



ST LOUIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:-

THIS IS OUR SCHOOL,

WE ARE A FAMILY, EACH OF US KNOWN AND LOVED.

THIS IS OUR SCHOOL,

LET US GROW STRONG HERE, TO OUR FULL, IN MIND BODY AND SOUL.

THIS IS OUR SCHOOL,

LET PEACE BE HERE AND JUSTICE AND HOPE.

THIS IS OUR SCHOOL,

CHRIST IS HERE.

St Louis Catholic Primary School Attendance Policy

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support children and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable children to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. It is the parents responsibility to ensure that children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all children will:

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- discuss promptly with the class teacher or School Office any problems that may affect their child's school attendance.
- ensure that they contact the school **daily** of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- If a child is absent for more than 4 days due to illness a parent will need to provide Medical Evidence before the illness is marked as absent. This may be an appointment ticket or card for the drop in centre or doctors.

Examples	Authorised absences:	Unauthorised absences:
	*genuine illness of the child; *hospital/dental/doctors appointment for the child; * major religious observances *visits to prospective new schools *external exams or educational assessments. *educational visits and other school-directed activities *a pupil receiving off-site tuition for, say, special needs	*shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park; *a birthday treat; *oversleeping due to a late night; *looking after other children / other family member; *appointments for other family members.

- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

We expect that the school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of children whose attendance is falling below thresholds.
- make initial enquiries regarding children who are not attending regularly.
- meet regularly with the Education Attendance Officer (EAO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Attendance Service. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Attendance may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality when attending school is crucial. Lateness causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other children in the class. It is really important therefore that all children arrive at school on time. The school is open from 8.45am.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every child.
- Registration takes place at 8.55am and children who arrive after 9.00am will be recorded as late.
- Registers close at 9.15am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the Local Authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at the beginning of the afternoon sessions.
- Persistent lateness by a child will be dealt with through a letter home to parents after five lates and a meeting with the Headteacher after 10 lates and may be referred to the Education Attendance Service.
- A child's attendance is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.
- Absence telephone messages regarding pupils from parents can be left and are recorded on SIMs. Letters from parents' reference absence are kept in the office and are retained until the child leaves our School.
- If a child is absent and no communication has been received from a parent the Secretary will prompt a phone call from them by sending a text to inform them their child is not in School and no reason for absence has been received. If no phone call is received the Headteacher is informed who will then determine the next course of action through reference to LA Policy (see Attendance Matters).

Children Leaving During the School Day

The school staff must know where the children are during the school day.

- Children are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- Children must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a child is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the School Office before the child is allowed to leave the site.
- If a child leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the child as a missing person.*

Leave of Absence

Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and come into force on 1 September 2013.

The amendments make it clear that Headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. All reference to a holiday and/or extended leave, including the threshold of ten school days is removed. Any request for leave must be made in writing for the attention of the Headteacher in advance. There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education.

Somerset County Council (SCC) supports schools:

In expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school regularly. Any absence from school will impact on educational achievement, success in later life and longer term health and well being

In ensuring the law is upheld. Parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance at school of their child. Schools must explain their stance on term time leave in their attendance policy so parents/carers are clear on expectations and potential consequences, such as any unauthorised absence including taking term time leave not agreed with the school, can result in a Penalty Notice being issued to each parent for each child. Any Penalty Notice unpaid is taken to Magistrates Court as failure to secure the regular attendance of their child. If found guilty of such an offence, they might receive a criminal conviction and a potential fine of up to £1,000

SCC cannot override a school's decision not to authorise any term time leave. There is no right of appeal.

Taking a child on holiday in term time interrupts the learning of the whole class. Teachers have to spend time helping children catch up when they return. Parents should arrange holidays for the 13 week school holiday periods. Schools are open 190 days which leaves 175 days of the year for a holiday

Attendance Regulations

From 1st September 2013, any holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised by the school.

This is because the Government has changed the law with regard to granting term time leave of absence, replacing the 2006 regulation that allowed schools to grant up to 10 days leave of absence at their discretion.

This means that now, schools may NOT grant ANY leave of absence during term time unless there are EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances does NOT include

Cheap holiday cost

Getting personal paperwork, visa's updated (this should be planned into holiday periods)

Visiting relatives (this should be planned into holiday periods)

Exceptional Circumstances MAY include

Emergency service / forces personnel with proof of enforced holiday period

Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad

Holiday industry employees with proof of this being the ONLY time period allowed by employer

One international leave request per Key Stage for a very significant extended family event, including seeing an elderly/ seriously ill relative or where a close family

member has a terminal illness and it may be a last chance to be together especially if the family member lived overseas.

Parents having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period

Regular time off for illness will be challenged, requiring not only medical evidence but also medical guidance on how schools can best support and manage those children in school. Saying a child is “unwell” will no longer be enough, parents will need to be specific.

Any time away from school can have a significant impact on educational attainment, success in later life and longer term health and well-being. In law, parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school.

Therefore, any unauthorised absence in term time can result in the issuing of a Fixed Term Penalty Notice by the Education Attendance Service. Parents will have 21 days to pay this £60 fine, after which it goes up to £120.

Examples of Penalty Fines

One parent, one child £60

One parent, two children £120

Two parents, one child £120

Two parents, two children £240

Failure to pay a Fixed Term Penalty Notice within 28 days may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrate’s Court of up to £1000.

A fixed Penalty Notice might also be issued if a **child’s attendance falls below 92% with 10 sessions or more missed and no satisfactory reason or explanation is given.**

Where an absence is considered to be completely unavoidable, a term time leave request form is available from the office which must be completed and returned to the school office as far in advance as possible.

If you have any concerns about the contents of this reply, please contact the School. **Somerset County Council will be supporting all schools in ensuring the law is upheld.**

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

- At St Louis Catholic Primary School we hold regular reviews of attendance. If a child’s attendance is identified as a cause of concern then a letter is sent to advise parents. If there is no improvement then a second letter is sent inviting parents to a meeting with the Headteacher. If attendance remains a concern then a referral is made to the Education Attendance Service.
- The Education Attendance Service may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent / carers who are failing to secure their children’s regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or EAS Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

Changing Schools

- If you are moving house and your child may be leaving our school please let us know as soon as possible.
- A child will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:
 - The date the child will be leaving the school and starting the next.
 - The address of the new school.
 - A new home address if appropriate.

The child's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the child will be registered as Missing from Education and the Local Authority will be notified.

Appendix One

The Education (Child Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Child Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

The **Education (Child Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a **family holiday** during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

St Louis Catholic Primary School

Term Time Leave Request Form

From September 2013 the Government has said schools may NOT grant ANY leave of absence during term time unless there are EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.

If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence** and noted on your child's attendance record.

Name of child / children Class

1.....

2

3

For Office use: % attendance.

1

2

3

a request to be authorised as being absent from school
dates: fromto..... (inclusive)

Exceptional Circumstances (please tick one)

Emergency service / forces personnel with proof of enforced holiday period

Holiday industry employees with proof of this being the ONLY time period allowed by employer

One international leave request per Key Stage for a very significant extended family event, including seeing an elderly/ seriously ill relative

Please give information:

Signature Parent/Carer Date
.....

Please return this form to school well in advance of your proposed absence.
Authorised **Not Authorised**

