

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

REVIEWED BY GOVERNORS SEPT 14	TO BE REVIEWED BY GOVERNORS SEPT 17	TO BE REVIEWED BY GOVERNORS SEPT 20		
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We feel that the whole ethos of the school is encapsulated in the Roman Catholic Church's New Code of Canon Law (1983) Canon795:-

"Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person Children are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in an harmonious way, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life."

1. Introduction

1.1 Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

1.2 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

1.3 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School values all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

1.4 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying and behaviour.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.2 A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

2.3 Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

2.4 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

2.5 The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

3. Categorising absence

3.1 Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

3.2 Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

3.3 Parents should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. In the interests of safeguarding if school has not been notified of a reason for absence by 09.30 the office staff will contact parents by text message and invite them to ring school.

3.4 Absence can then be categorised as follows:

3.5 Illness In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

3.6 Medical/Dental Appointments Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

3.7 Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement.

3.8 Excluded (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

3.9 Family Holidays and Extended Leave Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

3.9.1 Legislation states that up to 10 school days leave in any one school year **may** be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. However, it must be noted that the Governors at Holy Spirit School have taken the decision **that family holidays in term time will no longer be authorised.**

If a child is absent without good reason (unauthorised absence)

The Education Social Work Service may:

- Issue a Penalty Notice of £50.00 (if a child has 10 unauthorised absences in a term).
- Prosecute through the Magistrates Court – If found guilty parents may be fined and will have a criminal record.

...a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Attendance and Pupil Support Service.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. If it is not paid within 21 days it will increase to £120, which must be paid within 28 days of the initial issuing of the Penalty Notice. Failure to do so will result in the parent(s) being prosecuted in the Magistrates Court

3.10 Religious Observance: Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

3.11 Late Arrival: Registration begins at 08.55, pupils arriving after 09.05 will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 09.20. Pupils arriving after the close of register

will be recorded as UNAUTHORISED, and will count as an absence for that school session. On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to gain a mark in the register to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

3.12 Unauthorised absence: Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents and pupils. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with

4.2 The School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

4.3 Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School request that Parents will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on in school. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time

The policy is also available in the following formats, on request to the headteacher: email; enlarged print version; other formats by arrangement.