

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Holy Trinity C of E Infant School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at the school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school and is available on our school website. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education. Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at our schools work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Aims of the Policy

- To provide a clearly defined school policy on attendance which will prove helpful to parents/carers, pupils, staff and governors.
- For all parents/carers and pupils to understand that regular attendance is vital for good progress to be made in a child's education.
- For parents/carers to understand that for the safety of the children, school needs to be informed as soon as possible of the reason for a child's absence.
- To give clarity about absences which are authorised or unauthorised.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school and improve overall percentage attendance.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, offering support and advice.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other services and agencies.

- To recognise the needs of individual pupils when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Procedures

- Parents are informed of the school hours. At Holy Trinity our doors are open from 8.35am. Our register remains open until 8.55am. After this time your child will need to be signed in at the office and a late mark (L) will be given. If your child is later than 9.15am then an unauthorised mark will be given (U).
- We understand that young children are prone to infections/illnesses, but we encourage parents to send their children back as soon as they are well enough.
- Parents of pupils with long-term medical conditions are asked to provide written information from medical personnel.
- We accommodate the administration of medicines which are long-term by training staff, so a child's attendance is not affected (see our Administration of Medicines Policy).
- If a child's lateness or attendance record causes concern for any reason, this is discussed with parents. In the event of no improvement, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Department or Early Help.
- The school monitors absence rates, unauthorised absences and lateness each week.

Requests for Holidays in Term Times

Holidays/extended weekends/ occasional days should not be taken in term time.
Authorised absence will only be granted in the following circumstances: -

- Annual leave restrictions e.g. police/emergency service workers, occurring due to foreseen or unforeseen circumstances, where forces have to be shared across the country.
- Factories/ workplaces shut down at set times each year for family holidays.
- Religious observances, in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010.
- Other **exceptional** circumstances to be considered on an individual basis.

A letter/email should be written to the Headteacher, explaining why there is a need to take their child (children) out of school in term-time. A letter from an employer, stating why a holiday can only be taken at a certain time, may be considered as support for the application. The Headteacher will consider whether the request is authorised or unauthorised. The Head reserves the right to discuss the anonymised application with the Chair of Governors and/or the whole Governing Body if necessary.

Leave of absence **will not** be granted retrospectively. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the Headteacher, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised absence and can be subject to fines in line with the Nottinghamshire County Council's Code of

Practice for issuing penalty notices.

Registration

1. An attendance register is taken by the class teacher twice a day and records whether a pupil is present or absent. Each absence away from school has to be classified by the school (not the parents) as either an AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED absence.

2. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the school for a good reason, for example: genuine illness, medical appointments that cannot be made outside school hours or other unavoidable cause.

3. Unauthorised absences are those that the school do not consider to be justifiable reasons and for which no 'leave' has been given. These include:-

- Parents/carers keeping their children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive too late to get a present mark
- Day trips and holidays in term time that do not qualify for an authorised absence, as defined above and agreed by the Headteacher
- Shopping, looking after children or birthdays

3. Should your child be absent from school parents are expected to contact the office as soon as possible on the first day of absence by telephone. Should you not make contact, we will get in touch with you via the telephone to investigate the reason for absence. This is a Safeguarding check as well as an absence check.

4. If your child should be attending After School Club on that day, please also bring this to our attention.

5. Should school have continuing concerns about your child's attendance, we will invite you to discuss these with the Headteacher.

Encouraging Punctuality and Attendance

We demonstrate our strong punctuality and attendance ethos by having:-

- A late book for recording reasons why pupils are late and we follow patterns of lateness and low attendance.
- Stories in Collective Worship and PSHE about lateness, linking to punctuality being a good life-skill.
- Regular newsletters, posters and visual displays emphasising to parents that learning starts as soon as the children enter school and late children will be missing out, effecting attainment and progress over time.
- Class attendance figures regularly displayed to encourage competition.
- Rewards system for punctuality and excellent attendance: Gold certificates for 100%, Silver certificates for 97%+, Bronze certificate for 95%+ attendance.
- A building which enables pupils with disabilities to attend as other pupils, according to the Equalities Act, 2010

- A staff and Governing Body who are committed to a whole-school approach which reinforces good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Staff modelling punctuality and good attendance.
- Effective procedures to use attendance data to identify trends and highlight areas of concern.
- Clear communication with pupils and parents about the consequences of truancy and parentally condoned non-attendance.
- Attendance will be reported on in the Headteachers' termly report to governors

Thank you to all parents, carers, pupils and staff for supporting this policy.

Policy Updated: April 2022

Next review date: April 2024