



The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School Pupil Attendance Policy



School Ethos and Mission Statement

In accordance with our Catholic Christian ethos which is encapsulated in our mission statement we will encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which all pupils feel valued and part of the school community.

Aims

We will

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole school attendance levels, including statutory targets

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We will develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for:

- Parents and carers
- Pupils
- School staff
- Governors

This procedural framework complements this policy, and identifies how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This procedural framework will include guidance on:

- Registration
- What constitutes unauthorised absence
- Consistent use of symbols for authorised absence
- Holidays in term time/Extended leave
- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual pupils
- Systems for dealing with absence
- Criteria and systems for referral to the local authority and other agencies
- Systems for reintegrating pupils who have been absent
- Systems for monitoring whole school attendance and Action Planning
- Appropriate alternative curricular arrangements

Holidays in Term Time/Extended Leave

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools cannot authorise any leave other than in exceptional circumstances. In The Blessed Sacrament School the Headteacher is the person authorised by the 'proprietor' i.e. the governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings

Leave of absence **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
- the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request.

Additional information regarding leave of absence is included with the procedural framework.

Religious Absence

The school will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, (i.e. the day set aside by the Religious Body of which the parent is a member) and this will be marked as 'R' in the register. Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply (this would be marked in the register as 'C').

Use of Penalty Notices

The Blessed Sacrament Primary School may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This includes Leave of Absence which is taken without a prior request being made; and leave taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the leave is taken regardless of this advice. The Blessed Sacrament Primary School may also request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice for days taken in excess of the agreed period of leave; without good reason. Parents also risk losing their child's school place if they do not return from leave, as agreed, and readmission cannot be guaranteed.

Partnership Working

School will work with the Local Authority and other support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

School will adopt systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future Action Planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

Review of Whole School Attendance Policy

The policy and associated procedural framework will be reviewed annually.

The last policy review took place in Summer 2015.

The last procedural review took place in October 2016

Linked Policies:

- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Children
- Equal Opportunities
- Racial Equality
- Special Educational Needs

The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School Pupil Attendance Policy Procedural Framework

This document forms part of The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School's Pupil Attendance Policy, and will be reviewed annually.

In drawing up this procedural framework, the school has taken due regard to the outcomes for children identified under Every Child Matters, and on duties arising from Section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

Current Status

Maintaining our greatly improved attendance remains a priority for the school. In 2012/13 due to the resources committed to staffing to promote good attendance our attendance was in line with the national average and exceeded the targets recommended by the LA.

Rights and Responsibilities

The school expects parents to:

- Ensure children attend regularly, and punctually
- Contact school on 1st day of absence and give a reason for the absence
- If an absence lasts longer than 3 days parents should contact school every third day to give a reason for the prolonged absence
- Send a letter into school on return from absence
- Avoid holidays in term time wherever possible
- Send in requests for holidays in term time before the holiday is booked and at the latest two weeks before the dates requested
- Make early contact with school where they become aware of an issue which may cause problems with attendance
- Attend meetings if concerns are identified
- Participate in Attendance and Parenting Contracts where appropriate
- Support the school in agreed interventions/action plans

The school expects pupils to:

- Attend school regularly
- Be on time for registration
- Adhere to our systems for late registration
- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school e.g. early bedtimes to allow punctual attendance

School Staff

Overall responsibility for these attendance procedures lies with Head Teacher. Mrs Mary Allen is our attendance officer. She has day to day responsibility for attendance matters. Pupils with persistent absences are referred to our family support worker. In the absence of the attendance officer the family support worker will assume the day to day responsibility for attendance.

The Head teacher will:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Promote good attendance with pupils and with parents. Impress upon parents and pupils the strong link between attendance and educational attainment.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- Make pupils and parents aware of expectations regarding attendance matters through newsletters, the school brochure and website.

- Set attendance targets with the governing body and report to them on progress towards achieving targets
- Make staff aware of the school's attendance and registration procedures
- Arrange training for staff on attendance matters
- Ensure there are clear incremental steps for dealing with poor attendance (see attendance flow charts)
- Arrange attendance panels, parenting contracts and request Penalty Notices

The Attendance Officer will:

- Prepare registers for distribution to classes
- Record attendance and absences in SIMS Attendance Manager
- Make first day contact with parents of absent pupils for whom we have had no reason for absence.
- Amend absence codes once reasons for an absence are known
- Review registers and identify trends of absence
- Administer the Traffic Light system of informing parents about their child's attendance.
- Send out letters of concern to parents (see hierarchy of letters)
- Send out letters of congratulation for good attendance to parents.
- Prepare the end of term 100% attendance certificates and the weekly best class attendance certificates
- Monitor the absences of those pupils identified with attendance problems and liaise with the family support worker with regard to the support she is providing for these pupils
- Make notes in SIMS about the reasons given for absence for pupils whose attendance is a concern.
- Monitor and record attendance of any pupils who are receiving education elsewhere
- Liaise with the school's admissions officer and head teacher with regard to children missing education
- Collate whole school attendance data and work with the Head teacher to analyse this data
- Keep an attendance file
- Submit attendance data to the Local Authority and the DFE
- Submit Children Missing Education forms to the LA

The Family Support Worker will:

- Contact families when concerns have been identified (see attendance flow charts)
- Work with families at stages 1 and 2 of the attendance flow chart
- Make contact with and work with support agencies
- Work with the Headteacher to prepare attendance contracts and attend meetings with parents
- Work with the Headteacher to submit information to the court officer in order to apply for fixed penalty notices and other court hearings.

The class teacher will:

- Ensure that attendance registers are marked according to school policy and the Pupil Registration regulations

All staff will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To be aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils

- See pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

The Governing Body will:

- Review the attendance policy annually
- Analyse attendance data, and in use that data for action planning and target setting - annually
- Agree statutory attendance targets
- Receive a report on attendance each term
- Identify a governor to have responsibility for attendance
- Sit on attendance panels and meetings

Procedures

Registration

All staff with responsibility for registration should be aware of The DCSF guidance, "keeping Pupil Registers" and "Absence and Attendance Codes." Lancashire's "Guidance for Schools on Registration and Attendance". Registers should be marked consistently and accurately. Staff should ensure they use the correct attendance and absence symbols.

Procedures for registration are detailed in the staff handbook.

Registration sheets are brought to the classrooms before each registration session by two Y6 pupils.

Registers should be marked at 9.00 a.m. and again at the beginning of the afternoon teaching session.

Morning registration closes at 9.30 a.m. Registers should be returned to the office at 9:10 along with any absence letters or monies collected. The attendance officer will mark any children arriving after 9:10 but before 9:30 as late before the register closes.

Afternoon registration closes 5 minutes after the start of the afternoon teaching session.

Registers should always be totalled to enable a quick headcount in the event of fire.

Late registration arrangements

Teaching assistants are on duty at each entrance until 9:10, they record the names of any pupil arriving after 9 a.m. in an exercise book. The doors close at 9:10.

Pupils arriving after 9:10 must enter school through the main entrance. The attendance officer will mark **those who arrive before 9:10 as late before the register closes (L). Those arriving after 9:30 will be marked as late after the register has closed (U).**

Signing out arrangements

Pupils leaving the premises during the school day must be collected by a parent, or another adult who has been entrusted by the child's parents, from the main entrance. They must be signed out by a member of staff. Children returning from an appointment during the school day must be signed in by a member of staff.

Arrangements for recording messages from parents by telephone

These are recorded on slips of paper and put in the register for the class teacher to read. They should be dated and the reason for the absence or appointment noted.

Arrangements for retaining messages from parents re absence from school

All absence letters and records of phone messages from parents are kept by the attendance officer until she has entered the correct absence code in SIMS Attendance Manager. They are kept in a file until the end of the academic year. In cases where there is a concern about the pupil's attendance notes are made in SIMS to detail the reason for the absence.

Amending absence codes

The attendance officer or in her absence the member of staff delegated by the Headteacher amends absence codes once reasons for absence have been established. If she is unsure about amending a code she consults the Headteacher.

Dual Registration

In the case of pupils with dual registration (e.g. pupils temporarily in support units) the attendance officer contacts the establishment the pupil is attending each week and the code is amended as appropriate.

Checking consistency in the use of symbols

Teachers are issued with the current list of symbols. The attendance manager checks consistency across the school when she enters the symbols into SIMS. She reports any discrepancies to the teachers.

Acceptable reasons for absence

The attendance officer monitors the reasons for absence as she enters the codes into SIMS. In the case of absence due to sickness, if a pupil has not returned after 5 school days and the parents have not been in contact with the school to explain why the absence is prolonged, the attendance officer makes contact with the parents. This also happens if there is a pattern of absence. Any concerns are passed on to the family support workers to investigate. (see flow charts) The absence may also be discussed with the Headteacher or another member of the SMT. If after investigation, it is felt that the illness is not genuine the decision will be taken not to authorise the absence. The attendance officer usually discusses this decision with the Headteacher and parents are notified of the decision to mark the absence as unauthorised.

Holidays in Term Time

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools cannot authorise any leave other than in exceptional circumstances. In The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School the head teacher is the person authorised by the 'proprietor' i.e. the governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings

Leave of absence **SHALL NOT** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
- the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request.

Additional information regarding leave of absence is included with the procedural framework.

Religious Absence

The school will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, (i.e. the day set aside by the Religious Body of which the parent is a member) and this will be marked as 'R' in the register.

Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply (this would be marked in the register as 'C').

Strategies for promoting/improving attendance

The school promotes the need for good attendance with parents through:

- Newsletters
- Posters
- The home school contract
- 'First day calling' system
- Letters to parents (see hierarchy of letters in SIMS)

The school promotes the need for good attendance with pupils through:

- Assemblies
- Posters
- PSHE
- Involving pupils in setting targets for attainment and monitoring progress

Incentives and rewards:

- Weekly certificate for the class with the best attendance in FS/KS1 & KS2 awarded in assembly
- Termly attendance celebration assembly – certificates for 100% attendance, parents invited by letters (see letters in SIMS)

- Annual attendance celebration – certificates and prizes for 100% attendance
- Traffic Light Letters

Curriculum and School Ethos

- Learning is fun – creative curriculum
- Individual needs catered for
- Range of after school clubs to engage “hard to reach pupils”

Vulnerable pupils

- Anti-bullying policy
- Lunchtime supervision – play activities, Q-club
- Family support workers
- Multi agency support

Attendance Panels

When pupil absence is persistent, parents will be asked to appear before an attendance panel if:

- There has been no improvement following letters from school
And/or
- There has been no improvement following help and advice from the family support/help and support has not been accepted

The attendance panel will comprise of professionals working within the school, or on behalf of a relevant outside agency eg

The Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher,
A Family Support Worker
A member of the Governing Body
Social Worker
School Nurse
(See sample attendance panel paperwork)

Attendance thresholds/actions table

Attendance falls below....	Action (progressive intervention and action as listed below)
95%	Warning letter indicating future action should attendance fall below next threshold. Phone call from family support worker Followed by letter to confirm agreed actions and improvements necessary.
90%	Child is classed as a persistent absentee. Meeting with family support worker - targets for improvement set. Review meetings termly until attendance rises.
85%	Meeting with Family support and Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher – If attendance continues to fall further meetings with full attendance panel regular half termly meetings until attendance rises above 95%
80%	Attendance panel – referral to LA Attendance Officer/Team

Parenting Contracts

The school may invite parents to sign up to a parenting contract at the time of the attendance panel for very poor attendance or in cases where there has been no improvement in attendance by the date of the review which follows an attendance panel.
(see sample Parenting Contract)

Referral to LA Early Intervention Team

If there is no improvement a referral will be made

Penalty Notices

The Governing Body will seek to use Penalty Notices in the following circumstances:

- Unauthorised holidays in term time or unauthorised extended leave
- For persistent absences after all other means of improving pupil attendance have been exhausted

CAF

If at any stage in this process the school has serious concerns about the pupil's welfare which cannot be resolved by the school alone a CAF may be initiated. If at any stage in this process the school has serious concerns about the pupil's welfare which cannot be resolved by the school alone a CAF will be completed.

Removal from Roll

The attendance officer is responsible for identifying pupils who may have gone missing. When a pupil is absent and the attendance officer is unable to make contact with parents through daily phone calls, the following procedure will be followed after 3 days or sooner for vulnerable pupils:

1. The attendance officer will contact other family members and neighbours known to the school
2. If the pupil is on the CP register the Social Worker will be contacted
3. The family support worker will visit the family home.
4. If she is unable to make contact she will contact our Community Police Officer
5. After 10 days a Missing Child referral will be made

The child will only be removed from roll when the LA officer for Children Missing Education advises it is safe to do so. The decision will be made by the head teacher.

School based systems for dealing with punctuality issues

The system for late registration is shown under registration procedures

- A system of letters is kept in SIMS to be used to draw parent's attention to punctuality issues
- The family support worker may be asked to work with pupils and parents regarding punctuality
- The use of Parenting Contracts will be considered for persistent punctuality issues.
- The use of Penalty Notices will be considered for persistent punctuality issues.

School based systems for dealing with absences

1. The attendance officer will contact those parents who do not contact school on the first day of absence.
2. Letters of concern will be sent (see hierarchy of letters)
3. The family support worker will contact parents to discuss attendance concerns
4. The family support worker may offer support
5. Consider attendance panel
6. Refer to LA attendance officer
7. Consider a parenting contract
8. Consider CAF referral
9. Consider Penalty Notice

Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Action Planning

- The attendance officer collects the data
- The attendance officer and Headteacher meet each month to analyse the data and decide what actions to take as a result of the analysis
- Frequency and nature of feedback re analysis of attendance data to
 - Governors - termly
 - Staff - termly
 - Pupils - termly
 - Parents – termly

What we analyse data for:

- Patterns of broken weeks by individual pupils
- Patterns of absence for individual pupils
- Misuse or inconsistent use of absence codes across the school
- Trends in reasons for absence
 - Extended medical leave
 - Use of C
 - Holidays/Extended Leave
 - Exclusions, etc
 - Trends in particular groups (ethnic groups, gender), or years