



## Attendance Policy



At St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School we are committed to giving every child the best possible chance to develop their potential fully. Good, regular and punctual attendance is crucial in ensuring that every child makes consistently good progress. We need to work with parents to ensure that all children attend school fully.

In recent years a lot of research has been carried out into the importance of good attendance in schools and the effect that both good and poor attendance can have on children's attainment and their future life chances.

### **Some Facts and Figures**

The legal requirement for children to attend school is for 190 days. Below is a chart which clarifies percentages and what they equate to in terms of days.

- 10 days absence = 95% attendance
- 19 days absence = 90% attendance
- 29 days absence = 85% attendance
- 38 days absence = 80% attendance
- 47 days absence = 75% attendance
  
- 90% absence equates to a child having half a day off a week.
- 80% absence equates to a child having one day of a week. They will have missed one fifth of their educational entitlement.

If children develop a pattern of poor attendance during their primary education it has been found that this increases when they move into secondary education. Research has identified clear links between attendance and attainment.

Children with over 90% attendance are more likely to gain 5 A\* - grade C GCSEs  
Children with less than 85% attendance are unlikely to gain 5 A\* - C grade GCSEs.

Being frequently late for school also adds up to a lot of lost learning:

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to 3 days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks in a year.
- Arriving 30 minutes late is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

### **Every school day counts towards your child's future.**

Schools are expected to monitor pupil attendance regularly. At St.Catherine's we expect a minimum **attendance of 95%** from all children and will work with families to make this possible. Amendments to the 2006 statutory regulations make clear that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

## **Exceptional Circumstances:**

The following situations might be considered as exceptional circumstances:

- Religious observance
- To attend a family wedding
- A family bereavement
- For educational purposes (such as fixed exams)
- Other exceptional family circumstances
- Holidays for members of the armed forces

It is the responsibility of parents to contact the school in writing when requesting time off for their children so that each case can be considered on an individual basis. When possible, evidence such as appointment letters should be included with the letter to the Headteacher.

## **Responsibilities for Parents and Carers**

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular and punctual attendance is encouraged by:

- Ensuring that their child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn (i.e. not too tired or hungry.)
- Work in partnership with the school to encourage their child to see the importance of attending school regularly and time keeping as a life skill.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies to resolve issues of non-attendance.
- Notify the school if their child is absent.
- Not taking children away on holiday during term time.

## **Appointments**

We ask that every effort is made to arrange appointments outside the school day. When collecting your child, please bring a copy of the appointment card or letter to the school office. This will then be copied and attached to the school attendance folder.

## **The School Day**

Our school day begins at 8:30am. All children are asked to assemble on the school playground from 8:20am. Registers are marked on entry to the children's classes and learning for the day begins directly after registration. Registers are closed at 8:40am.

Children who are not present for registration are marked as absent. If they arrive after registration they are marked as late. Parents are asked to notify the school office as early as possible if children are unable to attend. Parents will be contacted by the school office to clarify the reason for the child's absence by 10:00am on the first day of absence if the school has not been notified in advance.

## **Monitoring Attendance**

The school uses a range of strategies to monitor attendance:

- Daily attendance registers are kept
- A late attendance register is kept
- Attendances are recorded on the Sims Pupil Program
- Weekly percentage figures for each class are noted (authorised and unauthorised absences)
- Attendance records will be issued to parents where attendance falls below 95%.
- If a child's attendance falls below 90% it will be registered as Persistent Absence.

- In the event of continued low attendance families would be referred to the Attendance team at Dorset County Council.

### **Penalty Notices**

Penalty notices have existed for a number of years and are issued by the Local Authority. They are issued in extreme cases of poor attendance and the school will have been attempting to work with a family to improve attendance well before a penalty notice is issued.\*

\* For further information please refer to the document 'School attendance. Statutory guidance and departmental advice. August 2013' available from the DfE website.

This policy was written in 2013

Reviewed Dec 2016

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