

ST JOSEPH'S



South Oxhey Primary
Schools

Attendance Policy



Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on 18th October 2018

It is due for review on 19th November 2019 (up to 12 months from the above date).

Signature *Linda Payne* Date19th November 18.....

Head Teacher

Signature *Adrian Ramsden* Date19th November 18.....

Chair of Governors

The South Oxhey Primary Schools are committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance and punctuality, enabling our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance helps the children in our school community to maximise their learning.

We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil progress.

Good attendance helps the children in our schools community to maximise their learning. This policy aims to support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality and reduce Persistent Absence in order that all pupils are assisted in reaching their potential.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School believes that good school attendance assists children and young people to achieve the following 5 outcomes:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well-being

Responsibilities & Expectations

- The school will provide a safe learning environment and maintain records of attendance according to legislation and guidance on a daily basis.
- Only the headteacher can authorise absence.
- The school will provide attendance details on the child's annual report.
- The school will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality.
- Details of poor attendance/punctuality will be reported to subsequent schools.
- School has a responsibility to safeguard all pupils and therefore will take all necessary steps to make sure a pupil is safe if they are not in school.

- Parents/carers have a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school and do not automatically have the right to take them on holiday during term time. Absences from school affect the whole school community, not just the child concerned.
- Parents/carers are expected to ensure their child attends school regularly, on time, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents/carers must inform the school on the **1st day** of absence and give a reason for their child's absence. Parents/carers will also maintain **daily** contact with the school until child returns to school.

- All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually.
- All pupils must remember to hand any note from their parent to school providing reasons for absence.
- All pupils will be expected to be ready to learn.

If a Child is Absent

The school will:

- Record notification of absence by telephone.
- If notification is not received, telephone parents/carers by 10am on the first day of absence and record the outcome of the call.

- Maintain regular contact with parents/carers throughout the child's absence.
- Keep written notification from parents/carers on file.
- Inform parents/carers in writing if a child's attendance falls below 90%.
- Write to parents/carers requesting a reason for absence if it has not been provided.
- Record any absences as authorised or unauthorised according to current DfE guidelines.

Lateness

- Registers are taken at 8.55am. Any child arriving after that will be recorded as late.
- Afternoon sessions begin at 1pm for FS &KS1 and 1.15pm for KS2 when the register is taken again. Children returning after home lunch after this time will be recorded as late.
- Registers will close at 9.15 am and 1.30 pm. Any pupil arriving after the registers have closed will be recorded as unauthorised absence unless there are exceptional circumstances for such late arrival.
- Parents/carers will be expected to sign the late book and give a reason for their child's lateness
- It is important that children are safe and therefore accounted for at all times during the day. Because of this, any unexplained absence is monitored very carefully.
- Parents/Carers whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by a member of school staff who will work with parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality

Absence due to Illness

- Notification must be provided for all absences from school and the school will always follow this up. The Headteacher will make a decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised dependant on the information provided by a parent/carer. Each decision is considered on a case by case basis. In most cases, absence is genuine and marked as authorised on the register
- ***The school operates a '1st day response' policy. This means that if we have not been notified by 9:15am to tell us why a child is not coming to school that day we will contact his/her parents/carers.***
- Parents/carers must give specific reasons for absence – being 'ill' is not enough.
- Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence stating that their child is too ill to attend school.
- Unless parents/carers have been given a particular time of absence through illness by a doctor they are expected to contact the school each day to let us know what is happening. The details of telephone calls are recorded and monitored.
- Registers are monitored on a regular basis by our Attendance Improvement Officer to look at patterns of absence, identify individuals or groups absences, attendance of siblings, etc. They may ask to see parents/carers if attendance is not satisfactory.

Absence due to Medical Appointments

- We would request that all medical appointments, if possible, are made after school.
- If a medical appointment is known in advance parents/carers must notify the school in writing. If an emergency appointment is made please phone the school before 9am.
- Notification must be given if a child needs to leave school during the day. The relevant book must be signed at the office and again on return.

Term Time Holiday

There have been amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which come into force from 1st September 2013.

These remove all reference to family holiday and extended leave therefore:

- **NO** leave of absence will be granted
- *Parents may make an application for leave of absence for an exceptional circumstance*
- *The Headteacher will decide whether this application will be granted*
- *The Headteacher will decide the number of days granted for any leave of absence*
- *Leave of absence taken without permission will be unauthorised*
- *St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will decide what is deemed as an exceptional circumstance*
- *A child can be removed from the school's registers if they fail to return from a leave of absence where permission has been granted after both school and LA have tried to locate the pupil(s) or if there are 20 days continuous unauthorised absences and both the local authority and school have failed to locate pupil.*

Monitoring Attendance

- Registers will be taken at 8.55am each morning. Any child arriving after that will be recorded as being late.
- Registration details are transferred to an electronic database, which is the legal document.
- Parents/carers whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted to request an improvement in punctuality.
- The school will follow up persistent lateness, all absences and pupils with low levels of attendance.
- The school will monitor attendance on a daily/weekly basis.
- Parents/carers who have not provided a reason for their child's absence by the end of the week will be contacted.
- Each month, registers will be monitored and parents/carers of pupils with less than 90% attendance will be notified.
- Pupils with less than 85% attendance will automatically be discussed with the Attendance Improvement Officer and appropriate action identified and agreed.

Records

- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the school profile.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the deputy headteacher, who will write to the parents/carers.
- When attendance falls below 90%, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue. When it falls below 85%, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting and the pupil will be made known to the AIO.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil is classed as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level damages any child's educational potential and we will try to work with parents/carers to improve attendance rates quickly. Persistent Absentees are monitored carefully through our pastoral system and this is combined with academic support where absence adversely affects attainment. All persistent absentees are automatically made known to the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Integrated Working

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will work with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our pupils receive all the support available to achieve good attendance

Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.
- The headteacher and appropriate staff meet with the AIO for regular meetings to discuss and review attendance.
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and the AIO work with identified individual pupils and their parents to improve poor attendance.
- When the attendance does not improve sufficiently and after discussion with the AIO, the school may apply for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued, invite you to a meeting to offer support or may make a formal referral to the Local Authority.

Rewards for Good Attendance

- ***There is the whole class ready to learn award which includes attendance***
- ***Individually; certificates, prizes, house points and an end of year trip for all children with attendance of 95% and above.***

Exceptional Circumstances

- The school will actively seek to work with parents/carers where there is a genuine difficulty with attendance.
- Support strategies will be put in place for individual pupils where appropriate.
- When a child has an illness that means he/she will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send work home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will seek advice and guidance from the Education Support for Medical Absence.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

- The issuing of penalty notices will comply with the code of conduct and guidance as determined by the Local Authority. This recently changed on 1st February 2016.
- A penalty notice will be issued with regard to unauthorised absence if a pupil fails to attend school as required without a genuine explanation. A pupil's absence must have been unauthorised for at least 15 sessions (7 ½ days, one session is half day either am or pm) in the previous and/or current term. **Penalty notices will involve a parent paying a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days.**
- Failure to pay the fine within 28 days will result in either a prosecution for the offence to which the notice applies, or withdrawal of the notice (limited circumstances apply). Prosecution will be taken by the Local Authority under the Education Act 1996, section 444.

Staff Responsible for Attendance Matters

- Headteacher
- Administrators with responsibility for attendance
- All class teachers
- Governing Board

Monitoring & Review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years or earlier if deemed necessary.

Signed

Date

To be reviewed: February 2020