

Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School **Attendance Policy**

'We are the gospel, educating all children in order for them to grow and reach their full potential as fulfilled people in Christ'

Aims and objectives:

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all pupils to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why regular attendance is important:

Pupils who attend school on a regular basis and are offered access to high- quality teaching and learning opportunities will usually leave school with qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities. The links between attendance and achievement are strong, and high levels of attendance at school should be a right of each pupil.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

Holy Cross and All Saints RC primary School aims to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for this academic year and to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality by adopting the following strategies:

- Keeping accurate records
- Maintaining clear procedures for recording lateness
- Ensuring unauthorised absences are dealt with promptly
- Raise awareness of attendance issues at parents' evenings, new intake meetings and letters to parents.
- Following the authorities guidance on holidays in term time.
- Offering support and early intervention from the EWO or through an Early Help Assessment.
- Rewarding good attendance by sharing weekly class attendance and punctuality at our Celebration Assembly and awarding certificates. Half Termly class award for Best Class Attendance and Best Class Punctuality.

- To continue to promote attendance with the support of the Education Welfare Officer
- Applying the Whole School Attendance Policy consistently and reviewing annually
- Give you details on attendance in our letters home.
- Display our school target on the website.
- Report to you in parents meeting and in the end of year report on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is.

ABSENCE PROCEDURE:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, this must be on the first day of absence.

Please inform the school as soon as you know your child is ill and will be absent from school.

If your child's absence is not reported, on the first day of absence a text will be sent enquiring about the pupil's absence.

If no explanation is provided, the absence will be investigated by the school administrator.

If no explanation is provided following the above procedures then an unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Any prolonged period of unexplained absence will be referred to the EWO and Headteacher for investigation to ensure there are no safeguarding concerns. This may involve a home visit to identify the reason for your child's absence. If a safeguarding concern is identified a referral to Children's Service will be made following the schools safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like, illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from

attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Medical evidence may be requested for illness if school attendance is a concern.

Religious Observance:

The Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 states that absence for religious observance should be treated as an authorised (absence) 'on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs'. Leave for pupils for religious observance will only be agreed if the dates fall outside of normal holiday periods. Additional days off for shopping or extended celebrations will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Holidays in Term Time:

- From 1st September 2013 amendments to The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers **may not grant** any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- All schools are required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons. From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days**. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

All applications will be considered in line with the School Attendance Policy.

All applications for leave must be made in advance using the form available from the school office. (appendix 1)

Holidays in term time will not be authorised unless:

- Parents can produce evidence they are unable to take their annual leave from work during school holidays. (annual recurring requests will not be approved)
- Children are seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
- The event is for an exceptional reason and **parents are asked to provide detailed evidence** to support this request. These requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher who may consult the School Attendance Committee, which comprises of the Headteacher and a member of the Governing Body.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a visit from the Education Welfare team or a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils will be tracked and monitored carefully with both pupils and parents being offered additional support to raise attendance.

PUNCTUALITY

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8:45am**. Any child not entering school after this will have to be signed in by the parent/carer on the electronic signing in system. A reason for the child's lateness must be given

At **9.15am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked in to school to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Classes will be praised/rewarded at assembly for good punctuality records.

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the city.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in a letter home and we ask for your full support.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance Policy

- Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School will evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies by:
 - ½ termly monitoring of attendance through SIMS
 - regular consultation with the Education Welfare Officer
 - referring to the Education Welfare Service
 - planning and evaluating initiatives
 - Annual analysis of patterns
 - Annual feedback to Governors and Curriculum subcommittee

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school:

Mrs A Bell, Headteacher
Miss E.Croft/ Miss Whelan, School Administrator
Mrs C.Jackson, Office Manager
Mrs T Robinson, Education Welfare Officer

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Date:	
Review Date:	

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY TO SCHOOL

I have read, and understood and agreed the terms and conditions of the attendance policy for Holy Cross and All Saints R.C. Primary School.

Signed: _____

Parents of _____ Class _____



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Regular school attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. We expect all parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays taken in term time can impact on your child's progress and will not be authorised in line with our school policy.

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, **please complete this form and return it to school at least two weeks in advance.** Requests for leave of absence will be considered in line with our policy and will not automatically be authorised.

Government Guidance:

All schools are required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons. From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days**. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

PARENTS SECTION

Name of child: _____ Year Group _____

Reason For request:

Date of Departure: _____ Date due back to school: _____

Length of Absence (number of school days): _____ Destination: _____

Name of Parent/Carer: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Parent/Carer signature: _____ Date: _____

SCHOOL SECTION

Date of meeting with parent(s)/carer(s) (if applicable) _____

Leave approved? Yes ☐ No ☐ Number of days approved _____

Reason for refusal/authorisation :

Headteachers signature (on behalf of the attendance committee): _____

Date: _____