



# *Holy Family Catholic Primary School*

## **Attendance Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Holy Family Catholic Primary School places a high value on punctual and regular attendance. Every child in the school will be made aware of the importance of this. We wish to foster this value throughout the child's school career and into adult life.

### **2. Responsibilities**

2.1 Improving the attendance and therefore life chances of the children in the school is the joint responsibility of the parent, the school and the child. We recognise that good attendance is essential for pupils to maximise their achievement and attainment at school. Working together in partnership will ensure the child is most likely to achieve their full potential by ensuring their frequent and punctual attendance.

2.2 Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between higher achievement and good attendance
- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attendees find learning more satisfying
- Regular attendees have an easier transfer to secondary school

### **3. What you can expect the school to do to support good attendance**

3.1 Yearly reminders: At the beginning of each academic year, the school will send you a letter and a guide on school attendance detailing the procedure for reporting an absence to the school. (Appendix 1)

3.2 Weekly attendance and punctuality award: During our weekly Good News Assembly, the class/classes with the highest attendance and 100% punctuality receive a certificate.

3.3 Termly attendance: Each term a trophy filled with treats will be awarded to the class with the overall highest attendance and highest punctuality. At the end of the Summer Term awards are given for 100% attendance.

3.4 Daily monitoring of attendance: Upon completion of registration the Admin Officer will generate a list of children who are absent from the school. This list is cross referenced with the school's late book and with any messages that have been left on the school's answer phone. Any children who remain on the list (i.e. unexplained absences) give us much cause for concern. As such, the school will contact the parents/carers of these children to establish a reason for the child's absence.

3.5 Phased Entry into class from 8.45am: The school opens for pupils between 8.45am and 8.55am each day (unless otherwise specified). During these times, the school operates a phased entry into class. The school considers this informal start to the day to be very beneficial for your child. It provides them with the opportunity to mix with friends, have time to settle into the school

routine and generally have time to adjust into the 'school-way'. Children in KS2 complete work from their maths folders. At 8.55am the school closes all external doors and the register is taken.

#### **4. What the school expects the parent to do to support good attendance**

4.1 Arrive on time: We expect you to ensure your child arrives at school between 8.45am – 8.55am each day (unless informed otherwise). The school does understand that occasionally circumstances beyond your control mean that you may arrive late. In these instances we believe it is important that your child arrives later, rather than not at all, so please ensure you still bring them to school. If you arrive late, please ensure you sign your child in using the electronic system in the front entrance. The school monitors all late arrivals. Persistent late arrivals cause the school much concern. Consequently, a letter will be sent home reminding you of your commitments to the school. This may be followed by meetings with the Headteacher. (Appendix 2a & 2b)

4.2 Arrive ready: You should ensure your child arrives equipped for their day at school. Ensure they have any PE kit, swimming kit, reading books, musical instrument, packed lunch etc that they may need. (Please see your child's class teacher for further information).

4.3 Medical Appointments: If at all possible, please make any medical appointments for your child outside of the school day. The school does understand that this is not always possible and is understanding in these instances.

4.4 Term Time Leave of Absence: Any requests for holidays during term time will only be authorised for exceptional circumstances. Request forms are available from the Admin Office. (Appendix 4)

#### **5. Informing school of an unexpected absence**

5.1 The school answer phone is in operation at all times. If it is apparent that your child will not be in school, you should leave a message on the answer phone before 9am on the first day of absence, stating your child's name, your child's class teacher and the reason for absence. If it is not possible to give a return to school date you should ring each day of the absence and leave a message. You should expect to receive a reminder letter if you fail to inform school about the reason for an absence. If no response is received following this letter the absence is considered as unauthorised. (Appendix 3) The school may refer a pupil to Start Well Services if their attendance or punctuality causes a concern.

#### **6. Informing school of an expected absence**

6.1 If your child is having a planned absence (e.g. medical appointment), can you please inform the school office of the absence and the reason for it, we can then make the necessary amendments to your child's attendance records. In these instances of expected absences, it is not necessary for you to ring the school, if you have already informed the school office.

#### **7. What the school expects your child to do to support good attendance**

7.1 Attendance Target: All pupils are expected to strive to achieve an attendance target of at least 97% and to aim for 100%.

7.2 Eat a balanced diet: Healthy eating is encouraged whilst at school. The school offers a highly nutritious school meal and children are encouraged to eat fruit at playtime. Water is readily available for each child.

7.3 Participate in physical activity: The school has an extensive programme of physical activity. Children also have access to regular intra and inter-school sporting competitions. After school sporting clubs work on rotation so each Key Stage has access.

7.4 Develop good sleep patterns: We encourage all children to have reasonable sleep patterns at home. In general, children need more sleep than adults and should try to achieve 10 hours sleep each night.

## 8. Registration

8.1 The school records must show whether your child was present or absent at the time of registration (8.55am). This is a legal process and authorised external personnel can request to see your child's attendance records and use information contained to support any investigations they may have to pursue. The morning class register is taken at 8.55am and closes at 9am each day. After this, the only entrance into the school is through the main entrance. Children who do arrive after this time, must go to the Admin Office to register their attendance, receive their mark and gain entry to the school. Please note: - The school registers close at 9am, and lessons start. Any children arriving after this time will receive an unauthorised late mark, (this is shown as a 'u' on your child's registration report). Arrival after 9:30am with no explanation will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. The register is also taken at 1:15pm.

8.2 Each year the school reports to parents the total number of authorised and unauthorised absences. The reporting dates run from the beginning of the academic year to the end of term five.

## 9. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

9.1 Parents should be made aware that it is the school which decides whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. A message on the answer phone does not in itself necessarily authorise an absence.

9.2 All reasons given for a child's absence are considered by the school. As examples, absence from school **may** be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

Absence from school will **not** be authorised for:

- Holidays
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Minding the house
- Caring for brothers/sisters, relatives

- Unapproved holidays
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

In all instances, each individual case is considered on its own merit and in relation to the child, family and previous circumstances. No holidays will be authorised if a child's attendance is below 97%.

## **10 Monitoring and Review**

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Wigan attendance targets.

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed every year, or earlier if necessary.