



## ALL HALLOWS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

#### **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to attend school every day (190 days per year) and to be able to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential in order for pupils to maximise their chances of success. There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent GCSE results and excellent school attendance.

#### **Key personnel**

<b>Headteacher</b>	The Headteacher is the only person who can authorise leave in 'exceptional circumstances'
<b>SLT Link</b>	The SLT link for attendance is Mrs J Washington
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	The Attendance Officer is Mrs Lynne Topping
<b>Attendance Improvement Worker</b>	The AIW is Miss Suzanne Schofield

#### **Duties**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and guardians to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education. Parents/Guardians are responsible for their child's school attendance and punctuality.

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's roll. In addition, lesson registers are taken each lesson.

## **Responsibilities**

The school will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Attendance targets are set for individual pupils and year groups.
- Attendance and punctuality data is regularly reviewed.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and be registered punctually.
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

The Parents or Guardians will:

- Ensure good attendance (97% and above)
- Inform the school on each day of absence and give specific reason.
- Discuss planned absences with the school in advance and seek the appropriate leave of absence in good time.

### **School Day:**

- The school day for pupils begins at 8.40am — by this time all pupils should be on the school's premises.
- The first session begins at 8.45am when the "Registration Bell" is sounded;
- Pupils entering the school premises after the "Registration Bell" are late for school;
- Afternoon registration takes place within Period 5. It begins at 13.20pm  
The school day ends at 15.05pm.

### **Form tutors:**

- Form Tutors have the responsibility of registering pupils' attendance at the beginning of the morning session.
- Form Tutors will ensure that the registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Form Tutors have a major role to play in encouraging pupils to be punctual and to attend school each day.
- Absence notes from parents will be checked by Form Tutors for their authenticity and will be passed to the Learning Manager for filing.
- Form Tutors will bring to the attention of the Learning Manager those pupils who are either late for registration or who are absent;

### **Learning Managers:**

- Will liaise closely with Form Tutors in checking that registers are completed accurately and that they are kept in a safe place;
- Will ensure that the registers are available for scrutiny and for emergencies e.g. for fire drills;
- Will ensure that all absence notes are stored in a secure place;
- Are responsible for notifying parents of unauthorised absences on those occasions when a pupil has been absent for three days when no reason has been received from the parents;
- Are responsible for notifying the Attendance Officer of attendance problems.
- Are responsible for discussing with Form Tutors problems relating to pupil attendance and the accurate record keeping of registers.

### **Punctuality:**

- All pupils are expected to be punctual to school (8.40am) and to lessons.
- Any pupil who is late to school must attend lunchtime detention with Mr Finch on the day of the lateness. Failure to attend will lead to an after-school detention.
- Pupils arriving after the registration bell at 8.45am will be marked as late using an L code.

- Pupils arriving after registers close at 9.15am will be marked as an unauthorised absence and the absence must be explained by parental contact. This will be coded as a U.

### **Attendance procedures**

- Parents are asked to telephone school before the end of the form period to notify us of a child's absence.
- Authorised absence, e.g. illness, must be supported by a letter from the parents explaining the reason for the absence
- Pupils who wish to leave the premises during the school day will be expected to bring a letter from their parents notifying the Learning Manager of the reason.
- Pupils arriving at school after registration should sign in at the General Office and should sign out if leaving the premises before the end of the school day.
- Where parents fail to make contact providing a reason for absence, the School Attendance Officer will endeavour to contact them.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

- School has not given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent
- School does not accept a given explanation as satisfactory justification for absence
- Medical evidence requested by school is not forthcoming
- No explanation of absence is received within two weeks
- If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether that absence is authorised or unauthorised. Parents may not authorise any absence. In cases where parents seem to condone unauthorised absence, school may involve the court officer.
- The Governing Body have agreed to adopt the Government initiative of imposing Penalty Notices in cases of persistent unauthorised absence and persistent lateness to Registration.
- Parents will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and will have 15 days to ensure an improvement in attendance and / or punctuality. Failure to ensure improvement will lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice.
- Penalty Notices are issued by the court officer to the family home. The fine for unauthorised absence currently stands at £120 per parent, per child. Non-payment of the Penalty within the 28 day time limit will trigger the prosecution process under the Provisions of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

- In circumstances where a PN has been served with no impact or attendance patterns show chronic poor attendance the school may request a prosecution through Section 444 (1) of the 1996 Education Act. This will result in prosecution through the courts if there is no improvement in attendance.

### **Leave of Absence**

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Applications should be requested before any expenses are committed. Costs already incurred are not considered when a leave for absence request is reviewed.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time.

All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent. Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence must complete the official request form. This can be collected from reception or downloaded from the school's website. Completed forms should be returned to the school's Attendance Officer at least 3 months before the proposed absence (where possible). Leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional.

A request for a leave of absence involving a pupil missing 4 or more days of school will not be authorised without a formal discussion between a parent/guardian and a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team.

In considering the request we will also look at various factors such as:

- The timing of the request:

When a pupil is just starting the school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.

Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods e.g. GCSE or any other public examinations.

- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below 92% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave.
- The student has a serious work deficit
- other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year
- a leave of absence will not be authorised retrospectively

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 Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence is shown on reports and ultimately school references. Unauthorised absence of ten or more school sessions in a half term can lead to the authority issuing a penalty notice. The fine for unauthorised absence currently stands at £120 per parent per child.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Re-admission cannot be guaranteed.

The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

### **Monitoring attendance:**

- Mrs Topping will provide a daily list of absentees for Learning Managers.
- Mrs Topping has an agreed list of "first day response to absence" pupils, agreed by the Headteacher and Learning Managers. Families of these pupils will be contacted as early as possible on the first day of absence.
- Mrs Topping will provide analyses of attendance on request.
- Miss Schofield will meet with Learning Managers weekly to discuss attendance issues and to highlight individual pupils. Pupils with attendance below 90% will be contacted by Miss Schofield.
- Miss Schofield Learning Managers and the Headteacher will have a formal termly meeting to review individual cases. At this meeting, future strategies will be developed.
- Pupils will be rewarded for excellent attendance via the school's rewards system.
- Governors Pupil Welfare Committee will receive reports on attendance.
- The Headteacher will inform all Governors of the school's response to its attendance target on a termly basis at the Full Governors meeting.

**November 2014**