

St Anne's Catholic Primary School
Washington Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 5AA

Living, Loving and Learning as Children of God

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by Committee:

Approved by FGB/IEB

December 2014

Next Review date:

November 2015

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Attendance Policy

The Governing body of St Anne's Catholic Primary School recognises that regular school attendance is essential and parents, pupils and teachers all have their part to play in ensuring this happens.

Governors and staff expect all pupils to attend school for 190 days of the academic year as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Parents/Guardians should remember this is a legal requirement.

Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We will do all we can to encourage excellent attendance by having in place appropriate procedures in keeping with the Local Authority, and continue to promote positive attitudes towards attending school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy, caring and rewarding experience for all pupils. We will acknowledge and reward children who demonstrate good attendance.

There are two types of absence:

- ***Authorised absence:***

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

- ***Unauthorised absence:***

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping or visit a theatre/cinema during school hours.

Repeated unauthorised absences

- The school will inform the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve then the school will contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

If a child is absent

- The class teacher will record an absence in the register. The office will endeavour to contact the parent if there has been no communication with the school, from the parent by phone before 9.00am. If after three days of absence, where contact has not been established, a letter will be sent to the child's home address.
- On the same day a child returns to school, a note with the date should be provided by the parent to explain the absence.
- A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence if for example a child has a medical appointment.

Requests for leave of absence

- We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best possible progress. However, there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least one week in advance.
- Leave of absence forms must be obtained from the school office and completed and signed by the head teacher indicating whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

Family holidays during term time

- In line with the changes in Government policy, the school will no longer authorise family holidays of up to 10 school days. Exceptions may be made for family emergencies, religious observances or on compassionate grounds.
- Requests for absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and only at the discretion of the head teacher or their authorised representative. All requests should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the first day of intended absence.
- In considering whether or not to authorise leave, the head teacher will consider each case individually, taking into account a child's attendance historically and the reason for the absence.
- The Local Authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised absences in term time.
- A child who is absent longer than an agreed return date, could be reported to the Educational Welfare Officer.
- **Authorisation will not be granted for any absence requested in September or May.**

Long term absence

- When children are absent from school for more than five days due to illness, parents may liaise with their child's class teacher to arrange for suitable work to be done at home to help children keep up with school work.
- If the absence is to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.
- The governors supported by the LA reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Rewards celebrating good attendance

- Children who achieve 100% attendance in any one term will receive a certificate acknowledging their success in a Praise Assembly. There are recognised certificates for children achieving 100% attendance for a whole academic year.

Attendance Targets

- The school sets attendance targets each year. The head teacher and governors agree these targets. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for the LA when setting its own targets.
- The Governing body will monitor absence targets against the National and LA targets through the Head teacher's Report.

Lateness

- School begins at 8.50am and all children are expected to be in school for prompt registration. Any child arriving later than 8.50am should enter the school via the main entrance reporting to the office accompanied by a parent/guardian or another adult over 18 years old who will sign them in. Parents should provide school with a reason for their child being late. Children arriving after 9.05am but before 9.30am will be marked as late. The register closes at 9.30am and any child arriving after this time will be marked absent for the morning session.
- Parents should be aware that when pupils are consistently late, it becomes disruptive not only for their education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action will be taken.

Removing a child from the school roll

Parents will be given due notice in writing if a child is to be removed from the school roll.

In the following circumstances, the school may delete a pupil from the school roll if the school and the LA have been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a pupil, or the child is not absent because of sickness or any unavoidable cause:

- If a child is continuously absent for 20 days or more, and the absence is unauthorised.
- If a pupil does not return to school within 10 school days following an authorised absence.
- If a child fails to return to school within 10 days of an extended leave of absence.

Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance.
- The policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if considered necessary.

Date approved: December 2014

Review date: November 2015