St Aidan's Catholic Primary School

POLICY FOR
Attendance

Agreed by Governing Body	26.11.13
Reviewed AND UPDATED	11.12.18 - FGM

School Mission Statement
'Learning and growing together, inspired by the love of Jesus'

 In our School we aim to: **S**pread happiness with a smile
                            Take care of others and of property
                            Always try our best
                            Include others and share
                            Do as Jesus asks us to
                            Always tell the truth
                            Never forget our manners
                            Speak calmly and kindly

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School
Attendance Policy

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have.
Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.
St Aidan's Catholic Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

This policy has been developed in consultation with Governors, Teachers, Pupils, School Attendance Service and Parents, Carers and Guardians. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the schools' commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

At St Aidan's we aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

♦ Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
♦ Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated, relevant and creative curriculum
♦ Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements
♦ Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance
♦ Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

Statements of expectations;
Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

Expectations of Pupils:
♦ To respect themselves and others
♦ To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
♦ To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or there are barriers to them attending school

♦ To be happy and encourage others to feel happy

Parents, carers and guardians have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents, carers and guardians should also make sure that the children arrive on time, are properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

Expectations of Parents, carers and guardians;

- To ensure children attend school and are punctual everyday
- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- To provide a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- To work closely with the school and Attendance Service to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time may be refused
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be extra vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATS or the numeracy and literacy hour.
- To provide correct contact details and inform and inform of any changes to these immediately
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements

The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and afternoon session.

Expectations of the School:
♦ To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
♦ To meet the legal requirements set out by Government
♦ To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
♦ To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
♦ To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 education act
♦ To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance
♦ To encourage open communication channels between home and school
♦ To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
♦ To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the School Attendance Service
♦ To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. Through the School Attendance Service (SAS) the Local Authority provides support to schools and parents, carers and guardians to fulfil their legal duty. The SAS is the enforcement agency of the LA and as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

School Procedures for Recording, Monitoring and Promoting Attendance

Recording
The class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from school at **9.00am**. At **9.30am** the register is taken to the school office. All staff need to be aware that any child arriving late after this time MUST register at the office for purposes of fire regulations and the office staff must update the registers.
The register officially closes at **9.30am** and any pupil arriving after this will be marked (U) late after the close of the register). A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence. Reasons for absence may be offered verbally by phone and recorded in the school office but **must** be followed by a letter on the child's return to school. The school may then decide if it wishes to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence. This decision will be made within the guidance set out in the 1996 Education act, which identifies the following reasons as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence.

♦ The child is ill or is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause
♦ The child lives over a certain distance from the school and either the LA has failed to make suitable arrangements to register the child at a nearer school or the LA has failed to make suitable transport arrangements
♦ The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith

Recording Reason for Absence
The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised, a reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents, carers and guardians who have not offered a reason and after a three week process will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

	1st Day of Absence	2 Days after period of absence	1 week after period of absence	2 week after period of absence
Parent Carer Guardian	Contacts school with reason by phone and/or letter	Parent, carer, guardian provides a letter stating reason for absence	Parent, carer, guardian returns slip from letter with reason.	Parent, carer, guardian returns slip from letter with reason.
School	School may phone parent, carer, guardian to inform them that the child is not in school and enquire about a reason why. A text	Further text sent	Further text sent	Further text sent

	message is sent to all pupils absent on their first day not in school			

Attendance codes

A set of standard codes are used consistently within the register. These codes are input into the electronic register as required and are used to give depth of meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
B	Educated off site (Not dual registration)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration	Present	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness(not med/dental etc.appoints)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Present	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Present	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late(after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils and staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session

Persistent Absence

This is a measure used by the School Attendance Service to trigger their intervention. The thresholds for triggering persistent concerns are:-

1 day = 2 sessions

Half term 1   10 absences
Half term 1-2   20 absences
Half term 1-3   30 absences
Half term 1-4   37 absences
Half term 1-5   46 absences

The 5 Stages of concern of School Attendance

Stage 1- when absences start to occur – school make contact by text message for a reason.

Stage 2- when absences continue – School may interview yourself/ child and monitor progress more closely, together with letters and phone calls. School may ask you to come in to school for a meeting. (Amber)

Stage 3-when the situation does not improve – school talks to the Attendance Service within the LA and an officer will visit you and make an assessment. (Below 90% - RED)

Stage 4-when stages 1-3 have not brought about an improvement – at this stage any further absences will not be authorised by school. The LA school Attendance Office will case work with you for a half term to support you in improving your child's attendance. This can include home visits, meetings, phone calls, referrals etc. (usually around 85%)

Stage 5- when no improvement occurs despite all of the above – the case will be transferred to the School Attendance Improvement Officer for possible prosecution/statutory action. This could mean a fine or imprisonment, resulting in a criminal record for the parent.

Informing Parents, Carers, Guardians
Each half term parents will be informed about their child's attendance. Letters will be sent to ALL parents when attendance falls below 95%.

School will review attendance termly and will identify the 6 weakest attenders for support and challenge each time.

School will conduct termly reviews of attendance on a case by case basis and will move to prosecution, home visit by the Attendance Team, invitation to Attendance Panel in school, home visit by Learning Mentor/ Headteacher or appropriate letters sent home.

Attendance below 90% will trigger a RED warning letter
Attendance below 95% but above 90% will trigger an AMBER warning letter

Children whose attendance falls below 90% in a half term will be monitored daily via an Attendance Card
Children whose attendance falls below 95% in a half term will be monitored weekly via the Learning Mentor

Children who improve (after a half term) will move from RED to AMBER or from AMBER to GREEN

All children being monitored at AMBER level can move to RED if they are absent more than twice during the monitoring period.

Roles and Responsibilities
Classteacher
- Ensure any ongoing attendance/punctuality issues are highlighted to Learning mentor and Headteacher
- To develop a class ethos that supports good attendance and punctuality
- To praise/reward within the class improved and good attendance/punctuality
- To informally talk to parents about attendance/punctuality concerns
- Class teacher will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that can succeed
- To raise attendance/punctuality concerns with parents at formal parents meetings(Review Day –Targets)

Learning Mentor
- To ensure there are effective procedures in place to identify poor attendance and punctuality
- To work closely with the classteacher to improve attendance/punctuality
- To work closely with individual pupils and families to support them in removing the barriers to poor attendance and punctuality
- To work closely with school attendance service to support and challenge poor attendance and punctuality
- To keep teachers informed of any information received from parents or attendance service
- To ensure the Headteacher is regularly informed of attendance data and individual pupil attendance issues
- To work closely with Foundation Stage Parents to support them in ensuring that their children attend school regularly

Headteacher
- To highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality to pupils through assemblies and individually
- To reward good attendance of individuals and classes through whole school assemblies
- To work with and challenge parents, carers, guardians where there are concerns about poor school attendance
- To provide parents, carers, guardians with regular information about their child's attendance
- To report to Governors information about attendance linked to school targets
- To ensure that all necessary attendance returns are completed for the LA and DCFS
- To respond to Leave of Absence requests
- To ensure the school provides a climate that is welcoming and a curriculum that supports and encourages all pupils
- To monitor procedures within the policy
- To support staff who have concerns over poor attendance and punctuality
- To meet regularly with Learning Mentor to evaluate impact of attendance strategies

- To work with and challenge the School Attendance Service to ensure they are providing an appropriate service

Administration Staff
- To ensure attendance registers are available for teachers at the start of each day
- To record parents, carers, guardians reasons for absence and ensure the information is available for teaching staff and Learning Mentor
- To record children's lateness (after 9.10), and reason given in late book
- To ensure registers are updated for late arrivals
- To update attendance on SIMS from the manual registers on a daily basis, record lates daily and sickness absence daily on SIMS.

School Attendance Service
- To meet regularly (according to level of need)with the Learning Mentor to agree casework
- To report back verbally and provide written reports to the School/Learning Mentor on actions carried out
- To regularly review the impact of their work with the Learning Mentor/Headteacher
- To encourage good attendance by working with pupils and families
- To complete the annual Attendance Audit and feedback to Head

Requests for leave of absence
If a parent wishes to request a period of leave they are required to complete a Leave of Absence form which has to be authorised by the Headteacher. See Leave of Absence Policy

Official Register
At the end of every week the registration sheets are filed.

Each half term the official register will be printed for that time and checks made to ensure accuracy.

Absence letters should be dated on receipt and signed by the teacher receiving them. They should be stored in the register folder.

Strategies used to promote/ensure good attendance and punctuality
- Certificates/rewards termly and yearly for full, good and improved attendance
- Weekly award for best class attendance, punctuality, Attendance Hero and Full Attendance
- Termly incentive activities and/or rewards
- Promoting school attendance strategies through newsletters and notice boards
- Promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality by informing parents half termly of their child's attendance level. Those deemed to be unsatisfactory will be invited to meet with the Headteacher.
- Termly attendance panels to be held in school