



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

At Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, we believe that strong links between attendance and achievement exist and if pupils miss school/learning then they may experience difficulty in catching up missed work

Effective schools must convey a positive attitude for regular attendance to parents/carers, pupils and teachers. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School is proactive in promoting regular attendance and punctuality ensuring that pupils take full advantage of the Educational Opportunities available to them.

The document defines the policies and procedures implementation of which will help to achieve the following objectives;

AIMS

- To improve attendance at school in order that we fulfil our school aim of providing the best education for the pupils according to their attainment and achievement
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure regular and punctual school attendance.
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence.
- To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
- To be aware of and to respond quickly to any problems relating to school attendance.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.

Responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that Parents/Carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of school age attend school regularly and punctually and that pupils receive an Education according to their ability. Also to ensure proper safeguarding procedures are in place for attendance.



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Pupil Registration

The schools are required to maintain two registers

- An attendance register.
- An admission register (*known as the school roll containing a list of all pupils at the school*)

Both registers are legal documents and are completed in line with school policy.

- Registers must be completed on Sims at the start of every morning and afternoon session as this is a legal requirement.
- Registers must be kept accurately as they are legal document.
- Supply teachers/other teacher's in the class should be made aware of, and follow, the same procedures.
- Class teachers take the attendance Register between 8.45am and 8.55am and 1.15pm and 1.20pm.

Absence

Only the Head teacher can decide if an absence should be authorised or not.

- Reasons for absence must be provide by parent/carers as soon as possible. A note or telephone call is required on the first day of absence and **a note is required following the return to school** after any absence that has not been planned in advance e.g. illness. The school does not have to accept the explanation offered by the parents/carers as a valid reason for absence. If a member of staff has concerns, the Head teacher must be informed straight away.
- Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that a letter covering absence is provided by the parent /carer immediately upon a pupils return. This letter will be sent to the school office to be recorded on Sims.
- The school Admin staff note telephoned reasons for absence on the Sims register.
- The register should be amended straight away.
- If a message explaining absence is not received, every effort will be made to telephone the parent /carer to confirm that the absence is genuine using our first day calling procedures.
- If there is no notification then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If after the office Admin have tried to contact the parent /carer for 2 continues days and they have had no communication. **The Head teacher will write to the parents/carers and inform them that if we do not hear from them within 3 working school days we will request that our Education Welfare Consultant visit the family residence due to Safeguarding concerns. If there are more than 10 unauthorised absences in a 7 week period, parents/carers could be liable to a penalty notice.**
- It may be necessary for parents/carers to take a pupil out of school during the day. The parents/carers must go to the school office and enter the details of the absence into the signing in / out book provided and sign in on return.



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Understanding types of absence

- Every half day (session) absence from school has to be marked in the register and given a code by the school. The absence will be either **authorised or unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If we do not receive details as to why a pupil is absent it will always be **unauthorised**. Examples of authorised absences are morning or afternoon away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or another unavoidable cause.

Medical Appointments

- Whilst we appreciate that appointments have to be taken when they are on offer parents/carers are encouraged to make them for out of school hours or during the school holidays. If this is not possible, it is best if appointments are made for 0930-1200 or after 2.00 so that the pupil can be registered for attendance at the beginning of the morning and afternoon.

Punctuality

- Late arrival to school is disruptive to pupils learning; to teaching staff and other pupils in the class. The class teacher has to stop teaching to allow the pupil to sit down at their desk. The pupil would also have a short gap in learning as the lesson would have started.
- If a pupil is late to school they can also miss quality time with the teacher, vital information and it can be embarrassing for the pupil.
- A pupil who has persistent lates could lose confidence and become anxious, the impact may contribute to either faking illness to avoid school or become a non-attender.
- Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our pupils as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.
- Any pupil, who arrives late for school after registration has been completed, must sign in the late book at the school office. This allows late attendance to be monitored and is necessary in case of a fire or emergency evacuation of the school.
- Any pupil arriving between 9.00am and 9.30am will be marked as late.
- Any pupils arriving after 9.30am will be marked as unauthorised late arrival, this counts as an absence for the whole morning session.
- Parents will be contacted by the Education Welfare Consultant when a pupil is persistently late at the beginning of the day.



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Request of Leave of Absence in Term Time

- Current Legislation does not allow any absence due to holiday during term time unless there are extenuating circumstances when it will be at the discretion of the Head teacher.
- Leave of absence in term time plays a significant part in the school's attendance figures. This is an issue not just for Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School but for all South Gloucestershire Schools.
- Any parent /carer wishing to request leave of absence in extenuating circumstances will need to apply in writing to the Head teacher 2 weeks in advance. This does not mean that the absence will be automatically authorised.
- If a parent/carer take a pupil/pupils out of school during term time and that absence is unauthorised for more than 10 sessions in a 7 school week period then this could result in the school requesting a penalty notice.
- The notice is a fine of £60 pounds per parent per child if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice; but rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days.
- The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted-details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.
- If the fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the local authority will prosecute the Parent/Carer for non – attendance of the child at school.

Education Welfare Consultant

- The school and the Education Welfare Consultant have access to the attendance records of all students and will take appropriate action when attendance is of a concern.
- The school and the Education Welfare Consultant work very closely on to monitor all pupils' attendance under 95%.
- Any students with attendance below 90% will automatically be discussed with the Education Welfare Consultant
- Where the school have identified that a pupil require EWC support a school attendance meeting is arranged to identify support strategies
- Parents/carers should be aware that any pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and where there is no improvement after intervention and support and the absence is unauthorised by the school that this may lead to prosecution .



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Promoting and celebrating good attendance

- Attendance board in main foyer showing class with best attendance.
- Certificates to be given out at end of term in celebration assembly for students with 100% and most improved attendance.
- Newsletter stating the class of the week with the highest attendance of the week.
- Class with the best weekly attendance to keep the school mascot
- Class with best attendance for the year to go on school trip.