

St Joseph & St Teresa's
Catholic Primary School



Attendance Policy

May 2014

School Attendance Policy

Rationale

St Joseph & St Teresa's recognises that good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. St Joseph & St Teresa's aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents/carers, local community and the Attendance Service work together in partnership. School will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

Legal responsibilities

The Children's Act states that 'The parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence and punishable by law'.

Aims

- To improve the quality of school life.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality.'
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.

Objectives

- To involve the children more in their attendance.
- To improve communication with parents/carers about regular school attendance.
- All staff to promote and monitor good attendance.
- Effective working relationship with the Attendance Service.

Procedures

- Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
 - Authorised (where the school approves absence)
 - Unauthorised (where the school does not approve absence)
- Only the head teacher can authorise absence and not the parent.
- It is expected that parents/carers will provide an explanation if their child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone or personally.
- If contact (explaining the child's absence), fails to be made by parents/carers, then the school will contact home by telephone or text on the initial day. If the

parent/carer fails to respond letters will be sent asking for a written explanation. An unauthorised absence is issued if a response is not made.

- The head teacher will regularly remind parents/carers of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Each class with the weekly highest attendance receives the 'Attendance Cup' to look after for the following week.
- Weekly class attendance is published on the Newsletter.
- Children with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the school at the end of the academic year with a certificate and a 'special treat'.

Identification and Referral

- Identification is made by our Attendance Officer (Mrs M Middleton)
- Our Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers with letter 1
- Following the letter there will be four weeks' monitoring of the child's attendance.
- If there is no improvement then letter 2 will be sent. Parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting and an Attendance Support Plan will be implemented
- If there are further absences parents/carers will be referred to the Attendance Service
- If attendance has improved over the 4 weeks school will continue to monitor attendance

Lateness

Doors open at 8.45 am. School officially begins at 8.55am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Once registration is closed at 9.15am (after 20 minutes) an unauthorised mark is recorded on the register.

The school doors will be closed and the gates locked at 8.55am therefore parents/carers arriving after this time must enter and exit through the main school entrance.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others,

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

Leave of Absence during term time.

Parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of school for a family holiday. Leave of absence will not be authorised (unless there are exceptional circumstances) and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.

Exceptional Circumstances

1. Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in the school holidays. This must be evidenced by production of the policy document of the organisation.
2. Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
3. Where a holiday is recommended as part of a child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided.

This policy was developed through a process of consultation with the relevant professionals including:

Attendance Co-ordinator - Mr T Carroll (Head Teacher)

Attendance Officer - Mrs M Middleton (Office Manager)

Governor - Mrs M Cunningham