

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through Faith, Hope, Love

At St Joseph's, we strive for academic excellence through encouraging resilience, empathy, aspiration and challenge. We have high expectations for ALL so that we can be 'The best we can be.' With Faith, Hope and Love at the heart of our school family, our children feel safe, secure and supported.



## Attendance Policy

Our ethos is one that nurtures education through recognition and celebration of all children's experiences and achievements, whatever the context. Each child is unique and made in the likeness of God. Every child should succeed at their own level and be praised for this success

**Subject Leader:** W D'Arcy  
**Link Governor:** Gabriella Tiley  
**Approved by FGB:** 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019  
**Review Date:** September 2022

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Catholicity**

Our ethos is one, which nurtures education through the recognition and celebration of all children's experiences and achievements, whatever the context.

Each child is an individual and deserves to be respected and valued as such. Every child is unique and made in the likeness of God. Every child should succeed at their own level and be praised for this success.

### **1.2 Good attendance**

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we want to ensure that pupils take advantage of all the opportunities on offer at the school; it is therefore essential that children attend every day they can.

Good attendance is important because statistics show a direct link between underachievement and poor attendance. Regular attenders:

- Make better progress, both socially and academically,
- Find school routine and school work easier to cope with,
- Find learning more satisfying,
- Have an easier transfer to secondary school.

## **2. Responsibilities**

### **2.1 Introduction**

It is recognised that responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality is a partnership between all staff, governors, parents and carers and the pupil. The following sections explain each partner's responsibilities.

### **2.2 Headteacher**

The Headteacher will:

- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Be responsible for authorising approved absence.
- Ensure effective procedures are in place for recording and monitoring attendance.
- Analyse attendance data and report this, and any issues, to Governors three times a year.
- Oversee attendance procedures.
- Follow-up higher levels of absence, as identified in data, by meeting with the pupil's parent/carer.

### **2.3 Governors**

The governors will:

- with the Headteacher, monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures annually, addressing any issues that may arise;
- in consultation with the Headteacher, work with families towards achieving 100% attendance.

### **2.4 School staff**

The school staff will:

- implement consistently the procedures laid out in this policy;
- maintain accurate records e.g. data returns, class registers and absence books;
- monitor attendance and follow-up unexplained absence by phone call before 10:00 am on the first day of absence;
- remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school prospectus and home-school agreement;
- publish each child's attendance rate in his/her annual school report;
- acknowledge good attendance by awarding 'full attendance' certificates at the end of each year;
- collect and publish attendance data each year;
- contact parents if there is a concern regarding a child's attendance.

### **2.5 Parents and carers**

Parents and carers should:

- in accordance with the Home – School Agreement, make sure their child attends school regularly, arriving in time for the start of the school day. School times are published on the school website at: [http://www.st-josephs-nymphsfield.com/website/school\\_organisation/356797/](http://www.st-josephs-nymphsfield.com/website/school_organisation/356797/) ;
- let the school know by telephone before 10:00 am on the first day of absence, why their child is absent and when they are expected to return;
- support the school by not taking their child on holiday during term-time and by arranging dental or doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school holidays;
- keep the school updated if their child has an extended period of absence due to illness.

### **2.6 Pupils**

Pupils should arrive at school promptly and on time, so that they are in class before Registration commences. This will ensure there is no loss of learning or disruption to classroom activities.

### **3. Registration**

#### **3.1 School Day**

The school day, is published on our school website at: [http://www.st-josephs-nympsfield.com/website/school\\_organisation/356797/](http://www.st-josephs-nympsfield.com/website/school_organisation/356797/)

The school doors are open at 8:40 am, so that children are settled and ready to start the school day on time.

Children should be in their classroom in time for registration at 8:50 am and should be collected promptly at 3:15 pm unless they are attending an after-school activity, or the Out of School Club. If a child has not been collected by 3:25 pm, a member of staff will take them to the Out of School Club and parents/carers will be required to pay the appropriate fee.

#### **3.2 Registration Procedure**

The school is required to keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll.

The class teacher will call the register twice a day, between 8:50 am – 9:05 am for the morning session and 1:20 pm – 1:25 pm for the afternoon session.

At the end of each week, totals for present/authorised absence/unauthorised absence are completed.

The codes\* used in attendance registers are explained below:

##### **Unauthorised absences (in red circle)**

**O** unauthorised absence not covered by any other code

**G** family holiday not agreed or days in excess

**U** Late after registration closes

##### **Approved Educational Activities**

**P** Approved sporting activity

**V** Educational visit

##### **Authorised absences**

**B** educated off-site

**M** medical/dental appointments

**I** illness

**R** day of religious observance

**T** traveller absence

**E** excluded (no alternative provision made)

**H** Holiday for exceptional circumstances

**C** other authorised absence. Exceptional circumstances (used sparingly).

**Lateness**

**L** before registers close

\* For further guidance please refer to 'Absence & Attendance Codes' – in the office. Absence notes, telephone messages and emails will be kept in the class Absence Envelope and kept in the Register wallet at all times.

**3.3 Lateness**

Punctuality is a good habit to develop. Therefore, parents are urged to make every effort to ensure that their child is punctual. Class teachers will contact parents should there be any concerns regarding lateness.

Lateness makes for a difficult start to the day and children may miss important messages, guided reading and valuable learning time.

The main entrance door and security gate are closed at 8:50 am therefore children arriving after this time will need to be signed in at the school office by a parent/carer. Where a pupil is persistently late for school parents/carers may be asked to meet with a member of the senior leadership team.

A pupil will be recorded as late after registration closes if he/she arrives after 09:05 am. After this time the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The child will therefore need to report to the office after this time to ensure their attendance is recorded.

If a pupil who has been marked as absent (after registration) and subsequently arrives, the absent mark must stand. An indication of the time of arrival will be recorded on the arrival 'signing-in' sheet.

If a pupil leaves school during a session and after registration due to sickness or medical appointment, the 'present' mark must stand but the parent/carer must sign the pupil out at the office.

It is essential that children are collected promptly at the end of the school day, by 3:25 pm at the latest, as delaying staff in the playground can disrupt organised afterschool activities, meetings with parents or staff meetings/training.

Where a pupil is regularly collected late at the end of the school day (after 3:25 pm), parents/carers may be asked to meet with a member of the senior leadership team.

### **3.4 Notification of lateness or absence**

Parents are required to notify the school of a child's absence in the morning of the first day, by telephone. This will ensure that the school knows that the child is at home and has not left for school and not arrived. This also applies to lateness due to medical appointments etc.

The administrators will endeavour to contact parents to clarify the situation if a reason for absence is not received by 10.00am.

## **4. Absence**

### **4.1 Authorised absence**

Authorised absence is when a pupil:

- is absent with the prior permission of the school;
- is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dental appointment;
- is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance;
- has suffered a family bereavement;
- has been excluded;
- is taking part in a public performance e.g. concerts, etc., music examination or special tuition;

The *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013* make clear that '**Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Headteachers should determine the number of days a child can be away if the leave is granted'. See also *Section 3.3 'Exceptional Circumstances'*.

### **4.2. Unauthorised absence**

Unauthorised absence is when a pupil:

- is absent and no explanation, or an unacceptable explanation, is offered;
- a pupil arrives after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
- is away from school on a family holiday.

Legally, only a Headteacher can approve absences. We are under a legal obligation to record an absence outside the categories listed in *Section 3.1*

'*Authorised Absence*' as unauthorised. The school rigorously follows the local authority attendance guidance for schools, which can be found at:  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2086805/attendance-guidance-for-schools-updated-jan-2019.pdf>

The Headteacher is required to follow the guidance contained in the '*School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures for School Attendance and Behaviour*' guidelines. Further information is available via the following link:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/401467/parental\\_responsibility\\_measures\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_and\\_behaviour.pdf.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401467/parental_responsibility_measures_for_school_attendance_and_behaviour.pdf.pdf).

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these but may be subject to change.

All unauthorised absences appear in the annual pupil report to parents.

#### **4.3. Exceptional circumstances**

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations above, holidays during term time will **NOT** be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- in **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of five days of absence providing a child has a good (97% or higher) attendance record over the previous three terms.
- where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances parents should put their request in writing to the Headteacher for authorisation no less than two weeks prior to the date of absence.
- an 'Exceptional Absence' request must be made in writing and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school Governors. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year; parents will be informed whether or not the absence has been authorised.
- if leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and local authority may be notified and fines may be issued (see also *Section 4.6 'Monitoring Absence'*).

#### **4.4 Appointments**

Parents should endeavour, as far as possible, for a child's medical or other appointment to be arranged outside school hours.

If this is not possible, the school should be advised via email to: [assistantadmin@st-josephs.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:assistantadmin@st-josephs.gloucs.sch.uk) . In this case the parent/carer must provide evidence of the medical or dental appointment e.g. hospital letter, appointment card, etc.

For safety reasons, parents/carers should sign their child 'out' and where appropriate, 'in' at the school office.

#### **4.6 Monitoring Absence**

The school administrators will monitor the registers on a weekly basis, focusing on absences. Where it is identified that a child's attendance is falling, the administrator will refer the child to the senior leadership team. Unauthorised absence is monitored by the Headteacher.

The senior leadership team will review the child's attendance record and consider the reason why attendance has fallen and whether this is having an effect on the child's progress. Each case will be considered on an individual basis and the senior leadership team may pursue one or more of the following options:

- Inform the parents/carers in writing that there is a concern about their child's attendance.
- Meet with parents to discuss the attendance record to understand the reasons for absence and discuss ways in which the school may be able to help support the child.
- Warn parents/carers in writing of the possibility of prosecution.
- The school will work closely with parents/carers to help improve a child's attendance.

In cases of unauthorised absence, where leave is taken without prior agreement by the school, or where a child's attendance falls below 95% the senior leadership team, in conjunction with a nominated governor, will scrutinise a pupil's attendance history and, if appropriate seek local authority guidance in securing regular and punctual attendance.

Further information is available on the Gov.uk website at the following address: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>



**5. Child Leaving School**

When a child leaves the school other than at the end of Y6, steps will be taken to ascertain where they have transferred to, in order to link with Children Missing Education procedures. If this cannot be established within 10 working days the relevant Local Authority department will be informed.

**6. Review period and date of next review**

Last reviewed: Autumn 2019 Next review: Autumn 2022

**7. Links**

- Safeguarding policy