



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bingley



Attendance Policy

Our Vision

'Learning with Jesus, to be the best we can be'

Our Mission

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations" Mtt 28: 19

-  We aim to grow in knowledge and friendship with God
-  We, the governors, the Headteacher and the staff will uphold the Catholic Values of our school life
-  We will feel compassion for others in difficulties
-  We aim for a welcoming, Christian atmosphere
-  We live our lives according to Gospel values, following the examples of the Saints
-  We will achieve the best we can academically, spiritually and in everything we do
-  We will work in partnership with our families, our parish, other schools and our diocese to create a community of faith
-  We welcome other faiths working in harmony with Catholic traditions
-  We will deliver a high standard of Religious Education which will be reflected in all of our teaching
-  Prayer and Collective Worship will be at the heart of our school life and we will enjoy regular visits from our parish priest who leads us in our spiritual development
-  We will care for our world and everything in it

Date written: May 2015

Reviewed: June 2017



1 Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or go on holiday early, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence if they have not already informed the office.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

A parent/ guardian must inform the office rather than a sibling.

Absences of more than three days of children on the child protection register will be reported to the designated social worker.



4 Requests for leave of absence

The Governors of St Joseph's and Bradford Council expect all parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment. Amendments made to Education (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006) remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days.

The amendments make it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This does not include holidays. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school may have to pay a Penalty Fine of £60 (per parent, per child) issued by Bradford Council, if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days. The Governing Body will not authorise any holidays during term time. Leave of absence will only be granted if there are **exceptional circumstances**. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. If you wish to apply for a leave of absence, then you must do so in writing, directing your request to Mr John Shaw, Chair of Governors. Please do this *well before* you make any arrangements/ book time away.

5 Long-term absence

When 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 that they can keep up with their school work, if the child is well enough to complete it.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

The attendance officer will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences and their absence rate falls below 95%, the parents or guardians will be asked to discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, or the absence rate falls below 90%, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

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

7 Rewards for good attendance

All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. They will receive a special badge and a 'treat' from the Headteacher.

Each week, the class with the best attendance will receive the 'Attendance Cup' and extra minutes playtime. The children may wish to 'bank' these extra minutes over the year and go to the park in the summer for an afternoon if they wish.



8 Attendance targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. 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.

9 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the attendance officer immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the attendance officer or the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Signed:

Date: May 2015