



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Policy

Attendance Policy

Date: October 2022

Next review: October 2023

Mission									
Together we love, learn, follow Jesus									
Vision									
At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, through an open and generous heart, we learn together as a family in faith, following the gospel values of love.									
Values									
Hope	Thankfulness	Collaboration	Compassion	Friendship	Resilience	Empathy	Creativity	Justice	Respect

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a *minimum* of 96%
- Maintain parents', carers' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

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 and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent or carer, you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks where this is possible
- Keeping us updated by telephone, letter or conversation if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- Remind parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, on the school website and other school documentation
- Publish our attendance rates
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and, in line with our Disability Equality Scheme, ensure that pupils recognised as having a disability are not discriminated against when they need time off to attend essential medical appointments
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his termly tracker and annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, who will work with school and parents to improve the situation, or in cases where this does not have the desired effect, to PAST – Pupil Attendance Support Team.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill or for bereavement.



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We realise that there are *rare* occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

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:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority, who may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8.55 am. Doors open at 8.45am for children to come in to class. You need to ensure your child is coming through the school gate before 8.55am.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are used for short tasks such as maths problem solving or grammar practice.
- If your child regularly misses this short session, their progress will be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.
- Registers close at 9.00 am
- Arrival after 9.00 am will be marked as 'Late'.
- Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence if it is after 9.30 am, in line with the DfE (Department for Education) guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if not collected or the school contacted by school closing time.
- Any child arriving late has to be accompanied to the main entrance/office by a parent or carer, giving a reason for the late arrival.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the head teacher in exceptional or special circumstances, using the following guidelines:

- The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason for an application
- The Headteacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.



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- If the school does not agree to grant leave of absence, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving.
- Let the Head Teacher know in order for them to liaise with the new school
- Confirm the school has your current phone number
- Let us know when you move

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. Equally, if your child doesn't attend school for a prolonged period of time and we cannot get hold of the parent or carer, your child is considered to be a **Child Missing in Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents and carers are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue. In such circumstances, the fine is made against all adults who are legally responsible for the child. For example, where both mother and father have parental responsibility, both adults will be subject to legal action or fine.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Reviewed October 2022