



# Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



## School Attendance Policy

Adopted by Governing Body : 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Signed Chair of Governors

To be reviewed : October 2018, or dependant on any legislative changes

### 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'

### 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 and volunteers to share this commitment.'*

### 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 Children and Families First Service
- Raising the profile of attendance across the whole school (Early Bird Events)
- The support and involvement of parents
- The involvement of the school's Integrated Services and Wellbeing 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 emergency contact details held at 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. Parents are also required to provide a written explanation for the absence upon the child's return. This is made clear to them on admission to school and also from time to time in our newsletters.

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 Children and Family First Service.

### **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.

## **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 Children and Families First Service should be informed and all attempts made to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. This might involve 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 Children and Families First Service should be informed and they will file a “Missing Child” report.

## **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.

## **7. SCHOOL AND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST SERVICE**

The school’s Pastoral Manager works closely with the Children and Families First Service to promote good attendance. The Children and Families First Co-ordinator 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 Children and Families First Worker
- 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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](http://www.education.gov.uk)

Please complete this form and return to the school office.

### 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: \_\_\_\_\_

