

SACRED HEART  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



LIVE LEARN LOVE

ATTENDANCE AND  
PUNCTUALITY  
POLICY

APPROVED BY  
THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
MARCH 2021 - MARCH 2022  
REVIEW DATE – MARCH 2022

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy, we recognise that good attendance is important for the wellbeing of pupils in both their personal and academic development. We are committed to co-operation between the school, parents and pupils to achieve the best possible attendance. Less than full attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. Accordingly, the school will actively pursue the aim of high attendance and punctuality in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole.

All children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child is registered at school, parents / carers (including those with parental responsibilities) have a duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and punctually. The only statutory defences to the offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons;
- The Local Authority failed to provide transport when required to do so;
- The absences were due to religious observance;
- Permission was granted by the school or there was unavoidable cause.

## **AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- To ensure regular attendance of children at Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy;
- To maximise the opportunities for pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy;
- Reward outstanding attendance and punctuality annually (there will be consideration for those children with a long-standing medical conditions);
- To promote children's well-being by regular attendance at school.

## **REGISTRATION**

- The school day begins at 8:45am
- The gate is opened between 8:45 and 8:55am. Entry after 8:55 will be registered as late.
- Registration opens at 9:00am promptly.
- Class teachers take the register and mark pupils present or absent.
- A child arriving late into school but before registration closes, (9:05am) will receive a late mark by the class teacher to indicate this.
- After this time, children are recorded as late after registration closes in the register held at Reception – Parents must sign the child(ren) in and the entry is timed.
- Each school day is split into two sessions. The second session commences at 1:10pm.

- If children leave during the school day they must be signed out by the school office, parent/carer must provide a reason for leaving and the exit time logged.
- Any child who is absent and the teacher is unaware of the reason, will receive a call home from the office.
- On a daily basis, all registers are sent digitally to the office so that data can be collated on the system. Reasons for being absent are then entered by the office staff. (See Appendix 1 for codes)
- Teachers track attendance and if a child falls below 95% a letter is sent to the parents. Teachers inform the Head of any concerns.

### **ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS**

If a child is ill, parents must ring before 9:30am on the first day of absence, explaining the reason for absence, so that the teacher can be informed. If the school office has not been contacted by 9-30am a phone call or text to parents to confirm the child's whereabouts and reason for absence will be made.

### **MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Medical appointments during the school day should be avoided. Should it be absolutely necessary to attend a medical or dental appointment, we ask parents to contact the school office. Pupils must be returned to school as soon as possible and follow the correct signing in procedure.

### **PUNCTUALITY**

Parents must ensure their children arrive at school in a timely manner. Where a child has been invited to attend an intervention group, before school, children must arrive a few minutes before the time of the activity. Collection from after-school clubs must be prompt. The school reserves the right to exclude a child from a club where repeated late collection has been noted.

### **PLANNED ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

Parents must ensure their children attend school regularly and, in particular, during school and national assessment weeks, i.e. May. School term dates are given out a year in advance and reminders are sent out regularly in newsletters.

### **Term Time Holiday**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(AMdt) Regs 2013 make clear that Head Teachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Authorisation for absence will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

These include:-

- Holidays on religious grounds
- Bereavement
- Compassionate leave of absence
- Unexpected traumatic incidents
- Unplanned emergencies

Whilst there are financial benefits for families taking holidays in term time we must also acknowledge the problems this creates within schools. This undermines the education of all children in the school, not just those children who might be absent, affects behaviour and places an increased burden on teaching staff. Parents might, after considering the above, still decide that they wish to take a holiday in term time. They will still need to inform school in writing as the school legally has to account for the whereabouts of every registered child on a daily basis in term time. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent in reply to parents.

## **Penalty Notices & Poor Attendance**

### **Persistent Absence**

- The DFE considers a pupil to be a 'Persistent Absentee' when attendance falls below 85% in any fully completed term.
- Where there are concerns about attendance and the prospect of a pupil becoming a Persistent Absentee, parents are contacted and planned interventions begin (letter issued by school stating concern, parents meet with school, close monitoring by school, use of Family Support Worker, Attendance Officer).

## **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

These regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay a fixed penalty notice which will increase after 28 days.

Amendments to the 2007 regulations reduced the timescale for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, since 1st September 2013, pay a fixed penalty. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Review Date March 2022

Signed by 

## APPENDIX 1

### Registration codes



entered by teachers

- B educated off site
- J interview
- S study leave
- L late (before registration closed)
- C other authorized circumstances
- G family holiday not agreed
- M medical/dental appointments
- T traveller absence
- U late (after registers closed)
- D dual registration
- H family holiday (agreed)
- P approved sporting activity
- V educational visit or trip
- O unauthorized absence
- E excluded
- I illness
- R religious observance
- W work experience
- N reason not yet verified
- Y unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- X non-compulsory school age

