



## SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School Attendance Policy

### Rationale

At SS Peter & Paul we are committed to providing a caring and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We are committed to providing all our pupils with a full-time education, which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her full potential in all areas of their development. We recognise that attendance is a key factor in raising attainment and it is vital that children attend school regularly in order to maximise their learning.

### Aims

- To ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and on time
- To ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key indicator of academic achievement and to ensure that learning is not lost through unnecessary absence
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in our school community
- To ensure the school supports each child on their journey in learning and faith
- To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies

### Guidelines

Attendance is monitored termly by the Curriculum and Community Committee and reported to the full governing body.

The head teacher and the SLT take responsibility for attendance by monitoring attendance weekly and identifying specific areas where poor attendance may be an issue e.g. holidays, sickness, patterns in absence.

The school works with the Education Welfare Service and may make referrals if attendance is causing concern. The Local Authority will take



appropriate legal action against parents where they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school, in accordance with the Education Welfare Service School Non-Attendance policy.

## **Procedures**

The school maintains regular contact with parents and carers wherever possible in order to maintain the focus on improving attendance and where there is a concern over attendance additional information may be requested regarding absence. For example letters from the doctor to support sickness absence or proof of travel if there is a delay back to school.

## **Strategies to improve attendance**

The school will encourage positive attitudes towards attendance by:

- Awarding a certificate or prize to all pupils with 100% per year.
- A member of the Leadership Team being available to talk to parent/carers and help support where attendance or punctuality is poor.

## **Procedures and responsibilities**

It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence.

If no contact is received from the parent/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence by 9.30am the school will make a phone call home. A phone call will be made each day until contact is made or the child returns to school. **Referral will be made to the school's EWS (Education Welfare Service) if no response is received after 10 days of absence.**

**If a child is on the child protection register or is identified as at-risk then Social Care will be informed of the unexplained absence within 24 hours.**

Where a child has unauthorised absence and no message has been forthcoming, a letter will be sent requesting a reason for absence.

Where no explanation is received, and attendance continues to cause concern, a further letter will be sent, explaining the school's concerns and also notifying the parents of the intention to contact the EWS if no message is received.

If absences are short but frequent, this will be monitored and parents contacted, either when a pattern of absence is identified (eg Monday mornings)



or when attendance falls below 93%. This monitoring will take place termly and may result in referral to the EWS if concerns persist.

Where attendance is below 93% or is falling rapidly, then parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss the issue and explore strategies to support improvement. Targets will be set for individual pupils.

The school meets regularly with the EWS and discuss pupils with poor attendance and ways in which we can support parents/carers.

The school will monitor those pupils arriving late or being picked up late. If a child arrives late or is picked up late more than three times in a term a reminder letter will be sent out to parents. If this is repeated, a final warning letter will be sent out and a meeting will be organised with the Headteacher. If this persists the EWS will be called in to support and if it is the end of the school day, Social Care may be contacted to pick up the child/children.

### **Pupil Registration**

The school will follow statutory requirements for registration of pupils.

The school day is 8.55 am - 3.15 pm.

Children not in class by 9.00am are marked late.

Children who arrive after the register is closed in the classroom will be sent to the office to be marked as late in the register.

Children arriving to school after 9.30am will be marked with 'U' as unauthorised absence.

### **Absence from school**

#### **Holidays during term time**

**Parents/carers should not take pupils on holiday during term time and NO holidays will be authorised.**

#### **Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is an authorised absence, however proof is required and the school should be notified 24 hours before the appointment unless it is an emergency. We strongly encourage that appointments are made out of school hours. If appointments are during the school day, appointments should be avoided at the beginning of the morning or



the afternoon. Proof of an appointment will be requested if a pupil has frequent appointments during the school day or where attendance is a cause for concern.

The school will keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency.

If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, the School Health Service will be notified.

### **Very Exceptional Circumstances**

It is only in very exceptional circumstances that the head teacher may grant permission for leave during term time and attendance and punctuality will be taken into account.

No absence will be granted if their attendance is below 93%.

In making a judgment about a very exceptional circumstance the school will consider each case individually. Parents/carers must be made aware of the schools policy on attendance and care taken to ensure it is fully understood and adhered to.

Any request for leave for very exceptional circumstances must be made to the Headteacher in person, by arranging an appointment to see them and must be made at least 1 month in advance except for bereavement or sudden illness and must be followed up in writing on a leave of absence form.

Exceptional Circumstances that may be considered include:

1. Absence for bereavement
2. Serious illness in the family
3. Funerals
4. Immediate family member wedding
5. Attend graduation ceremony of parent
6. Holiday with a terminally ill parent/sibling
7. Holiday with a parent returning from active duty abroad
8. Citizenship ceremony
9. Religious ceremony up to 1 day

These have been agreed by the Governing Body as a fair and accurate way of reducing and monitoring absence in school.

The maximum leave that could be considered is up to 5 days and additional leave would be classed as unauthorised and may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.



## **Other circumstances**

### **Exclusion**

A pupil excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school.

Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress.

If a permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupil's name will be removed from the school roll on the school day either: after the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion; or on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made; or, if before that, the pupil takes up a place elsewhere. Meanwhile absence should be recorded as authorised.

Teachers are responsible for setting work for an excluded pupil who remains on the school roll.

### **Penalty Notices**

In cases where the school has followed its procedures, undertaken relevant checks, identified the absence of the pupil as unauthorised, recorded it in the register as such and the pupil has a minimum of 8 unauthorised absences in the previous 10 school week period and hasn't exceeded the maximum 20 then a Penalty Notice (monetary fine) may be issued. This will also apply where a parent continually fails to provide an explanation for a pupil's unauthorised absence, or where the reasons being given are determined to be unauthorised according to the schools policy and procedures and the parent has failed to cooperate with strategies to improve their child's attendance.

November 2016

Signed on behalf of The Governing Body:

SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School

Renewal date November 2018