

# *St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School*

## Attendance Policy



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

*St. Joseph's School, through its Mission Statement, is committed to each child fulfilling their potential –*

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*'At St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School, we aim to grow and learn together within a loving and caring environment which reflects the Gospel values. We encourage all our children to reach their full potential in all aspects of their education.'*

Regular attendance of pupils correlates closely to raising achievement and fulfilling potential. If children are to derive maximum benefit from their education, they must attend school regularly and on time.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT:

The school

- Efficiently and accurately registers pupils.
- Contacts parents if a child fails to attend without satisfactory explanation. First day contact will be made in all cases by a member of the admin team. If the school is unable to contact the main parent(s), efforts will then be made to contact other listed contacts to ascertain the reason for the absence. *(Also see Safeguarding policy)*.
- Will prioritise first day contact for pupils in year 5 and 6 who have permission to travel to school alone.
- Promotes positive attitudes to attendance by taking account of pupils individual needs
- Has in place clear communication routes to discuss any difficulties which may prevent a pupil from attending school. First through the contact with the school office and / or class teacher and then the Head or Assistant Headteacher.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT:

The Parents

- Ensure their child attends school regularly
- Ensure their child arrives on time for school
- Contact the school on the first day of absence if their child is unable to attend for a valid reason and provide a note on the child's return to school. *(If for any reason the parent is unable to contact the school directly, they should make every effort to ask another adult to contact the school on their behalf)*.
- Ensure that their child is prepared with necessary equipment to attend school
- Support the school in its aim to raise the achievement of their child through full attendance at school.

## REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registers are marked in line with the guidance in the front of each register and that provided by the Educational Welfare Service.

- Every entry in the register will be in red and black ink; any corrections will be made in such a manner that the original entry and the correction are both clearly distinguishable. Tippex is **not** to be used
- Children will be registered before 9.00am each morning and at 12.25pm (KS1) and 1.20pm (KS2) each afternoon.
- Children arriving late will have their time of arrival and reason for being late recorded. Children arriving after 8.55am are marked as late. Children arriving after 9.25am will be marked as 'unauthorised late'. (For the afternoon sessions, 'unauthorised late' would apply from 12.55pm and 1.50pm respectively).
- Reasons for absences will be recorded in the register authorising the absence or not.
- The registers are stored securely and managed by the admin team.
- The registers will be regularly checked by an administration officer, who will complete totals and ensure they are properly recorded
- Registers are available to the EWAS for register inspection, feedback will be given to the staff
- Whole school attendance policy is available from the school office.

### Authorising Absence

Reasons for absence must be recorded in the register and notes filed in the child's pupil file.

### Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments

If a child is prevented from attending school by reasons of illness, this absence will be treated as authorised. School must be informed as outlined above.

Authorisation in any other exceptional circumstance can only be granted following discussion with the Head or Assistant Headteacher.

### **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

**WHEN A PARENT PHONES OR WHEN A PUPIL  
BRINGS A NOTE AND THE SCHOOL FINDS THE  
REASON ACCEPTABLE.**

### **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

**NO NOTE OR PHONE CALL RECEIVED OR THE  
REASON GIVEN IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE SCHOOL**

### School procedures to follow up absences

The school has a comprehensive system for following up unexplained absences. The Admin Team have initial responsibility for following up unexplained absences. Persistent absences /lateness are managed by the Headteacher who conducts interviews with parents to discuss concerns.

Local Educational Authorities are responsible with enforcing school attendance. Where the irregular attendance of a pupil causes concern the LA can prosecute parents. St. Joseph's School works closely with the Educational Welfare and Attendance Service (EWAS) in order to raise attendance and punctuality and to support families in need of support and advice.

Decisions to refer families to the EWAS are made by the Headteacher. The Headteacher reports regularly to the governing body on attendance patterns.

### Parental Notes

Parentally condoned unjustified absence is equally as damaging as truancy. Only school staff can authorise absence, not parents. The fact that a parent may offer a note or other notification in relation to a particular absence does not oblige the school to accept it as a valid reason for absence. If in the opinion of the school the explanation offered is unacceptable (or where no explanation is given) the absence must be treated as **UNAUTHORISED**. Absence of pupils without valid reason or for which no explanation has been provided must be treated as unauthorised absence.

Pupils who are frequently absent as a result of illness may be referred to the school nurse and/or the EWAS.

### Family Holidays

- It is not acceptable for children to be absent for annual holidays or trips during term time
- In exceptional circumstances authorisation can be legally granted to a maximum of ten school days, following interview with the Head or Assistant Headteacher.
- Where parents fail to seek authorisation, the absence will be deemed as unauthorised and will be referred to Early Help Service through referral form CAF.

### Lateness

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her continuity of learning but also that of others. When pupils arrive after 8.55am the register will be marked as late and the time noted. Persistent lateness will be referred to the Early Help Service

### Educational Welfare Officer

Families and members of staff who have concerns relating to attendance may contact the EWO through the duty service – Telephone No: 0207 525 2714.

Our EWO Officer is:   Liam White    T: 020 7525 0257

**Guidance for good practice in children's travel to and from school.**

Children at St. Joseph's School in Years Five and Six may travel to school and leave school unaccompanied if they have their parents or carers permission.

The Head/Deputy Head must be informed before children may travel unaccompanied, through filling in the appropriate permission slip (see below)

Where possible Year Five/Six children will be encouraged to travel in pairs when crossing roads and travelling on buses.

In line with appropriate health and safety guidance, it is not considered acceptable for children in years three and four to travel to school/home unaccompanied.

Year Six pupils may collect and accompany other pupils home from Year 4 only with their parents/carers permission. Parents must provide permission and notify this using the appropriate form.

Although Year Five children with permission may travel to and from school unaccompanied, they should not take responsibility for other children.

Pupils in Key Stage One should be collected by parents, or carers. Brothers or sisters of secondary school age may collect siblings in KS1 after notifying the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

Nursery children must be brought to school and collected by a parent, or carer.

Children are not permitted to arrive in school until 8.40.am when the playground is supervised, unless attending the school's breakfast club.

Children must be collected at 3.15.pm. unless attending After School Club, or an extra curricular club.

Children in Year Five/Six who are sent home due to illness must be accompanied by a responsible adult. (please see attached permission slip).

**Travelling to school by bicycle**

The pupils attending St. Joseph's School are not permitted to travel to school using a bicycle. This decision has been taken in light of the number of major roads in the immediate area surrounding the school and to ensure the safety of all our pupils.



Telephone: 020 7237 4267  
Fax: 020 7237 1618

Headteacher: Mr. M. Macauley

## Appendix 2

Dear Parents / Carers,

This is a letter for parents of children currently in year groups 5 and 6. In accordance with our school policy, you have the option to allow your child to travel to and from school alone with your consent.

It is your decision, as a parent, whether you allow your child to travel home alone and you will need to consider the following:

- transport (walking, use of public transport...oyster cards)
- departure times, journey duration times, journey routes
- return times/home access
- contacts (mobile phones are discouraged. However, if you wish your child to use this, as necessary, during lone travel periods, please indicate this on the slip below. Mobile phones will be kept by the school office for the duration of the school day)
- maturity of your child regarding personal safety

The school runs a breakfast club from 8:00am each school morning and is open from 8.00am.

As a school we offer this opportunity because we recognise the children are on a learning journey and are nearing their transition to secondary school. Travelling home alone, whether in Year 5 or 6, allows the children to develop independence and responsibility. However, it is your decision as to whether you think it is the right time for your child to be given this option or not.

Please could you complete the permission slip below indicating whether or not your child will be allowed to travel to or from school alone or both.

Children will not be allowed to travel to and from school without this permission.

✂-----

**My child** \_\_\_\_\_ **currently in** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class will:**

*(Please tick as appropriate)*

- Travel to school alone
- Travel home from school alone
- Use a mobile phone for necessary contact *only* during lone travel periods
- Be brought to school by an adult
- Be collected from school by an adult

I have given my consent to the statements with a checked box. I understand it is my responsibility to ensure my child arrives in school and is collected from school on time. I understand that I must contact the school if my child is unable to attend school or if another adult is collecting my child.

**NB:** Children in Years 5 and 6 will be dismissed from the West Gate in the corner of the main playground (opposite Wade Hall)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_