



Archdiocese of
Birmingham

St Maria Goretti Catholic Academy

Attendance Policy



POLICY

Approval and review

Committee to approve policy	
Date of Board / Academy Committee Approval	
Chair of Board / Academy committee – Name	
Signature	
Head teacher	
Signature	
Policy review period	
Date of policy review	

MISSION STATEMENT

**With respect for God and united in faith, we place service before self to inspire hearts and minds.
By achieving together through our love and faith, we place Christ at the centre of all we do.**

Introductory Statement

1. CORE STATEMENT ON ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- 1.1 Regular attendance and punctuality is essential if children are to make good progress at school.
- 1.2 The school aims to maintain good attendance and punctuality by implementing a policy within which staff, children, parents and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school maintains attendance records and initiates quick and early intervention when a problem is identified. We feel it is crucial that children develop the habit of regular and punctual attendance and learn to be responsible and reliable. Staff encourage and acknowledge good attendance and punctuality, and liaise with colleagues, parents and other agencies when appropriate. In addition, good attendance and punctuality are seen as achievements in their own right and are recognised as such by the school.
- 1.3 This policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all children including Foundation Stage 1 and 2.

2. REGISTRATION

2.1 There are four broad classifications in the attendance register:

- Present: - Pupil on the school premises at the time of registration.
- Approved educational activity: - Pupil is engaged in an approved supervised activity off site.
- Authorised absence: - Pupil has the authority of the school to be absent, either given in advance or afterwards.
- Unauthorised absence: - No explanation received or unacceptable reason given.

2.2 Symbols Used:

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------|
| / | Present | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| A | Other authorised absence | - RED INK |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| C | Authorised Absence | - System Code |
| D | Dual registration | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| E | Excluded | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| F | Extended Family Holiday (agreed) | - RED INK |
| G | Family Holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement) | - RED INK |
| H | Family Holiday (Agreed) | - RED INK |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | - System Code |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | - RED INK |
| M | Medical/Dental Appointments/Confirmed Illness | - RED INK |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | - RED INK |
| O | Unauthorised Absence | - RED INK |
| P | Approved sporting activity | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| R | Religious observance | - BLUE/BLACK INK |
| T | Traveller (family visits relating to culture) | - RED INK |

U	Late (after registration closed)	- BLUE/BLACK INK
V	Educational Visit/Activity	- BLUE/BLACK INK
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	- BLUE/BLACK INK
Y	Forced and Partial Closure	- BLUE/BLACK INK
Z	Pupil not on roll	- System Code

N.B: Latecomers are counted as present and details noted in the Late Book or register.

2.3 Guidance on Completion of Registers

Registers are completed by the class teacher at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.

Each week is dated in the space provided.

Weeks are completed in the correct section for the appropriate term.

3. FIRST DAY CONTACT

3.1 DCSF guidelines on school attendance stress that the single most effective initiative designed to improve rates of attendance is the implementation of first day response to pupil absence. Parents and carers are expected to sign the Home School Agreement (see Appendix 1) and support the school's policy on attendance, by:

- contacting the school on the first day of absence
- establishing the reason for absence at an early stage,
- preventing unauthorised absence,
- informing the school of any potential difficulties with attendance, and access support from the Attendance team.

3.2 **The school operates a first day contact policy as follows.** Parents/Guardians are expected to contact school before 10.00 a.m. or leave a message via voice mail. In the event of no contact being made, Parents/Guardians are telephoned by a member of the attendance team.

The outcome of the conversation is recorded and passed to the teacher on the standard telephone absence memo. If there is no reply, or a letter of explanation is not received, a letter will be sent home requesting a response. Should there be no reasonable explanation for absence, this will be categorised as 'unauthorised.'

4. Monitoring Pupil Attendance

- 4.1 Registers are reviewed daily by a member of the attendance team, usually the school administrator, to ensure that attendance problems are addressed promptly.
- persistent or unexplained absences
 - continual broken weeks
 - patterns of non-attendance on specific days
 - % attendance below the school average (see prospectus)
 - repeated medical absences and patterns of illness
 - persistent lateness

It is school policy to communicate promptly with families and work with children and families to provide appropriate support to improve a child's attendance. Persistent absences, or sudden changes to attendance, will trigger a response from the school attendance team. Parents/carers will be contacted to meet with the Head of School to discuss attendance.

- 4.2 Class teachers also have a responsibility to support the school's policy, by monitoring attendance and forward any concerns, directly to the Attendance Team.
- 4.3 If the Executive Headteacher/Attendance Team remains concerned regarding a pupil's welfare or attendance, a referral is made to the Education Welfare Officer, requesting a home visit. Parents/carers will be informed, either verbally or in writing.
- 4.4 If attendance remains low and no valid reason is given parents are required to attend an attendance clinic with the Head of School, Education Welfare Officer and members of the Attendance Team. Attendance clinics are termly.

Persistent Absence

From September 2015 the government defines any child with attendance below 90% as a "persistent absentee". The school attendance team has developed rigorous procedures for monitoring lateness and absence. A pupil who has been identified with frequent absence is highlighted. Parents and carers will be requested to make an appointment with the head teacher to discuss the circumstances. The initial approach is to provide appropriate guidance and support for pupils and families, where necessary. The school Learning Mentor, home-school link worker, EWO or other professionals may be contacted, following agreement by the parents/carers.

Should families be reluctant to access support, and the pupil attendance continues to cause concern, there will be a formal referral to Education Welfare, to further address the issue.

These children and their parent/carer will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer. Support to families will be offered through the school and agencies with an overall aim of securing regular attendance, when necessary the Education Welfare officer will pursue statutory action and fixed penalty notices will be issued.

5. MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

- 5.1 The school discourages medical/dental appointments during school time. The following statement is printed in the Prospectus and in the newsletter at least once a term.

“Parents are requested to arrange non emergency, non urgent medical/dental or other appointments at the end of the school day”

6. HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

- 6.1 **In line with government policy, the school will not authorise holidays to be taken during term time.**

Please note, persistent pupil absence may be classed as a legal offence and could result in legal proceedings.

Any unauthorised absence which exceeds more than four weeks may result in a child losing his/her place in the school.

Religious Festivals

As a Catholic school we acknowledge requests for the celebration of the religious festival of Eid. In accordance with local authority guidance, the school may approve absence for the following days.

1 day for Little Eid.

2 days for Big Eid.

No further days will be approved and will be recorded as unauthorised

7. ACKNOWLEDGING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The school has introduced a series of positive strategies to promote and reward Good attendance.

- 7.1 Weekly trophies are awarded to the classes (FS/KS1 and KS2) for best attendance of the week. Staff constantly praise and offer positive encouragement to children who are regularly punctual and have good attendance.
- 7.2 Gold, silver and bronze certificates are awarded to pupils each term, for good attendance
- 7.3 All pupils achieving 100% attendance will be rewarded with a variety of prizes at the termly celebration assembly

- 7.4 The school's overall attendance figure is shared fortnightly with parents and recorded onto the newsletter
- 7.5 Attendance is referred to at every parent discussion in particular when discussing individual pupil progress and attainment
- 7.6 Improved attendance is recognised in the form of a letter to the parents
- 7.7 Attendance Team pupil representatives deliver weekly class attendance reports in the form of a traffic light system.

8. PUNCTUALITY

- 8.1 A member of staff is on duty each day, monitoring at K.S.1 and K.S.2 both supervising and encouraging children to be punctual.
- 8.2 Senior leaders monitor punctuality and attendance on a weekly basis.
- 8.3 A "Late Book" is kept in the office to record the date, time and reason for being late.
- 8.4 The Education Welfare Officer conducts termly 'late gates'

9. INFORMATION TO PARENTS

- 9.1 Information for parents is provided in a leaflet called 'Attendance Matters' which is issued annually. Copies are available in other languages, either in the main entrance, or on request. This is also shared at induction of all new pupils to the school.

This policy has been agreed following consultation with all staff and governors.

Signed:
 Executive HeadteacherDate:.....

Signed:
 Chair of Academy CommitteeDate:.....

The policy will be reviewed