

HOLY TRINITY
PRIMARY
SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE
POLICY

Rationale:

The importance of regular school attendance and good punctuality cannot be over estimated. Regular attendance is a pre requisite to a good education and securing it is high priority for our school. By failing to attend school regularly, pupils diminish the value of education provided for them It affects their ability to achieve their full potential and of developing social skills. Frequent lateness also has a dramatic effect on a child's education. A child who is late for school, finds it more difficult to settle that day, they miss vital work, which then has to be caught up. It also disrupts lessons for the teacher and the rest of the children in the class.

Aims:

- To encourage parents to ensure their children are at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- To work in partnership with parents to establish good attendance patterns.
- To develop a positive reward system to encourage good attendance.
- To keep parents informed about their child's attendance and punctuality.
- To encourage children to be independent and come to school every day, on time and with the correct resources.
- To liaise with the Education welfare Officer with regard to attendance.
- To improve rates of attendance for all pupils in school

Why is school attendance and punctuality important?

- It is required by law.
- Children need to attend school regularly to keep up with their work and promote social development.
- A good education will give your child the best possible start in life and enable him or her to make the best of the opportunities available.
- Children need to develop good habits in readiness for later life.
- Employers of school leavers will take into account the young person's school attendance and punctuality record before making a job offer.
- Young people who are away from school without good reason are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of the Principal/ Vice Principal:

- The Vice Principal is responsible for managing pupil attendance within school in liaison with the teachers in charge of attendance in KS1 and KS2.
- The Vice Principal rewards good attendance each week, with the weekly attendance trophy for the highest attending class group.
- The Principal rewards 100% attendance at the end of each year, with pupils presented with a certificate for full attendance and a prize during the Prize giving ceremony.
- Each term, the Education Welfare Officer and Vice Principal reviews the registers and identifies any patterns of attendance that are of concern. Where appropriate visits are made to the family home by the Education Welfare Officer.
- Monitor punctuality
- Each year a report on school attendance is provided for the consideration of the Board of Governors.
- Support parents who are having difficulty getting their child to attend each day

Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors:

- To consider the Principal's report on school attendance each year.

Roles and responsibilities of the Teachers in charge of attendance:

- The teachers are responsible for managing pupil attendance within their key stage in liaison with the Principal/Vice Principal.
- To work closely with the EWO to monitor attendance through SIMS.
- To send initial letters home to parents whose children are beginning to show signs of frequent absenteeism.
- To refer children to the EWO if there is a pattern to their non attendance or if their attendance falls below 85%.
- To Complete the weekly attendance file noting reasons for absences

Roles and responsibilities of Staff:

- To ensure the register is maintained accurately at the commencement of each school session, and returned to the school office every Friday. Registers are legal documents and can form evidence base in court cases. [See Appendix A for Registration Codes]
- To report any notable and concerning patterns of absence to the teacher responsible for attendance or the Vice Principal. They in turn may contact Education welfare Officer,
- In the Reception Class to establish good habits with attendance
- To use the latecomers book to record pupils who are frequently late for class.

Roles and responsibilities of Parents and Guardians:

- Parents should ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- If their child is genuinely unable to attend school, Parents and Guardians are expected to contact school at the start of each day of absence to provide a reason for absence. On the child's return to school, a letter signed by the Parent or Guardian, explaining absence should be provided.
- If their child starts avoiding school, parents and guardians should contact the school straightaway and work with them to sort things out.
- If their child needs to miss school, for example for a religious festival or some other special occasion, the parent or guardian should seek the school's agreement well in advance and give full details.
- Parents and guardians are requested to make **routine medical or dental appointments outside school hours.**
- Parents and guardians are discouraged from taking holidays during term-time. However, if this is a necessity, parents and guardians are required to apply to the Principal for authorised holiday absence prior to booking the holiday.

Roles and responsibilities of Pupils:

- To attend school every day, arriving on time and ready for work.

Procedures to record attendance and punctuality

Children may come into school from 9.00. School starts at 9.15. Any child who comes to school after this time will be marked late in the latecomers book.

The teacher has a register which he/she completes every day. They will mark the appropriate code with a pencil and the register will be sent to the office every Friday (refer to appendix 1). If a child is absent for half a day this will also be noted.

The school secretary inserts the attendance figures on to the SIMS system every week and gives a print off of each classes figures to the Principal. The Vice Principal then visits each classroom every Monday presenting an attendance trophy to the class with the best attendance in each year group. The class which has the best attendance in each Key Stage receives the Key Stage attendance trophy at the Monthly assembly.

The secretary also produces a weekly list of children absent from each class. The class teacher marks beside each child's name the reason for absence (if known). This is maintained by the teachers responsible for attendance. In Holy Trinity there is a teacher from Key Stage one and one from Key Stage Two who are responsible for monitoring attendance in the school.

The EWO visits the school once a month and working with the teachers responsible for attendance completes an audit of the school attendance. Children whose attendance falls below 85% will be referred.

We recognise that there are occasions when a child may be late for school – appointment, heavy traffic, illness etc. If however a child is late for school frequently or if there is not a genuine reason for the tardiness, then staff will record the names of children who come to school late in the latecomers book. These books are monitored, every fortnight by the teachers responsible for punctuality. The names of children who have been late for school more than five times over a two month period are referred to the Vice Principal. The Vice Principal will send home an initial letter and if there is no improvement will seek a face-to- face meeting with the parent to discuss punctuality.

When can children be absent from school?

Reasonable reasons for absence can include when he or she

- is ill.
- has an unavoidable medical or dental appointment.
- is taking part in a religious event.
- Is representing their country in an event.
- has an exceptional family circumstance, e.g. wedding or a funeral
- It has been authorised by the Principal/Vice Principal.

Some unacceptable reasons for absence.

- Birthdays.
- Visiting relatives.
- Shopping.
- Hair appointment.
- Looking after other members of the family.
- Long weekend breaks.
- when there is reason to doubt the explanation
- truancy before or during the school day

Holidays during term time

In Holy Trinity we actively discourage parents from taking a child on holiday during term time. It causes disruption to the child's education and means that the child is missing out on essential work which the rest of the class is doing. In some cases the child may find it very difficult to catch up on this work.

If parents do decide to take their child on holiday they should contact the principal or Vice Principal prior to booking the holiday to seek authorization.

They should ensure on their return that the child tries to catch up on all work missed.

What may happen if a child does not attend regularly?

The law states that parents are responsible for ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance at school. The staff in Holy Trinity School will work with parents, providing support to assist them in getting their child to school each day and on time but if this is unsuccessful a referral will have to be made to the Education Welfare Officer. Home visits will be made by the EWO to any pupils causing concern. The EWO will try to resolve the situation by agreement but if the child's attendance fails to improve, these Officers can fine parents up to £1000 for each child who fails to attend regularly.

The Local Education and Library Board also has the option of applying for an Education Supervision Order in respect of the child. It is important that parents co-operate with the school and the Education Welfare Officer in order to resolve any difficulties early before any legal action becomes necessary.

Incentives in Holy Trinity to improve attendance and Punctuality

- Weekly visits by the Vice principal who will talk in general to the children about attendance and punctuality and will talk to individual pupils when required.
- The vice principal awards the class in each year group with the best attendance the weekly attendance trophy. A notice is placed on their classroom door to enable other classes to see that they were the best attenders of the week.
- The Principal will present the monthly attendance trophy to the class in each key stage with the best attendance. This will be presented during the monthly assembly and the class will have their photograph put on display in the school foyer.
- Letters of referral will be sent home to parents
- The vice principal will phone parents if she has a concern about a child's attendance.
- The "mitchers" register will be maintained. Parents will be telephoned immediately if a confirmed "mitcher" is absent from school.
- Random absence checks will take place every week where a class will be selected and the parents of those children who are absent from the class on that day will receive a phone call from the main office.
- Children who have 100% attendance will receive a book prize and certificate at the prize giving ceremony.
- Posters about attendance will be displayed in the parents room.

This policy will be placed on the website and will be available for parents. It will be reviewed in 2010.

Appendices:

Appendix A:

NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetable sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances