Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our symbol of Jesus, Mary and Joseph signifies the importance of a loving family, at the heart of which is building our relationship with God, through the teachings of the Catholic faith.

Our Mission

We are committed to the highest quality education for all

- *We are committed to promoting an inclusive, loving family through the teachings of the Catholic faith*
- *We are committed to safeguarding everyone in our family*

Values

We promise to keep everyone Learning, Included, Safe

Holy Family: Together in love

Updated: September 2024	*Review: September 2025*

"Children who do not regularly attend school do not achieve their full potential. Not only do they miss lessons, but patchy attendance makes it more and more difficult to catch up".

Audit commission.gov.uk: Improving School Attendance

Aims

The purpose of this revised policy is to:

- *ensure the regular and punctual attendance of all pupils at The Holy Family Catholic Primary School*
- *clarify the staged procedures for staff, Governors and parents*
- *ensure the accurate recording of attendance and absence by teachers*
- *set targets for improvement*
- *Safeguard children who are not attending school*

Attendance

It is a legal requirement for children to attend school. From 1 September 2013 legislation prohibits any school **from authorising leave of absence for holidays** *except in exceptional circumstances. Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, came into force on 1 September 2013. It is therefore illegal to take children out of school for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to any leave of absence for a holiday during term time. Schools are in session for 38 weeks per year, so there are opportunities to take children on holiday during the remaining 14 weeks.*

Poor attendance disadvantages children. To this end, high regard is placed on regular and punctual attendance at Holy Family Catholic Primary School. Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year unless there is a good reason for absence. Registers are kept for all classes including the under-fives. Pupils are marked present or absent at the beginning of each am and pm sessions. Parents must telephone or send a message to the school when their children are absent to explain the reason. This should be done before 9.00am. Reasons for absence are recorded in the register.

Registers are checked daily and where there is cause for concern further appropriate action is taken, contact is made with parents and carers (by telephone and/or letter); daily monitoring of a child's attendance is actioned. The school wishes to support parents and carers who are finding it difficult to ensure regular and punctual attendance.

The school will proactively use attendance data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. These pupils will be discussed with the attendance team.
The school will work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the absence including an barriers to attendance. We will, where appropriate, signpost support services for parents. This follows the Support First Principle.

The school will –

- Make first day phone calls where no contact has been made by the parents
- Make home visits where appropriate
- Write letters to parents
- Speak to the young person when they next attend
- Provide guidance about illnesses that do not require a child to be absent / have time liites
- Monitor pupils that are regularly late
- Monitor attendance for patterns
- Consider if there are unmet learning needs
- Take into consideration EAL for the family
- Hold in school meetings with parents
- Make reasonable adjustments where this is appropriate
- Maintain attendance data
- Make referrals to other agencies including: Notts Help Yourself, Nottinghamshire Pathway to Provision, Health Related Education Team, The Education Pyschology Service, Anxiety Related Non-Attendance

The school will also attend relevant training including developing our support for pupils with Emotionally Based School avoidance, Anxiety Related Non-Attendance and will liaise with outside agencies where this is appropriate. We will ensure that key staff understand the Attend Framework. A referral to EHAF may be considered. In addition, we will monitor attendance through a safeguarding lens and will liaise with safeguarding agencies where this is appropriate.

If attendance issues persist, we will take an active part in a multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. We will act as a lead practitioner where all partners agrees that the school is best placed to lead.

Encouraging Good Attendance

At Holy Family Primary School, we encourage good attendance through an attendance slide in celebration assembly each week. All children who attend the whole week on time receive a raffle ticket and are entered into a draw. Each week two tickets are chosen, winning a prize for the individual and a class extra playtime. These tickets accumulate and each half term a family draw is made

to celebrate and reward a family of a pupil. Certificates for outstanding attendance (100%) are awarded each term along with a seasonal reward.

All parents are informed of their child's attendance at Parents' Evenings and on reports.

Absence

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken if necessary;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Holidays During Term Time

Regular attendance means every day that the school is open.
Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Educational Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1st September 2013.

From this date amendments make clear that Headteachers **may not grant any leave of absence** during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances do not cover family holidays.

If parents disregard these regulations the absence will be unauthorised and the school may apply for a penalty notice to be issued by the local authority in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007.

From September 2024, all schools in Nottinghamshire will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons within a 10 week period. The penalty is £160 per parent, per child. If paid within 21 days, this is reduced to £80. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Parents can be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made. Each parent with parental responsibility for the child will be subject to the fine and it will apply for each child. In effect, this

means that if a mother and father take their two children out of school they could be subject to at least a £320.00 fine.

Failure to pay within 28 days may result in prosecution. This can lead to fines of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Lateness

School begins at 8.15am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration for this essential time. Any child arriving after 8.25am is late. Reasons for lateness and the time arrived are noted in the register.

All children attending late must report to the main entrance.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, further action may be taken. This may also result in a penalty notice.

Registers are closed at 9:00am. Pupils arriving after this time classed as absent with or without authorisation, as appropriate, for this session.

Roles and Responsibilities

Class teachers have initial responsibility for:

- expecting good attendance and punctuality from the children in their class, conveying the importance of regular and punctual attendance to parents recording attendance, absence and lateness appropriately and accurately in the register
- referring concerns to the headteacher
- informing parents of their child's attendance % each year as part of the school report
- informing parents of their child's attendance % each term

Attendance Officer and Admin Officer have responsibility for:

- carrying out First Day Calling
- close monitoring of attendance particularly those pupils causing concern
- contacting parents

The Head Teacher has responsibility for:

- ensuring the implementation of this Policy
- ensuring home visits and letters are sent / made
- reporting attendance and absence matters/concerns to the Governing Body

The Governors have responsibility for:

- ensuring the implementation of this Policy
- authorising requests for leave of absence for family holidays (delegated to the headteacher)

Parents have responsibility for:

- informing the school of reason for absence or lateness
- ensuring that they do not allow a child to have time off school unless it is really necessary
- making appointments outside school time wherever possible.

Completing the Register

The completion of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons:

- registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils; important if school has to be evacuated in an emergency
- they are documents which may be required in a court of law, e.g. as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance
- they contribute to end of term and end of year reports and any certificates of achievement.
- as a legal document, registers must be kept on the premises at all times.
- Registers are completed electronically.
- the appropriate symbols are inserted by the school office
- register totals are calculated electronically

Statutory Guidance on Education-Related Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices

Introduction

Local authorities and schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school.

Local authorities, police constables, school governing bodies, school head teachers (and staff authorised by the head) and teachers-in-charge of pupil referral units are required by law to have regard to the relevant parts of this guidance when carrying out their functions in relation to parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices. This means that while the guidance does not have the force of law, there is an expectation that it will be followed unless there is good reason to depart from it.

Purpose and scope of these legal measures

Parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices are interventions available to promote better school attendance and behaviour. Good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects. These measures are permissive and it is for individual governing bodies and local authorities to decide whether to use them.

Parenting contracts, orders and penalty notices for irregular attendance apply only to pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school. Penalty notices for parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded also apply only to children of compulsory school age who are registered at a school. Parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices for misbehaviour can be applied to pupils outside compulsory school age e.g. in a sixth form or maintained nursery.

Local authorities also have other powers to enforce school attendance where this becomes problematic, including the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply

with a school attendance order or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school.
Local authorities and schools using parenting contracts, parenting orders or penalty notices need to ensure that parents affected have access to clear, accurate information, including about their own rights and responsibilities.

School Attendance Orders

If it appears to the local authority that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, then they must begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order (Under section 437 of the Education Act 1996.) The order will require the child's parents to register their child at a named school. If they fail to comply with the order the parent can be prosecuted.

Parenting Contracts

A parenting contract (Section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003) is a formal written signed agreement between parents and either the local authority or the governing body of a school and should contain:

A statement by the parents that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are set out in the contract; and

A statement by the local authority or governing body agreeing to provide support to the parents for the purpose of complying with the contract.

Parenting contracts can be used in cases of serious misbehaviour (Section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 provides that parenting contracts can be entered into where a child who is a registered pupil has engaged in behaviour connected with the school which is likely to cause significant disruption to the education of others, significant detriment to the welfare of the child himself or of other pupils or to the health and safety of staff or the pupil is at risk of exclusion.) or irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. Parenting contracts are voluntary but any non-compliance should be recorded by the school or local authority as it may be used as evidence in court where an application is made for a behaviour parenting order.

The local authority or governing body should fund any support required to implement a parenting contract (such as referral to parenting classes) and provide information to parents about other types of support available such as details of national and local agencies and helplines.

Parenting Orders

Parenting orders (Section 8 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 parenting orders for irregular attendance) are imposed by the court and the parents' agreement is not required before an order is made.

Parenting orders are available as an 'ancillary order' following a successful prosecution by the local authority for irregular attendance or breach of a school attendance order.

They are also available as a 'free-standing order' by direct application by the governing body of a school or local authority to the Magistrates' Court in cases either where exclusion has taken place or where there has been serious misbehaviour (18Section 98 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that where a school or local authority have reason to believe that a pupil has behaved in such a way as to cause, or be likely to cause, significant disruption to the education of other pupils or significant detriment to the welfare of that pupil or other pupils or to the health or safety of any staff. Or, where the pattern of behaviour (if continued) could lead to the pupil being excluded.) An application for a parenting order for misbehaviour must be made within 40 school days of the date upon which the latest instance of serious misbehaviour occurred or, if applicable, the date on which the exclusion review process ends. If a parent has already entered into a parenting contract, an application can be made within 6 months of the date the contract was signed.

Parenting orders consist of 2 elements:
A requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's behaviour. This is the core of the parenting order and lasts for up to 3 months; and

A requirement for parents to comply with such requirements as is specified in the order. This element can last up to 12 months.

All parenting orders must be supervised by a 'responsible officer' from the school (behaviour orders only) or local authority. They are individually named in the parenting order.
Any breach by parents without a reasonable excuse could lead to a fine of up to £1,000. The police may enforce any breach of an order by a parent.
Parents have a right to appeal a parenting order to the Crown Court.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices (Section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003) are fines of £80/£160 imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided. They can only be issued by a head teacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head authorised by the head teacher), a local authority officer or the police. All schools and the police must send copies of penalties issued to the local authority. Penalties can only be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences. Persistent lateness could result in a penalty notice being issued and **any** unauthorised absence of more than 10 sessions in a rolling 10 week period may also result in a penalty notice.

Penalty notices (Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place (Section 103(8) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states a public place means any highway or any place to which the public has access.) during school hours (School hours mean school sessions or a break between sessions on the same school day) without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.