



# St Paulinus Catholic Primary School

*"We live in God, we walk with God, we are in God"*

(ACTS 17:28)

## Attendance Policy 2016

Signed ..... Date .....  
Chair of Governors

**Policy reviewed by Subject Managers :** Mrs. Roxanna Drake / Mrs. Christine Watt

**Policy updated by :** Miss E. Sinclair, January 2016

**Policy review date :** January 2019



# Attendance Policy

## Mission Statement

**“We live in God, we walk with God, we are in God” Acts 17:28**

The Governors and staff of St Paulinus School, Dewsbury, commit themselves to live as a community with Christ at its centre, characterised by living Gospel values within the Catholic Church.

It is our aim at St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School to provide all pupils with every opportunity for the best possible education. To enable this to happen, punctuality and good attendance are vital. At St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School we are committed to ensuring maximum attendance for all our pupils and any problems regarding punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as soon as possible. It is our policy in school to celebrate achievement. As attendance is a critical factor to the pupil's entitlement to learn, we promote and encourage good attendance for all our pupils by offering various incentives.

## **Objectives**

- To improve attendance and punctuality to at least 96% throughout the whole school.
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence.
- To reduce the amount of term time holidays taken.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication between home and school in regard to attendance.
- To liaise effectively with the Attendance & Pupil Support Service (APSS).

## **Education Act 1996**

The Education Act 1996 states that parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) receive a suitable full-time education. It is the responsibility of the LEA to ensure that parents meet these responsibilities.

Attendance enforcement is usually carried out by the LA Education Social Work Team who provide an important link between schools and families.

The school is required to inform the LA if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days and the absence is treated as unauthorised. Headteachers can, of course, notify the LA earlier if there are areas of concern.



## Data Gathering

The Attendance register is a legal document and is required to be retained for 3 years. It should be made available for inspection by an Attendance & Pupil Support Officer (APSO) or other authorised officer during school hours.

According to education regulations, the register is marked in the morning and in the afternoon. A pupil who arrives late will be marked late in the register and if they are more than five minutes late, will be placed on the list for monitoring. Absences will be marked as unauthorised unless and until authorised by the school and then the appropriate code will be entered. The Headteacher has the final decision on whether a reason for absence given by parents is justifiable and where notes are given, that they are genuine.

Registration of a child is entered in class and all data is entered onto the attendance module of Integris. This module manages attendance data and is used to analyse attendance records for individuals, groups or the whole school. The records held on Integris are transferred to the pupil's next school. Electronic attendance reports are acceptable for referrals to the APSS.

The Governing Body are informed each term in the Headteacher's report, of absence data. It is a statutory requirement that each term, Governing Bodies provide overall absence data to the Secretary of State. This is provided electronically by the School Administrator.

At the beginning of the school year the APSO, in consultation with the Headteacher, sets the targets for overall attendance and unauthorised attendance for that year.

## School Times

The school day begins at 8:40 am for Early Years and 8:45 am for KSI and KSII children. Lunchtime is from 11:45 am until 12:50 pm for KSI and 11:50 am – 12:45 pm for KSII. The school day ends at 3:05 pm for KSI and 3:10 pm for KSII.

It is important that pupils are in class ready for registration at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Lateness causes disruption to the lesson, parents/carers should make appropriate arrangements for their child when school has finished. In an emergency, and for their own safety, children may wait in reception if the collecting adult has been unavoidably detained/delayed. School must be informed as soon as possible if this is the case.

Parents are regularly reminded about school times in newsletters and the information is always on the school website.

## Authorised or Unauthorised Absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a valid reason such as illness or other unavoidable cause.

- Medical or dental appointments are treated as authorised absence, but parents should make appointments out of school wherever possible. An appointment card should be shown in all cases.
- A child will be classed as late after 8:50am. If a child arrives after the register has closed at 9:30am they are treated, for LA purposes, as an unauthorised absence for that session. Multiple lates will be flagged-up to the APSO.
- Parents should inform school of a reason for absence by telephone on the first day of absence.



Unauthorised absences are those which school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been granted.

This includes:-

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Parent sending their child to school late (after the register has closed) with no valid reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Parents taking children on holiday without prior authorisation from the Headteacher.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The School monitors the attendance of all pupils on a daily basis. If parents do not inform the school of a reason for their child’s absence by 9:30am on the first day of absence, they will be contacted by a member of staff. If telephone contact is unavailable, a text and a letter will be sent asking for an explanation. If no response is received, the child will receive an unauthorised mark against their name.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences / lateness or where the attendance drops below 90%, the school will write to the parents to invite them in to try to resolve the problem. If this is unsuccessful, the school will refer to the APSO.

It is a legal requirement that all unauthorised absences of more than 10 school days should be referred to the APSS and that any pupil with less than 90% attendance should be referred.

### **Penalty Notices**

According to Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have the power to issue a referral to the APSS team for Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

At St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School, it may be considered appropriate to issue a Penalty Notice in the following circumstances:

- truancy
- parentally-condoned absences
- holidays in term-time
- persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed).

To ensure consistent delivery of Penalty Notices the following criteria will apply:

- If the deliberate taking of a holiday in term time without / against school permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.
- If the pupil has not returned to school by an agreed date, with no satisfactory explanation
- If a previous warning of a Penalty Notice for term time holiday had been issued by school in the previous 2 years and further unauthorised holiday had been taken; this could result in fast-track prosecution under the provision of section 444, 1996 Education Act.



Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice. Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days will be £60 per parent per child and payment after that time but within 28 days is £120.

Non-payment of a Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the Notice and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of Sec 444, 1996 Education Act.

St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School and the APSS team will consider every aspect of a pupil's case before considering whether a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. This will include strategic discussions with the assigned APSO and any other attendance support staff who have involvement with or knowledge of the pupil/family. Parents must be made aware of

- The possibility of prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence.
- The possibility of a fine of up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment for non-payment of a penalty notice should the case go to court.

### **Supporting Pupils**

Where problems have been identified, St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School will endeavour to work alongside the APSO with pupils and parents to provide support and encouragement. Referrals may be made to outside agencies to offer further support for the family. Pupils are welcomed back to school after an absence and if it is necessary to discuss the absence, this is done discreetly.

### **Leave of Absence**

New Government guidance issued by the DCSF in October 2007 states that as a general rule, children should not be taken out of school for the purposes of a holiday and that time off from school for family holidays is not a right.

St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School discourages the taking of holidays during term time but realises that in some special circumstances allowances will be made.

The Headteacher will not authorise holidays for the following reasons:

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Availability of the desired accommodation.
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods and
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Close proximity to a school holiday

A condition of all requests for authorisation of holiday is that parents / carers apply in writing to the Headteacher for authorised leave at least 2 weeks prior to the holiday.

Penalty notices or warnings may be issued to parents taking their children out of school without permission, in line with the Kirklees Code of Conduct (refer to Penalty Notices.)



## Removal from Roll

Pupils will only be removed from roll when certain criteria have been met.

- The pupil has been admitted to another school and the new school has requested UPN and records and confirmed start date.
- The pupil has been permanently excluded and any parental appeal has not been upheld or the time limit for appeal has passed.
- Following notification from a parent that they intend to educate the child at home, the school will notify the LA in writing within 10 days and will then remove the pupil's name from roll.
- Where a pupil is receiving home tuition, often in the case of serious illness and it is likely that the pupil will not return to school.

## Celebration of Good Attendance and Punctuality

St. Paulinus Catholic Primary School operates a number of awards and incentives for good attendance. Each week, the class which has achieved the best attendance receives an award.

All children who have 100% attendance will receive a reward at the end of the academic year.

Details of current attendance and rewards can be found on our website: [www.stpaulinuscps.org.uk](http://www.stpaulinuscps.org.uk)

## Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed following the 3-year Policy Review Cycle of the school or when there are significant changes to the curriculum that warrant it. It may also be reviewed earlier should it no longer comply with school practice or the legal requirements of schools.

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