



SS Peter & Paul's Catholic Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Diocese of Brentwood

London Borough of Redbridge

SS PETER & PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Mission Statement

**We show our love for God in the way we treat each other.
Together we follow Jesus, by learning and sharing our gifts.**

Aims and Objectives of this policy

Regular attendance and punctuality are top priorities with staff and Governors at SS Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary School.

We aim to improve on the Government's target of 95% punctual attendance for all pupils. We realised that for our pupils to achieve a good standard of academic and social success in school they need to attend school on a regular basis. We also understand that we need to work closely with our families and outside agencies in order that our policy is successful.

The Law

A child of compulsory school age who is registered at the school must by law attend regularly. Only schools can authorise the absence of a registered child.

(Education Act 1996, Section 444 as amended by Section 82 and 109 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006)

Refer to Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities

Families of Pupils at SS Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary School should:

- Ensure their children arrive at school on time for 8.55am, appropriately dressed and ready to learn.
- ensure that their children attend every day unless they are unwell or have another authorised absence
- ensure that the school is notified if their child is absent or is about to be absent from school and give reasons for this. This should be done on the morning of the first day of absence before 10am and every day thereafter
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours where possible
- not take term time holidays
- work in partnership with the school to resolve issues that may lead to non attendance

The role of all school staff and Governors:

- make every effort to maximise attendance rates
- support parents in ensuring regular and punctual attendance of pupils and respond to any issue that may lead to non-attendance
- be sensitive to the needs of individual parents and this should be reflected in the way in which attendance issues are addressed
- make it clear to parents that it is the school, not the parent, that authorises an absence
- consider attendance and punctuality from a whole school perspective. The link between attendance and achievement will be monitored
- publish information relating to levels of absence, both authorised and unauthorised
- to report any concerns regarding female genital mutilation to police and social care in line with the school's mandatory duty
- to prevent radicalisation, protecting children from radicalisation forms part of the school's safeguarding policy

The role of the class teacher:

- complete registers electronically by 9am
- to identify pupils who have poor attendance and to look for any trends in non-attendance
- to liaise with the Attendance Officer when there are concerns regarding attendance of pupils
- any messages are recorded on the electronic register
- raffle tickets are given out on a Friday for 100% attendance
- the attendance chart is completed daily and other incentives followed
- the weekly attendance percentage is displayed on the classroom door
- to liaise with families in the playground through direction from the Attendance Officer
- include in each pupil's annual report to his/her parent/carer information relating to the number of absences that the pupil has accrued during that school year. The school may also comment on levels of authorised absence where these are considered to be a cause for concern
- to discuss the impact of low attendance on learning with families at consolation meetings where appropriate
- reward good attendance

The role of the Attendance Officer:

- Maintain registers, taken twice each day. All registers are electronically recorded and are available for the Education Welfare Officer and for use in Child protection cases.
- To contact families who fail to notify the school of their child's absence on the first day of absence and every day thereafter, this includes families of Nursery pupils.
- A record is kept of each pupil who arrives late and the reason noted.
- Will notify the EWO/Headteacher of any concerns
- To liaise closely with the school EWO who visits regularly.
- To contact the EWO by telephone, where there are significant on-going concerns.
- To give weekly attendance data to the Headteacher for monitoring purposes and updating the school newsletter.
- To notify the safeguarding team of absences of vulnerable pupils on a daily basis.
- To provide half termly attendance lists to all class teachers for monitoring purposes.
- To produce weekly class certificates for celebration of attendance in whole school assembly.
- To send out letters each term to families whose children's attendance falls below 95%.
- Proforma letters are sent to families whose child has had an unauthorised absence or persistent lateness.
- Record and monitor lateness.
- All significant absences are followed up by the Parent Support Adviser of the EWO, either by visit or letter.
- Complete any attendance data required by the LA.

The role of the Governing Body:

- The policy is reviewed annually.
- Attendance and punctuality is a school priority.
- Appoint an Attendance Lead who will monitor attendance in the school regularly.

The role of the Headteacher:

- Inform families at school induction meetings of the importance of regular punctual attendance.
- Inform families in the school prospectus of the need to attend regularly and of the requirement to contact the school by letter in the case of previously known absences and by telephoning by 10am before the start of school for other absences.
- Grant leave during term time in accordance with the principles and procedures outlined in this policy.
- Ensure that school procedures follow local authority guidance and policies.
- Ensure the facility to leave messages on the school voicemail system from 7.30am onwards.
- Reward good attendance.
- Ensure that all staff are trained on Safeguarding, the Prevent Strategy and other relevant training to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

The role of the Education Welfare Advisory Service (EWASS) :

- The school education welfare advisor will liaise with the LA and enforce attendance where necessary.
- The Education service works closely with SS Peter and Paul's. We have an allocated Education Welfare Officer who visits the school every fortnight.
- The EWO will identify pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties; this will include regular examination of attendance registers.
- The EWO will agree on a focused, time-limited action that needs to be taken by the school and/or the Education Welfare Service (before accepting a referral the school will have first undertaken some preliminary work themselves)

Refer to Appendix B

Absence procedures Authorised Absence

Absence will be treated as authorised if:

- The pupil is absent with authorised leave (defined as 'leave granted by the Governing Body or the Headteacher')
- If the pupil is ill (medical evidence required for 4 days or more) or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause.
- The pupil is attending a medical/dental appointment that cannot be arranged outside school hours.
- The absence occurs on a day set aside for religious observance; if extended days are taken these will be unauthorised and liaison may be necessary with faith leaders from the Redbridge Faith Forum.
- The pupil is attending an interview for a place at another school.
- The pupil is performing in an approved public performance or sporting activity which is not deemed detrimental to the child's education.
- The pupil has been temporarily excluded from the school.

Refer to Appendix C for more guidance

The school does not grant leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday.

Unauthorised absence

Absence will be treated as unauthorised if;

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil is absent for an unexpected special occasion.
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday.

The Policy on leave

'Leave' in relation to a school means leave granted by any person authorised to do so (the Headteacher/Governing Body).

The Headteacher will only consider authorising an absence during term time where an application has been made in advance by completing a **Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time form** and where she is satisfied there are the most exceptional of circumstances. Requests will not be granted for the purpose of a holiday and will not normally be granted for more than 3 days per school year for any pupil. (As advised in the Redbridge Attendance Policy) **Refer to Appendix C**

Child Missing from Education

Failure for parents/carers to contact the school where a child is missing education will result in a referral to the local authority for investigation.

Punctuality

We insist on punctuality at school as we want to support the development of good timekeeping habits. Persistent lateness does not constitute full school attendance (Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996). The school day begins at 8.55am and pupils are required to be in school by then. The morning Register is closed at 9.10.am. Children arriving after the opening of the register up to and including the 30th minute will be marked as being 'late' and those arriving after the 31st minute (9.26am) will receive an unauthorised absence. All pupils arriving late have to sign in. A penalty notice for persistent lateness can be requested by the Headteacher. Both the school and the EWO monitor punctuality. The EWO may undertake a 'late gate' with the agreement of the Headteacher.

Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration for Late Arrivals

- Adverse weather and /or travel conditions.
- Delay by a school bus/local authority.

Appendices A,B,C,D

This policy should be read in connection with the Redbridge Attendance Strategy and Department for Education school attendance guidelines.

And in conjunction with 'Keeping children safe in education, Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges September 2016.

This policy has been agreed by:

.....Date: April 2017
Mrs Susan Johnson Headteacher

.....Date: April 2017
Ms Sarah Ramsay, Chair of Governors

Policy to be reviewed: Autumn 2018

Appendix A

Education Act 1996, Section 444 as amended by Section 82 and 109 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 444 Offence: failure to secure regular attendance of registered pupil

(1) If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence.

(1a) If the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that the child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause the child to do so, he/she is guilty of an offence.

(1b) It is a defence for the person charged with an offence under subsection (1a) to prove that there was a reasonable justification for their failure to cause the child to attend regularly at school.

(2) Subsections (2a) to (6) below apply in proceedings for an offence under this section in respect of a child who is not a boarder at the school at which they are a registered pupil.

(2a) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school by reason of the absence from the school at any time if the parent/carer proves that at the time the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause.

(3) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school by reason of their absence from the school. (a) with leave, or (b) any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.

Appendix B Role of the Education Welfare Advisory Service (EWASS)

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to enforce regular attendance of registered pupils at school, which is carried out by the EWS working with schools. Data on attendance is collected termly by research and Data Team and it is the responsibility of the EWS to audit pupils who fall below target levels.

The work of the service can be broadly divided into three categories.

Strategic Policy

- Analysing borough wide data and identifying trends and areas of action and need.
- Developing policy initiatives and ensuring co-ordination and consistency across the borough.
- Liaising with the DFE and other external bodies to ensure that government initiatives and best practice exemplars are communicated to schools.
- Developing a strategic role that encourages a consistent approach between nursery, primary and secondary levels.

School Action

- Working closely with schools to analyse school level data and trends.
- Devising action plans with heads to meet the specific need of individual schools by, for example contributing to school assemblies, attending parents' evenings and undertaking late gates.
- Monitoring action taken by schools to improve attendance and reviewing school targets at half termly intervals.
- Ensuring effective and regular liaison between the EWS, school management teams and other key agencies or organisations.

Direct Intervention with Pupils and/or Parents and Carers

Providing direct intervention with pupils who fall below target levels of attendance and devising strategies to improve their attendance in partnership with schools.

Ensuring that borough and school policies on attendance are implemented appropriately in each individual case including the use of legal action against the parents where they are failing to fulfil their child's regular school attendance.

Working closely with schools at transition stages to ensure that identified vulnerable children are provided with all possible support to reduce the likelihood of increased non-attendance, where necessary working and liaising with partner agencies.

Appendix C

Exceptional Circumstances and most exceptional circumstances for Leave

- The Headteacher cannot forego his/her discretionary powers, however the following will be considered for leave.
- The death of a close family member.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the L.A. The EWS will advise schools on individual circumstances.
- Time off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, which is subject to a licence being issued by the EWS.
- Religious observance subject to a maximum number of 3 days. Pilgrimages (for example, Lourdes, Mecca, Rome, Jerusalem) are not religious observance that require absence during school term time.

Specific Circumstances not included on the List.

- Illness of a relative- leave will not be granted for the illness of a relative unless the Headteacher is convinced that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Prison visits- most prison visits can be achieved during weekends and holidays, but there may be exceptions when a parent is held in a prison a long way from home and when a Headteacher believes there is a justification to grant a day's leave.
- Weddings of parent and siblings-if the Headteacher is convinced that there is a persuasive reason as to why a wedding cannot be held out of school time, 1 day's leave will be granted.

Where the Headteacher is exercising discretion, a maximum number of 3 days is permitted.

Appendix D Rewards & Incentives for Punctuality and Regular Attendance

1. Weekly recognition-during assembly, all those classes who have good attendance have their attendance percentage read out in reverse order until the weekly attendance winners are arrived at. The winning class is rewarded by receiving a certificate for display on the classroom door. Any class achieving 100% is awarded a cup for the week.
2. Attendance Posters and stickers are displayed on classroom doors.
3. At the end of half term all the children whose attendance is 97% or higher, receives a badge.
4. Children who achieve 100% receive a special certificate and badge in a special assembly. Termly recognition-the class with the best attendance in each Key Stage win a sum of money for class council to spend on the class.
5. Children who have 100% attendance and punctuality for a week are given a token on a Friday. This enables them to enter a half termly raffle in which they can win a special prize.

SS Peter & Paul's Catholic Primary School

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Pupils attend school for a maximum 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The school regards absences as a very serious concern and there is an overwhelming connection between those students who are frequently absent and those who go on to underachieve in their learning, and in tests and exams later in life. Leave taken without permission will be recorded as unauthorised and you can be liable to a Penalty Notice resulting in a £120 fine per child per parent. Extended leave may result in your child being removed from the school roll.

(Please complete one form for each child)

Pupil's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Class _____

Name of Parent/Carer _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

Daytime Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact Number /mobile: _____

Reasons for absence: **(evidence must be provided, see below)**

Date of absence from _____ to _____ Inclusive

Number of days requested _____

Previous number of leave of absence days taken: (if none please state) _____

I have read and understood all the above information and understand that taking an unauthorised absence without permission can lead to the following sanctions: Fixed Penalty Notice (there is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice); removing the child from the school roll; Prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer)

Date: _____

***ALL SECTIONS MUST BE FULLY COMPLETED AND ACCOMPANYING EVIDENCE/ DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED BEFORE THE SCHOOL WILL CONSIDER YOUR REQUEST**

Evidence required:

- Medical documents
- Flight details (to include the date of booking)
- Return flight details (to include the date of booking)
- Copy of death certificate if applicable