



Saint Joseph's
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

(Version 4.2 April 2018)

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| Success Criteria: | | | |
| Context/Aim: At St Joseph's we believe that education is the basis that underpins a positive successful adult life. The aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to attend school every day (190 days per academic year) and therefore to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and there is clear evidence that shows strong links between excellent school attendance and excellent GCSE results. | | | |
| Monitoring Procedures: | | | |
| By Whom: Governors' Pastoral and Ethos Committee | When: Annually | How: Reports to the Pastoral and Ethos Committee termly | |
| Evaluation: | | | |
| By Whom: Head teacher and the Pastoral & Ethos Governors Committee | When: Annually | How: SLT and the Pastoral and Ethos Committee to review Policy | |
| Version | Approved | Review Date | Additional Information |
| 4.2 | April 2018 | April 2019 | |
| 4.1 | March 2017 | March 2018 | None |
| 4.0 | November 2015 | November 2016 | Re-Write |
| 3.0 | January 2014 | November 2015 | - |
| 2.2 | November 2012 | November 2013 | - |
| 2.1 | November 2011 | November 2012 | - |
| 2.0 | November 2010 | November 2011 | - |

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| Key Personnel | |
| Head teacher: | The Head teacher is the only person who can authorise leave in exceptional circumstances |
| Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Link: | Mrs S McHale |
| Pastoral Manager with responsibility for attendance: | Ms M Stanistreet |
| Pastoral Support Assistant with responsibility for Attendance: | Mr C Cull |

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| Vision Statement: |
| <p>St Joseph's is a co-educational, 11-16 Catholic voluntary-aided school in the diocese of Clifton and the county of Wiltshire. Our aim is to provide a caring educational environment where each person is valued and is given the dignity due to a child of God.</p> <p>At the heart of our school is the Christian vision of the human person. We want each member of our community to grow as an individual witness to the gospel values of love, truth and justice. We want each pupil to be healthy in mind, body and spirit.</p> <p>Each member of our community should feel safe and secure in the learning environment. We aim to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility in our pupils. Everyone in our community should show respect for themselves, respect for others and respect for the environment.</p> <p>We believe that each pupil should have the opportunity to enjoy and achieve to their full potential. We are committed to praising and celebrating achievement. We want our pupils to have high expectations of themselves to understand the value of service to others and our responsibility as stewards of the</p> |

environment. Everyone has a contribution to make in helping to build the common good. We aim to equip our pupils with the ability to make good choices in their lives based on the positive relationships and values they have learned in St Joseph's.

We aim to help each of our pupils to develop morally and spiritually. We want them to achieve economic well-being while being mindful of the needs of others who are less fortunate.

We are committed to aspiring for excellence in all that we do for the sake of the Gospel.

Head teacher

National Policies and guidance/courses referred to and incorporated into SJCS Policy:

| Document/Course Title: | Document/Course Date: |
|---|---------------------------------|
| School Attendance Departmental Advice Education and Inspections Act 2006 | DfE October 2014 Section 109 |

Other SJCS Policies that relate to this Policy:

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Child Protection Policy

Responsibilities:

The school will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Attendance targets are set and communicated to pupils.
- Attendance and punctuality data is regularly reviewed.
- Concerns and issues about attendance will be discussed with parents/carers and support offered to aid attendance.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and be registered punctually.
- Inform staff if there is a problem or concern that requires support to ensure good attendance.

The Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure good attendance (97% and above).
- Inform the school by telephone on each day of absence and give a specific reason.
- Notify the school and discuss any issues that might compromise good attendance and work with the school to support their son/daughter's increased attendance.

Legal Framework

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 109) states that it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child attends school. The school will work with parents/carers to support the good attendance of their son/daughter. It remains the responsibility of the Local Authority (hereafter LA) to make sure that parents meet their responsibilities and attendance enforcement will be carried out by the LA.

Schools in England and Wales are no longer permitted to authorise absence from school for anything but the most exceptional circumstances, (e.g a funeral). No request can be considered for more than one day's authorised absence. Only the Headteacher can authorise the absence due to exceptional circumstances.

From the beginning of the academic year 2015/16, the government has reduced the persistent absence threshold from 15% to 10%. Therefore, a pupil is now considered to have persistent absence if their attendance falls below 90% (19 days of absence). Attendance will be monitored and persistent absentees and their families identified and supported. The Pastoral Officer and Pastoral Support Assistant will work closely with the appropriate member of SLT and the parents/carers to aid improved attendance.

Attendance Procedures

School Day:

- The school day begins at 8:55 – by this time, all pupils should be in their tutor group.
- Students will be registered by their form tutors.
- Students that arrive later than 8:55 will be registered by the Pastoral Team as LATE.
- Lateness will be recorded by the Pastoral Team. Persistent lateness will result in both a sanction for the pupil and a discussion with the parent.
- Two late arrivals in one week will result in a Friday lunchtime detention.

- Afternoon registration takes place at 1:35 and all pupils should be punctual for this.

Authorised Absences

It is a legal requirement that when pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school in the following circumstances:

- **Medical/Dental Appointments**: we ask that when possible, medical and dental appointments are made outside of the school day. When this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents/carers should send in a note advising of the appointment before, or if this is not possible, on the day of the appointment.
- **Illness**: Parents/carers are asked to telephone the school before the end of Registration (09:05) on **every day** of the child's absence. For minor ailments, such as colds or headaches, parents/carers should administer the usual pain relief and encourage the pupil to come to school. It should be remembered that schools are unable to issue pain relief.
If a pupil is unable to attend due to illness, a written note is expected from the parent/carer on the first day of their return to school and should be given to Reception.
- A child that is suffering from a long term illness (eg ME) is expected to attend as much as possible and will be supported by the school with the provision of learning materials and an individualised timetable if necessary. This will be provided only after discussion with the parent/carer, with the support of medical evidence (eg a doctor's note). Collaboration with county for special needs medical cases.
- **Other authorised circumstances**: Absence from school during term time can only be authorised for exceptional circumstances, such as the wedding or funeral of a close relative. A close relative is defined by the school as a parent/carer, brother, sister or grandparent. An authorised absence will not be for more than one day, and the Head teacher is the only person who can authorise leave in exceptional circumstances. St Joseph's **will not** authorise absences for a family holiday during term time, in accordance with the expectation of the Department for Education.

Safeguarding

Our commitment to the safeguarding of our pupils is paramount and as such, the following procedures will apply:

- If a student has not been registered in the morning and no notification of absence has been received, a text will be sent to the parent/carer after close of Registration.
- If the parent/carer does not respond by 09:45, the notification of absence will be escalated to the Pastoral Support Assistant who will then call to discuss the absence with the parent/carer.
- SLT will be notified if no discussion has been able to take place and appropriate action will be taken.

Unauthorised Absences

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

- St Joseph's has not given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent.

- St Joseph's does not accept a given explanation as satisfactory justification for absence.
- No explanation of absence is received during two weeks.
- St Joseph's, working with the Education Welfare Officer, will support the imposition of Penalty Notices in cases of persistent unauthorised absence .
- Parents/carers will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and will have 15 days to ensure an improvement in attendance or punctuality. Failure to ensure improvement will lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice.
- Penalty Notices are issued by the court office to the family home. The fine for unauthorised absence currently stands at £120 per parent, per child. Non-payment of the Penalty within the 28 day time limit will trigger the prosecution process under the Provisions of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Intervention and Support

The Pastoral Manager and Pastoral Support Assistant work closely with the Education Welfare Officer and the Local Authority. Regular attendance reports will be collated and discussed with the EWO, with particular reference to pupils not achieving 90% or above. Monthly attendance reports will be shared with SLT. Once a child is identified as achieving under 95% attendance, the following steps will be put in place in order to support the attendance and learning of the pupil:

- School Attendance Meetings will be held by the Pastoral Manager and an invitation will be issued to the parent/carer. Meetings will aim to identify and resolve any issues that result in poor attendance, for example extra support in a lesson, or support in resolving organisational issues.
- There will be an Initial Meeting and two reviews, and if no improvement has been noted, then the EWO and LA will become involved.

At St Joseph's, we are rightly proud of our excellent support and intervention programme and we will work hard with parents/carers and the LA in order to support pupils access the best possible learning outcomes.

Attendance Expectations

At St Joseph's, we recognise that all stakeholders are working together for the best possible outcomes of the young people that attend our school. Working together, we can achieve and exceed expectation with regard to both learning and attendance:

Parents/Carers will:

- Talk to their child about school, taking an active interest in the learning that takes place and their progress.
- Contact the school if their child is absent on each day of absence stating a reason.
- Avoid unnecessary absences for medical/dental appointments.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance/learning.
- Approach the tutor as first point of contact if they become aware their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Ensure the school has accurate/current contact details.

Form Tutors will:

- Have the responsibility of registering pupils' attendance at the beginning of the morning session.
- Ensure that the registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form and maintain positive relationships with parents and pupils to support the pupil in all aspects of their school life, including attendance.
- Contribute to the whole school approach which reinforces whole school attendance.

All teachers will:

- Ensure that registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Take the register as soon as possible at the beginning of the lesson.
- Inform Reception of any pupils marked as present and not in the lesson (without prior arrangement).

The Head of House will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Build on positive relationships with parents and pupils to support the pupil in all aspects of their school life, including attendance.
- Contribute to the whole school approach which reinforces whole school attendance.
- Co-ordinate support for pupils returning after a period of absence, and request work for students unable to attend due to an authorised absence.
- Act on information given by the Pastoral Manager regarding absence or patterns of absence for individuals within the House.

The Pastoral Manager and Pastoral Support Assistant will:

- Monitor attendance both weekly and monthly and share the information with the Education Welfare Officer and SLT regularly.
- Support the improved attendance of pupils below 95% by working with the pupil, parents/carers, teachers and any other appropriate agencies.
- Investigate reasons for attendance of 90-95% and initiate meetings resulting in support strategies for each pupil in this category.
- Inform tutors, Heads of Houses and teachers of any difficulties experienced by the pupil as appropriate.
- Work with the pupil, their family and the EWO should attendance fall below 90%.
- Working closely with Pupil Premium Co-ordinator, Senior Leader for Behaviour and Assistant Headteachers for Keys Stage 3 & 4.

The SLT Link will:

- Liaise with the Pastoral Manager in order to support strategies put in place for individual students.
- Monitor attendance monthly and termly at both 95% and 90% and ensure all pupils have the opportunity to attend, enjoy and achieve in their learning.
- Consistently promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.

- Work closely with the Assistant Head teachers responsible for KS3 and KS4 to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils, including those with barriers to 100% attendance.
- Feedback to SLT and the Governing Body the attendance statistics for the whole school and various sub-groups (e.g. disadvantaged learners).

The Head teacher and Pastoral and Ethos Committee (of the Governors) will:

- Ensure all stakeholders are working together in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for all St Joseph's pupils.
- Monitor all attendance across year groups across each term.
- Discuss and support strategies across school to aid further improved attendance.

Consultation and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. In school, staff will be engaged in discussion about the policy and its values. The views of parents, staff and governors regarding the content or operation of this policy should be submitted to the Head teacher.

All pupils and parents will be reminded of the need for exemplary attendance and the steps that will be taken to support pupils with low attendance or additional needs to access education.

The school will remind pupils that their needs as an individual will always be balanced against the common good and the welfare of the pupils and others in the school.