

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School



Attendance Procedure

Approved by the Governing Body of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Non-Statutory Date implemented: July 2018 To be reviewed: Summer Term 2019
Reviewed at Wellbeing Committee 28th June 2018
Ratified at FGB Meeting 12th July 2018

The school has a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction:

The governing body of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School believe that every child, (Article 28 of the United Convention of the Rights of every Child) has the right to attend school. In accordance with this right is the expectation that parents will ensure that their children attend school according to the term dates. The school will comply with legislation in offering the correct number of days for attendance. Our Lady of Peace School believes that all children must be afforded their rights as it is in keeping with its mission of:

‘With Christ in our hearts, together we grow’

Purpose

To promote excellent attendance that will contribute to maintaining a positive school environment and secure a climate for effective learning and achievement in all areas. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement.

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Objectives:

- 1) To promote full attendance.
- 2) To share the responsibility for promoting the school’s attendance amongst everyone in the school and the wider community.
- 3) To reward pupils and celebrate the success of pupils who achieve excellent, good or improved attendance.
- 4) To challenge student attendance where it falls below 95% ensuring appropriate levels of support and intervention are maintained.
- 5) To engage with external agencies to monitor, support and intervene where attendance is a cause for concern and falls below 95%.

Why attendance matters:

- If pupils are to achieve their potential, good attendance and punctuality are vital.
- The link between attendance and achievement is well documented.
- We want all our pupils to achieve the very best that they can, to develop the whole person and be the ‘best they can be’

Principles

- Pupils should attend school every day and be on time to
 - a) make the most of their educational opportunity
 - b) establish good habits for adult life (economic well-being)

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- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are on time, should there be difficulties school staff will work in partnership with parents and the Education Welfare Service to resolve these difficulties in keeping with the school ethos.
- Every ½ day absence from school is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. All absences are recorded on annual reports. It is the decision of the Headteacher of Our Lady of Peace Primary and Nursery School as to whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Reasons for Absence:

- **Authorised absence:** is absence with permission, this includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided, e.g. ill health. Medical and dental appointments, where possible should be made for after school or during school holidays. The school understands that this isn't always possible, however, pupils should attend school prior to or following a medical/dental appointment and avoid a full day's absence.
- **Unauthorised absence:** is absence without permission, this includes all unexplained or unjustified absences e.g. term time holiday, a birthday celebration or failure to inform the school by telephone or in writing of the reason your child is absent.

Responsibilities:

The Education Act 2004 states that all children of compulsory school age (five to sixteen) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents/carers are legally responsible for making sure their son/daughter attends regularly.

- **Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day that their child is absent.** These phone messages are to be recorded in the front office. **When the pupil returns to school they should bring a written note which covers their period of absence.**

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School welcomes the active support of parents/carers. The school seeks to develop an effective partnership between home and the school based on mutual understanding and trust. However, in some circumstances when non attendance is below an acceptable level the school will liaise with the Attendance Officer and if necessary seek legal sanctions for non-school attendance.

As a School that we must adhere to the following attendance procedure.

After 10 sessions (5 days) of absence:

The Attendance Officer will write to the parent/guardian informing them that their child has had 5 days of absence. This includes any type of absence, regardless of whether you have called your child in sick or are on unauthorised holiday.

After 20 sessions (10 days) of absence:

The Attendance Officer will refer the absence to the Attendance Improvement Officer at Slough Borough Council. Upon acceptance of the referral, the Attendance Improvement Officer will write to the parent/guardian confirming that a referral has been accepted. The letter will outline targets that the parent/guardian will need to meet regarding their child's absence and may request a meeting with you. Please note that once your child has reached this stage, **ALL absences** will be marked unauthorised unless proof is provided by your child's Doctor or Hospital.

After 30 sessions (15 days) of absence:

The Attendance Improvement Officer from Slough Borough Council will write to the parent/guardian asking them to attend an Attendance Panel meeting. The meeting will be held at the local Authority with the parent/guardian, the Attendance Improvement Officer from Slough Borough Council and the School's Attendance Officer may be invited to attend.

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After 38 sessions (19 days) of absence:

Your child is now identified by the Government as a '**Persistent Absentee**'

The parent/guardian will be invited to an attendance panel meeting. The attendance panel will be held at Slough Borough Council, St Martin's Place, Bath Road and will be chaired by the Attendance Team Manager. There will be no representative present from the School.

The parent/guardian will be invited to explain the reasons for the regular absence of their child. The meeting will give consideration as to whether immediate legal action should be considered.

If a previous prosecution has been undertaken or a fixed penalty notice issued that has been unpaid, the parent/guardian will be invited to a pre-court panel interview. The pre-court meeting will be held at Slough Borough Council, St Martin's Place and chaired by the Attendance Team Manager. There will be no representative present from the School.

The interview will be conducted under caution in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1996 Section 444. Following this meeting a decision will be made by the Attendance Team Manager as to whether court action will be taken.

Please note that the number of unauthorised absences is not for a single period of time, but a total of the number of sessions absent **throughout the School year**

If your child is absent for a single period of 3 or more days at one time, then the School will require you to provide evidence from your Doctor or Hospital so that this may be held for Slough Borough Council.

May we also remind you that **NO** holiday will be authorised at any time during term time and 5 days of absence or more will incur a penalty notice (fine) from Slough Borough Council.

Any absences attached to a School holiday will need to be backed up with medical evidence, i.e. either an appointment card from the Doctor's surgery to say your child has been seen and please make sure this is dated for the day of absence or proof provided of any prescribed medication. This can be brought to the School Office on your child's return. Without this, your child's absence will be marked as unauthorised and again, if your child is away for 5 days or more (*including either side of a School holiday*), this could incur a penalty notice (fine) from Slough Borough Council.

As a parent/guardian it is your responsibility to ensure your child attends School on a regular basis.

Procedures

All staff will be reminded of the importance of adhering to these procedures through termly meetings.

- Class teachers or delegated Learning Support Assistants will take registers at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Any pupil not present at registration must be marked absent.
- Any pupil arriving at school after 9:00a.m. (start of school day) must be signed in at the main school office.
- At 9:15a.m. each morning a member of school staff will check late list against completed class registers.
- If the school is concerned about your child's absence you may receive a telephone call from the office staff or class teacher.
- Class teachers will monitor attendance on a daily basis.
- The Headteacher and Attendance Officer will regularly monitor attendance and letters will be sent to parents if deemed necessary.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the importance of regular attendance and of the link between high levels of attendance and good levels of pupil achievement.

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- Pupils will be rewarded for high levels of attendance and punctuality through termly certificates. Their achievement will be celebrated in assembly.
- The Classes with the highest attendance for the week will receive a certificate. For KS1 they will also look after SAM the Teddy Bear for a week and KS2 will look after the attendance trophy.
- Pupils will be rewarded for a whole year's full attendance and good punctuality with a certificate and a book at the end of the summer term. Their achievement will be published in the school newsletter and celebrated in assembly.
- Pupils who achieve improving levels of attendance and / or punctuality will be rewarded.
- Attendance targets are regularly reviewed and monitored with the Local Authority. Governors monitor attendance targets at regular intervals and reports are given to the full Governing Body at their termly meetings.

Gypsy, Romany and Travelling Families (GRT)

Who are Travellers?

Department for Education (DfE) advice explains that the generic term 'Traveller' covers a number of different groups:

- Roma
- English and Welsh Gypsies
- Irish and Scottish Travellers
- Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people
- Bargees (occupational boat dwellers)
- New Travellers

Attendance expectations

Under the Education Act 1996, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, parents are required to ensure that when their children are of compulsory school age and are registered at a school, they attend that school 'regularly'.

Traveller children whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal

However, parents of children with no fixed abode have a defence against prosecution if they can prove that:

- They are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel
- The child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and
- If the child has attained the age of 6, that they have made at least 200 attendances (sessions) during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted

This applies to parents of pupils registered at any school, including independent schools.

The DfE advice linked to above says that Traveller children whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

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Another of our articles explains that schools can issue [fixed penalty notices](#) (fines) to parents who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly. Only local authorities can prosecute parents, however.

[Education Act 1996, section 444\(6\),
legislation.gov.uk](#)<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444#section-444-6>

[Education and Inspections Act 2006, section 109\(6\),
legislation.gov.uk](#)<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/109#section-109-6>

Authorising and recording absence

The DfE advice linked to above explains that to help ensure continuity of education, it is expected that Traveller pupils will attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual-registered at that school and their main school.

The DfE advice also says that where a pupil is not attending a session because they are scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered, the code **D** will be used to record their absence.

Code **T** should be used record absence where Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

Code T should not be used for any other types of absence by Traveller pupils

For more information regarding the travelling communities, please see attached document:



attendance-advice-policy-travellers.pdf

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a 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. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world

Children are expected to enter school between 8.45am and 9am; any child arriving after this time will be marked as late in the register. Children who arrive after 9am are recorded as late after registration.

When your child is late, the following procedure **MUST** be adhered to:

- All late arrivals after 9am **MUST** report to the Main Reception

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- (For KS1 only) A late slip will be filled out by the school office and given to the parent/carer to take to KS1 and the slip should be given to a member of staff and the child will then be taken to their class. If you take your child to the KS1 without coming to the main reception first, you will be directed back to the main reception with your child to sign in. The late mark will be entered onto the INventory system and the class register by the Attendance Officer.
- **(For KS2)** If your child is late, the late mark will be entered onto the INventory system and the class register by the Attendance Officer.

Persistent lateness disrupts a child's education and encourages poor attendance, leading to bad habits that can be hard to break.

The school monitors regular lateness and letters are sent to families that have 3 or more lates in two weeks.

If this continues parents/carers are invited in for a meeting with Pastoral Manager to discuss the reason. A record of this meeting is kept whether attended or not.

If lateness still continues to be an issue the Headteacher will then request a meeting

Children should not be punished for lateness as it is rarely their fault

School Times Lunchtimes are :

0845- 0855 – Rolling start

0900 – Registers are closed

1145-1245 Reception

12.00pm to 1.00 pm for Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8:45am when children can begin to come into school.

Registers are taken at 8.55 am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by 9am.

Children arriving after 9:00 am are required to come in to school via the main reception, accompanied by a parent or carer, the school office staff will sign them into the Inventory system and provide a reason for their lateness which is recorded

At 9.15 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark 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

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will be asked to meet with the School Attendance Officer, but if you are having problems getting your child to school on time please do make an appointment with the attendance officer to discuss the matter. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving Our Lady of Peace Primary School, other than at the end of year 6 parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupils moving from school' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all of our pupils.

Related Policies

- **Late Collection Policy**
- **Attendance Protocol**
- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**

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