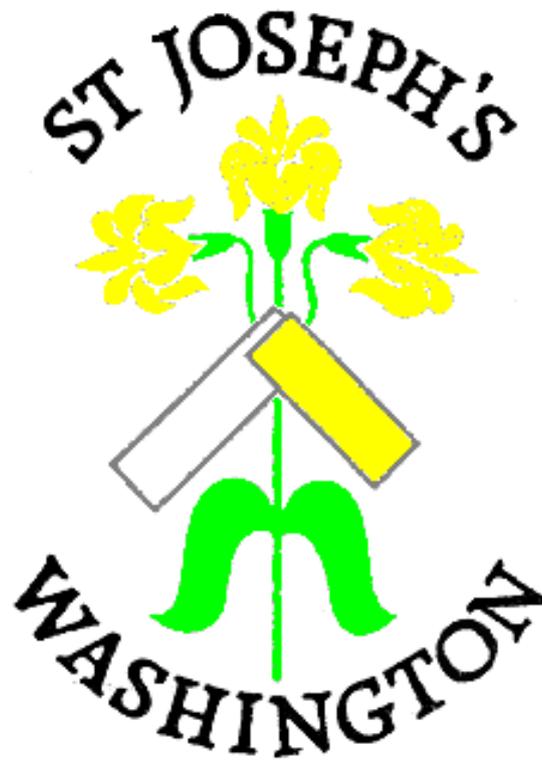


St Joseph's RC Primary Policy



WASHINGTON ST JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction:

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with their yearly school report.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Promote and reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, rewards and outings/events.

Understanding Types of Absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark;
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- day trips and holidays taken in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem. We can use outside agencies to help with this such as the School Nurse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's full support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully and we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan which may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse or the Authority Attendance Office. We may also use circle time, nurture intervention, individual incentive programmes or individual targets around raising attendance.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parent or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Long-term Absence:

Where children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so they can keep up with their school work.

Attendance Targets:

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the Head teacher with governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

Absence Procedures:**If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us before 9.30am on the first day of absence, giving a reason for the absence;
- Or you can call into school and report to the School Office.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the LA attendance team if attendance moves below 85% and shows no signs of improving.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.55am and we expect our children to be in the playground by 8:50am ready to enter school when the doors open.

Registers are marked by 9.00am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 9.30am registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head teacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach the school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and by celebrating good class punctuality.

People Responsible for this policy and its implementation:

Head teacher and the Governing Body

Appendix:

Indication of attendance performance:

98%+ Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of your child’s progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.

95% + Average – Well done, strive to build on this.

90-94% Unsatisfactory – Absence is now likely to be affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with school to improve the situation.

Below 90% Unacceptable – Absence is causing serious concern and will undoubtedly be affecting attainment and progress. An action plan will be put in place to improve your child’s attendance.