

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

We learn to love everyone as Jesus loves us.

Attendance and Leave of Absence Policy.

Introduction:

At Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we recognise that attending school regularly has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for children. We will encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which pupils feel valued and part of the school community.

DfE guidance states that all schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance which should be set out in an attendance policy. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstances of the school. This Policy incorporates the Leave in Term Time Policy.

Rationale

This Policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of pupil attendance at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School.

Aims:

Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance to maximise the potential of every child.

Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.

Support whole school attendance levels by ensuring that persistent absence is no more than the national average, that attendance is at least in line with the national average and identify pupils persistently absent from school (10% or more absence).

Identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence and punctuality is a cause for concern by identifying main causes for this and taking action to address and support them and their families to improve individual punctuality and attendance.

Track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We will develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for parents and carers, pupils, school staff and governors to complement this policy, and identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This procedural framework will include guidance on:

Registration

Punctuality

What constitutes unauthorised absence

Leave of absence

Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual pupils

Systems for dealing with absence

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance and Punctuality.

Parents must:

Ensure their child/ren arrive at school on time.

Provide reason for lateness.

Contact school on first day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance.

Update the school if the absence is expected to continue.

Parents may be asked to provide medical verification during or following a pupil's absence.

Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance and or punctuality.

Make a request for Leave of Absence in advance.

Leave of Absence

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools cannot authorise any leave other than in exceptional circumstances. In Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary, the Headteacher is the person authorised by the governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings. Leave of absence shall not be granted unless a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Additional information regarding leave of absence is included within the procedural framework.

Religious Absence

The school will authorise one day 'leave' per religious festival, e.g. Eid, but no more than 3 days in any one academic year. Parents must request this leave in advance.

Use of Penalty Notices

All parents/carers will receive information regarding Leave of Absence and can request a copy of this Leave of Absence Policy which forms part of the school attendance policy and procedures. If the leave of absence is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'O' this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised. Where a pupil is absent from school without permission of the school they may refer the matter to Legal Services. As a result, parent/carers of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days, the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority may commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

Minutes Late.

The school day begins at 8.45am. The afternoon session begins at 1.00pm. The doors to school are closed at these times to ensure the safety of all and late arrivals should report to the main reception and record reason for lateness. Punctuality is monitored and pupils who arrive 30 minutes late will be given a "U" in recognition they are in school but registers have closed.

Parents whose child(ren) is/ are persistently arriving after these times will be invited into school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with Education Welfare Service and consideration given to issuing a Penalty Notice. {See above.}

Partnership Working

At Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School, we will work with the Educational Welfare Support Team and other support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School will use electronic systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

Persistent Absence

The minimum attendance level which is expected of all primary aged pupils nationally is 96%. At Our Lady`s we aim for 97%. When attendance falls below this level as a school we will consider whether it is appropriate to offer support in order to improve the situation. Both local and central government pay particular attention to reducing the number of pupils who fall into the persistent absence category (PA). A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance falls below 90% at any point during the school year; whether the absences are authorised or unauthorised. When attendance nears this level children miss significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is put at risk. We need parent`s full support in ensuring that attendance does not reach this level. However, if for any reason a child`s attendance does fall into this category parents will be asked to do all they can improve the situation. Families will be supported in this by the school. Due to the seriousness of PA status it is highly likely that such cases will be referred to a local authority attendance team. Furthermore, absence data for individual pupils who are classed as persistent absentees are reported to the Department for Education annually; along with whole school absence figures.

Approved by:

Chair of Governors.

Date:

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