the Children and Families First Team.
- Unauthorised absence or persistent lateness can lead to a non attendance fixed penalty notice being served. (Further information is available from the office).

5.2 Sickness

When a child is unwell, parents are required to contact the school office by **9.10am** on the first day of absence. If the child is off for more than one day we ask that parents keep the school informed each day.

If parents do not contact us on the first morning of absence we will telephone the parents to obtain a reason for the absence.

If a parent has not reported their child's absence by 9.30am , then Mrs Lucas , our Pastoral Manager will take the case and may do a home visit or notify the Local Authority Attendance Team.

5.3 Medical Appointments

Wherever possible medical or dental appointments should be made in holiday time or outside of the school day. Please show the school office the appointment letter and a copy will be kept for our records. We can then class the appointment as medical rather than an unauthorised absence.

5.4 Punctuality

Children are expected to enter school via the playgrounds at 8.50am when the bell sounds. Registration takes place at 8.55am. Any child entering after this time will be marked as 'late' in the register. Children

who arrive after 9.20am are recorded as 'late after registration'. Persistent lateness disrupts a child's education and encourages poor attendance, leading to bad habits that can be hard to break. The school monitors regular lateness and letters are sent to families where there is persistent lateness. If this continues parents/carers are invited in for a meeting with the Pastoral Manager to discuss the reason. If lateness still continues to be an issue, then the Local Authorities Attendance Officer will be informed. Children will not be held accountable.

6. RAISING THE PROFILE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- We believe that good or improving attendance should be rewarded at individual and class level.
- Each half term children who have achieved 100% attendance receive a certificate. Children whose attendance is 100% for a whole year receive a Gift Voucher
- In Assembly on a Friday the class with the highest attendance will be announced and that class will receive the Cookie Bear Jar each child in the class will receive a biscuit.
- If a class get 100% attendance we call it Party Popper Friday and we let off a Party Poppers and that class will get a small bag of Haribos sweets each. .
- During the course of the year we will run the Early Bird Scheme to promote attendance and punctuality.

7. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

- If a child has "disappeared" i.e non attendance at school without an explanation, the Local Authority Attendance Team should be informed and all attempts made to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. This will involve re- telephoning emergency contacts previously given to school or home visiting.
- If this does not produce any information and there are serious concerns for a child's safety then the allocated officer for Children Missing from Education (CME) should be informed and the school then completes a CME School Referral Form

8. REMOVAL OF PUPILS' NAMES FROM THE REGISTER

A child's name will be removed from the register if they move to another school. This may only be done with the Headteacher's consent once it is clear that another school are admitting the pupil. A pupil's name may also be removed from the school role if they do not return after 10 days of unauthorised absence.

9. SCHOOL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE TEAM

The school's Pastoral Manager works closely with the Local Authority Attendance Team to promote good attendance. The LA attendance officer visits the school half termly to review attendance patterns. Children whose attendance is of concern are placed on the targeted children list and their attendance is monitored weekly.

If children's attendance falls below 90% a range of strategies are employed to improve attendance.

- Awareness raising letters to parents with a computerised print out showing pattern and percentage of absence

- Home visit from the LA Attendance Officer
- Invitation to parent to attend a meeting with the Headteacher or Pastoral Manager to discuss ways of improving attendance
- Collaborative work with the school nurse to work with parents whose children have frequent absences due to medical reasons.

Give your child the best start in life – Every school day counts

END

Appendix A

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School

Pupil Leave of Absence Form

IMPORTANT INFORMATION– PLEASE READ

We comply with the Department of Education's Legislation brought in on 1st September 2013 and will not authorise holidays in term time. Coventry Local Authority and our other Network 10 Schools do not authorise holidays in term time either. (see attached yellow letter)

Unauthorised leave in term time may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent/ per child under the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Further information can be obtained from www.education.gov.uk

Absence details

Child's name: _____ Class _____

from _____ to _____

Reason for absence _____

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Headteacher use only

Date/ time of meeting : _____

Outcome of meeting

Signature of Headteacher: _____ Date: _____

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Letter confirming outcomes sent to parents: Date : _____ Signed:

Please complete this form and return to the school office.