



## **St Teresa's RC Primary School**

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **Our Mission Statement**

**At St Teresa's Roman Catholic Primary School;  
We grow together with Jesus, as we live our lives according to Gospel values.  
We grow together as a community in respect, friendship and responsibility.  
We grow together in understanding as we encourage each child  
to achieve their true potential.  
We grow together in God's love.**



Date	November 2022
Review date	November 2023
Head Teacher	Mrs S Burgess
Governor	Mrs D Stevens
Attendance Champion	Mrs S Burgess
Education Welfare Officer	Mrs T Robinson

### **Aims and objectives:**

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all pupils to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### **Why regular attendance is important:**

Pupils who attend school on a regular basis and are offered access to high- quality teaching and learning opportunities will usually leave school with qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities. The links between attendance and achievement are strong, and high levels of attendance at school should be a right of each pupil.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

St Teresa's RC primary School aims to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for this academic year and to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality by adopting the following strategies:

- Keeping accurate records, register and cpoms.
- Maintaining clear procedures for recording lateness
- Ensuring unauthorised absences are dealt with promptly
- Raise awareness of attendance issues at parents' evenings, new intake meetings and letters to parents.
- Following the authorities guidance on holidays in term time.
- Consideration to be given to the completion of an early help assessment/signposting to support.
- Rewarding good attendance by sharing weekly class attendance and punctuality at Good News assembly and awards certificates.
- To continue to promote attendance with the support of the Education Welfare Officer
- Applying the Whole School Attendance Policy consistently and reviewing annually
- Give you details on attendance in our letters home;
- Display our school target and our half termly achievement on the website and notice board.
- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Of the school**

- **School attendance is a whole school approach**

#### Attendance Policy

- To ensure the strategies of the school attendance policy are adhered to by all staff.
- To inform parents when school attendance or punctuality becomes a cause for concern.
- After 3 consecutive days of unexplained absence, the school will either:
  - Visit the family home
  - Contact the Education Welfare Officer
  - Inform Children's Services
  - Request a welfare check by the police
- Offer of support to be made available

#### Of the pupils

- To understand the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality by having a collective responsibility with school and parents/carers.
- How Child friendly attendance policy, school council, school assemblies

#### Of the parents/carers

- Parents/carers must:
- read and sign home school agreement
- ensure that their children achieve a minimum attendance figure over 95%
- ensure that their children arrive at school promptly – 8.55am
- contact school before 9.30am to report their child's absence
- ensure that non-emergency medical appointments, i.e. dental check-ups, are made outside of school hours
- keep contact details up to date
- ensure a leave of absence during term time is requested in writing to the Headteacher
- Home, work and mobile contact numbers
  - home addresses
  - e-mail addresses
  - two additional contacts for emergency purposes, including phone numbers and home addresses
  - any additional information school needs to be aware of

#### Of the Local Education Authority

- The Local Authority will provide consultation and support with school for those children with attendance below 95%. This could include:
  - advice on penalty notices
  - attendance panel meetings
  - fast track to prosecution
  - truancy initiatives which includes unannounced home visits
- To work with school on devising and implementing new initiatives to promote attendance and punctuality.
- Analysis of school and pupil data

#### ABSENCE PROCEDURE:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, this must be on the first day of absence. **Please inform the school as soon as you know your child is ill and will be absent from school.**

If your child's absence is not reported, on the first day of absence a text will be sent enquiring about the pupil's absence.

If no explanation is provided, the absence will be investigated by the school administrator.

If no explanation is provided following the above procedures then an unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like, illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Please provide any medical evidence you have, this can take the form of appointment cards/texts. Prescriptions etc.

Religious Observance:

The Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 states that absence for religious observance should be treated as an authorised (absence) 'on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs'. Leave for pupils for religious observance will only be agreed if the dates fall outside of normal holiday periods. Additional days off for shopping or extended celebrations will be treated as unauthorised absence.

#### **Holidays in Term Time:**

- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 amendments to The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers **may not grant** any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Penalty Notices will be issued to parents/carers taking their children out of school in term time (10 sessions/5 days) Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60.00 and £120.00 if paid after this but within 28 days. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly. Both Penalty Notices must be paid.

All applications will be considered in line with the School Attendance Policy.

All applications for leave must be made in advance via email to the school office or Headteacher or by using the form in appendix 1.

**Holidays in term time will not be authorised unless:**

- Parents can produce evidence they are unable to take their annual leave from work during school holidays. (annual recurring requests will not be approved)
- Children are seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
- The holiday or the event is for an exceptional reason and parents are asked to provide evidence to support this request. These requests will be considered on an individual basis by the School Attendance Committee, which comprises of the Headteacher and a member of the Governing Body.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a visit from the Education Welfare team or a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) 10%  
Severe Absence (SA) 50%

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils will be tracked and monitored carefully with both pupils and parents being offered additional support to raise attendance.

School and supporting agencies will endeavour to support families holistically to improve attendance by tracking pupil attendance weekly and identifying patterns early and by discussions with parents/carers (and children where appropriate).

### **Legal Intervention**

Will only be considered as a final resort if all other interventions/support have failed or are not deemed appropriate.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

**Poor punctuality is not acceptable.** If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts at **8:55am**. Any child not entering school after this will have to be signed in by the parent/carer on the electronic signing in system. A reason for the child's lateness must be given

At **9.15am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark (U code) that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked in to school to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Classes will be praised/rewarded at assembly for good punctuality records.

### **School targets, projects and special initiatives:**

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the city.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in a letter home and we ask for your full support.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- St Teresa's RC Primary School will evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies by:
  - ½ termly monitoring of attendance through SIMS
  - regular consultation with the Education Welfare Officer
  - referring to the Education Welfare Service
  - planning and evaluating initiatives
  - Annual analysis of patterns
  - Annual feedback to Governors and Curriculum subcommittee

### **Summary:**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

**PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY TO SCHOOL**

I have read, and understood and agreed the terms and conditions of the attendance policy for St Teresa's RC Primary School.

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

Parents of \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1

## Salford City Council

## St Teresa's RC Primary School

## APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Regular school attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. We expect all parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays taken in term time can impact on your child's progress.

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, please complete this form and return it to school at least two weeks before your intended departure date. Requests for leave of absence will be considered in line with our policy and will not automatically be authorised.

**If your child is absent from school because they are on holiday and this leave of absence has not been authorised or they do not return to school on the agreed due date, you may be visited by the Education Welfare Team or be issued with a Penalty Notice from the Local Education Authority of £60 rising to £120. Your child may also be at risk of losing their school place.**

## PARENTS SECTION

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for request:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_

Date due back to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Absence (number of school days): \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL SECTION

Date of meeting with parent/s (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Leave approved? Yes ☐ No ☐

Number of days approved \_\_\_\_\_

Number and date(s) of previous applications granted?

School \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Duration of absence \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Duration of absence \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for refusal/authorisation (delete as appropriate):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Headteachers signature(on behalf of the attendance committee): \_\_\_\_\_