



St Joan of Arc Catholic  
Primary School

**POLICY**

**ATTENDANCE**

**2020-23**

# St Joan of Arc Catholic Primary School

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Mission Statement -

The Members of the Community of St Joan of Arc School, by respecting each other, learn and grow in the love of Christ.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

St Joan of Arc School seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive a full education, which maximises their opportunities for inclusion and achievement at school so that each pupil is able to realise his/her full potential.

All children between the ages of 5 and 11 are legally required to be educated.

Pupils, parents and carers, teachers, support staff and governors all have a role in maintaining a high standard of attendance and punctuality

***EVERY LESSON COUNTS! EVEN CASUAL ABSENCE CAN AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S ATTAINMENT.***

### Aims of the Policy

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at the school.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for all people involved in maintaining pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To implement a system of sanctions and rewards.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and responding to attendance data.
- **To work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.**

### 2. RECORDING ATTENDANCE DATA

#### Registers

- The registers are to be completed by 9.00 a.m. at the beginning of the morning and 1.00/1.30 p.m. for the afternoon session.
- A mark / (a.m.) and \ (p.m.) is used to indicate present and the letter N is used to indicate absence.
- All authorised absences will have the correct code entered with an explanation of the absence in the notes section, entered by office staff.
- All lateness will be marked with an L and the time. If a pupil arrives after the register closes without an acceptable explanation, it is marked with a U and is considered as an unauthorised absence.
- If mistakes are made, the office should be notified immediately.
- If a staff member other than the class teacher receives information about attendance or lateness, they are to inform the office staff.

### **3. SIMS**

All information with regards to attendance is held on SIMS

### **4. ABSENCE**

#### **Authorised Absence**

An authorised absence is when a pupil is away for a reason acceptable to the school. The school (not the parent) determines whether an absence is authorised after receipt of a verbal or written explanation from the parent/carer. Explanations from pupils or siblings are not sufficient.

#### **Unauthorised Absence**

The school will follow up on all unauthorised absences, communicating parental responsibility for providing explanations.

- Unauthorised absence letter
- Phone call home

## **Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time.**

- Special leave of absence can be authorised at the head teacher's discretion. Longer periods of absence may only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances.
- Any leave of absence for medical appointment or religious observance must be related to the school office.
- If a parent/carer feels it is absolutely unavoidable to take their child out of school for leave of absence, they must complete a Term Time Absence Request Form, in advance, for consideration by the headteacher.
- Any special leave of absence which including a request for a child to be out of school for over 4 days can only be authorised by the headteacher.
- Each case will be considered individually based on the nature of the event, history of term time absences, the pupil's current attendance, age, achievement, and the time of year with respect to the curriculum. Parents will be informed in writing of the decision on their request.
- Any time taken without the school's authorisation, or any additional time taken over and above the amount authorised will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- If a pupil does not return on the agreed date, the school will make every effort to contact the family by telephone and in writing. If no contact is made, or if the absence has been extended for anything other than unavoidable circumstances, the school will refer the family to Access and Engagement Services (AES) if they do not return within 10 school days. If no contact is made with the family by AES then a letter will be sent to parent/carer informing them that the pupil's is taken off roll, this will always be done in consultation with AES.

#### **4. PUNCTUALITY**

- School starts at 8.50 a.m. It is expected that all pupils arrive in good time.
- If pupils arrive after 8.50 a.m. They are to come through the main entrance at Northolme Road. Pupils will need to sign in via the screen at the school office.
- A late letter will automatically be sent to parents/carers if there is regular lateness.
- All unauthorised lates (those after the register closes) are treated as absences.

#### **5. MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND RESPONDING TO PATTERNS OF ABSENCE**

School staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges.

- The school is responsible for initial interventions. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a discussion is needed between the class teacher and school management to determine a course of action.
- If a class teacher makes initial contact with a parent to inform them of Early Help Services and there is no improvement, school management must be informed and will arrange to contact a parent/carer. If there is still no improvement after suitable interventions by the school, the EAS may become involved.
- Although all cases are considered individually, the EAS will generally become involved when a pupil's attendance falls below 90% in one term.
- To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the school's attendance officer will meet with a member of senior management each half term to discuss and agree a course of action for all pupils with attendance under 90%. The agreed action may include:
  - Closely monitoring the situation
  - A letter from the school
  - A meeting with the school (possibly with EAS present)
  - A formal referral to EAS (which can include home visits, referrals to outside agencies and statutory action)
- A series of standard letters are available to be sent to parents. These will be sent out by the school.

#### **6. SUPPORTING THE REINTEGRATION OF PUPILS AFTER EXTENDED ABSENCES**

- All pupils who return to school after an extended period of absence need to be supported. Each case will be considered individually and a plan will be drawn up to best support the pupil's academic and social reintegration into the school.

#### **7. TAKING PUPILS OFF ROLL**

- All pupils who leave St Joan of Arc School to attend another school (except for secondary school transfers) will remain on roll until their admission elsewhere is confirmed.
- In the case of pupils who disappear (i.e. leave with no indication of where they are going or whether they will return), the school will make every effort to contact the family on the telephone and in writing. If contact cannot be established, the school will make a formal referral to EWS.

## **8. ENCOURAGING GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Whole school activities will raise the profile of attendance and punctuality through.

- Newsletters
- Certificates for 100% attendance for each term
- Displays around the school

## **9. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS**

It is essential the parents/carers of all pupils understand the school's attendance policy and their role in ensuring their child has good attendance.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children arrive at school on time each day. Parents/carers must contact the school in person or on the telephone to provide an explanation on the first day their child is absent.

Parents need to do everything they can to promote the value of good education for their children, and to prevent any unnecessary school absences, such as making medical appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

This Policy is reviewed triennially by

The Governing Body

It was last reviewed in

January 2020

It will next be reviewed in

January 2023