



# HRB Attendance

The aim of this policy is to enable outstanding pupil attendance by clarify roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. The policy outlines procedures, rewards and sanctions related to pupil attendance.

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# **Holy Rosary Catholic Voluntary Academy**

**“Building Loving Hearts and Strong Minds in Union with God and Each Other”**

## **Introduction**

As a Catholic school we seek to work in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure the best possible start for each child entrusted to our care. Regular attendance and punctuality are an essential part of this partnership.

### **The purpose of this policy:**

- Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.
- Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent people who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community
- All stakeholders work together – pupils, parents/carers, teachers, internal admin, external agencies and Governors.
- This policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the wellbeing of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying and support for children with medical needs.
- All children should be in school, on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- Rewards and benefits for good attendance are clearly displayed and promoted throughout the academy and wider community.

### **Responsibilities:**

Parent/carers are responsible by law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parent/carers should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with the academy staff and other relevant agencies to overcome any problems which may affect a child’s overall attendance. The policy will be available on the academy’s website.

The academy encourages and values high attendance rates. The academy recognises the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parent/carers and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The academy takes a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with pupils and their parents/carer and provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

## Roles

### Holy Rosary Catholic Voluntary Academy will:

- Monitor attendance through daily registration and weekly priority pupil meetings. Registers are taken in the morning and at the start of the afternoon session.
- Encourage good attendance through regular assemblies and promotional material and investigate all unexplained and unjustified absenteeism.
- Work closely with parent/carer and other external agencies should attendance or punctuality give a cause for concern.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance.

### Parents and Pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- Have individual records of attendance provided by the academy annually which will be incorporated into the pupil's yearly report to parents.
- When a child is absent, parents should contact the school office on **01283 562686** before **10.00 am** on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence. This may be done by leaving a message on the school's answer-phone service. **Please do not send absence messages by Class DoJo.** Be specific as possible regarding the reason for absence/lateness, stating the child's name and year group.
- Children arriving after 9.00 am will enter school through the school office.
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Ensure school has two up to date contact details.
- Ensure pupils arrive on time. Registers are taken close at 9.00 am. After 9.00 am a child will be registered as late. After 09.15 am a child will be registered as an unauthorised late.

### Office staff, class teachers and leaders will:

- Keep an accurate register at the beginning of the morning session and the afternoon session, using the class register provided. **Morning Register will be from: 9.00 am – 9.15 am.**  
**Afternoon Register will be: - FS2 and KS1 – 1-1:15 pm // LKS2 – 1:15-1:30 pm // UKS2 - 1.30 pm – 1.45 pm.**
- Make a note of late arrival on registers recording the time of arrival on SIMS.
- Refer to the priority pupil meeting if there are concerns about a particular pupil highlighting attendance irregularities or consistencies
- Inform and communicate directly with classroom staff of pupils who are being monitored.

- When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. First day calls will be made once the marks have been formally recorded in SIMS. The school office and/or Pupil and Family Support Worker will aim to contact the parent or carer if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence. This is to check on the safety of the child and their family.
- When a child is absent for two days in a row and no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence, the Pupil and Family Support Worker and leader on duty will aim to complete a home visit. This is to check on the safety of the child and their family.
- Monitor pupils whose attendance is less than 95%
- Record information on attendance on SIMs.
- Send formal letters to parents/carers outlining concerns/consequences if unauthorised absence continues.
- Implement specified interventions and plans for pupils who are persistently absent.
- Ask for medical evidence of persistent medical absence from school. These concerns will also be addressed by inviting you to a meeting within our academy with parents/carers and a member of our Inclusion and/or Senior Leadership Team.
- Liaise with Early Help providers including East Staffordshire Family Support Service, Early Help Team and Safeguarding Unit within East Staffordshire and support with making appropriate referrals where support is required.
- Provide a termly report to SRSCMAT and Local Governing Body about academy attendance.
- Research government information on attendance and use the latest research and/or case studies to apply best practice.

**Governors will:**

- Scrutinise attendance and punctuality data at Governors' meetings presented to them in termly Headteacher's reports.
- Challenge and support leaders to maintain high levels of attendance.
- Monitor strategies implemented by the school to improve pupil attendance.

**Holy Rosary Attendance Target**

For children in Year 1 to Year 6, the academy's attendance target for the academic year 2021 – 2022 is 98%. It will be monitored by the Headteacher, Business Manager, Pupil and Family Support Worker, Priority Pupil team, governors and SRS CMAT Trust Board.

**Targeting and Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality**

At Holy Rosary Catholic Voluntary Academy, we widely publicise the benefits of regular attendance and the link to better learning outcomes. Pupils whose attendance is 98% and above will receive a reward at the end of each year. Teachers give Class Dojo points for Character Behaviours shown by

pupils in link with presentation. Specific rewards and interventions are implemented to meet the needs of individuals. This is decided within the weekly priority pupil meeting.

### **Request for leave of absence in Exceptional Circumstances.**

#### **Leave of absence during term time**

We have adopted a zero-tolerance policy with regards to holidays during term time; this is in line with Local Authority and Government Guidelines. Government legislation from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 states schools can only grant requests for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances.

No holidays will be authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Parents should complete a 'Leave of Absence Request Form' which is available from the school office. This will be passed to the priority pupil team for further consideration. Where authorised absence is given, this will be up to a maximum of 3 days and will most likely be short depending on the request.

Examples of what may constitute exceptional circumstances:

- to have a short absence to attend a family funeral.
- to attend a special religious ceremony for the individual or an immediate family member.
- to attend a cultural festival.

When an absence is authorised, parents will be provided with written evidence signed by the Headteacher.

If a parent does not apply for leave but we have reason to believe that the pupil has been taken on holiday, we will contact the parent to express our concern. The parent will be expected to provide contrary evidence to be received at school by a specified date. Should the supporting documentation not be provided by the specified date, the absence will be coded as unauthorised leave of absence and the relevant procedures will be applied. This could include a Penalty Notice fine by the Local Authority.

### **Definitions**

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day. This shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Holy Rosary use attendance and absence codes as required by the DfE School Attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities. The reason of each absence is always required.

### **Authorised Absence or Lateness**

Only the school can authorise an absence.

1. Where the school is satisfied with the explanation for the absence and the child is not classified as persistently absent (less than 90% attendance), the school will authorise the absence.
2. If pupils need to attend a doctor/dentist appointment and they return to school immediately after, they will not be counted as absent unless the child misses a whole session. This is the same for a child who leaves after registration for a good reason such as illness etc.

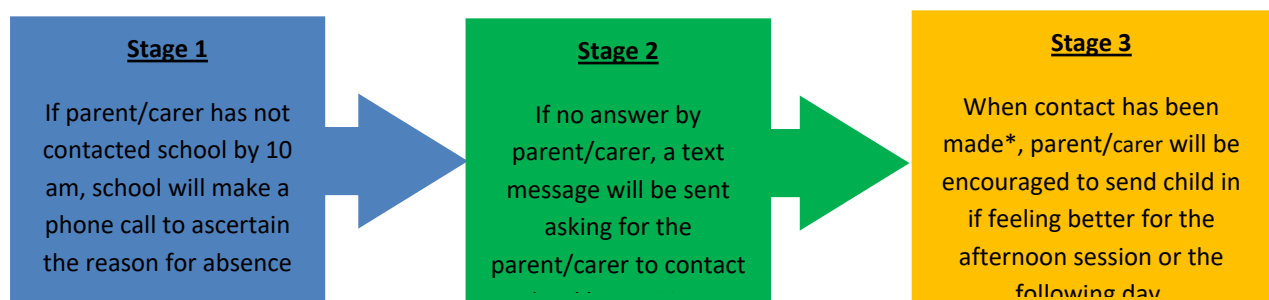
### **Unauthorised Absence**

An absence is classified an unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes (but is not limited to):

- absences that have never been properly explained.
- absences that follow a particular pattern (regular sporadic days off – including for illness).
- holidays, family/birthday events that have not been agreed to having any exceptional circumstance.
- parents/carers collecting their child within school time to attend their own personal appointments.

### **Absence Day 1 Procedure**



\* If there is no contact made by 11:30 am, the attendance officer will raise a safeguarding concern using My Concern. The leader on duty will then decide how to make contact with the child on the first day of absence. This could be another call, a 'Teams' meeting or other video call, or a house visit.

### **Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:**

#### **Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time**

From 1st January 2018 **any** period of unauthorised leave may result in parents receiving a penalty notice fine. The Headteacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by the Headteacher to the local authority.

#### **Penalty Notice for persistent lateness**

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning could be issued. **This has now changed to 10 marks.** Late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued. Parents are therefore encouraged to ensure their child attends school on time. However, if their child is late they must inform the school of the reason(s) why, as we may be able to offer them some form of advice or support.

#### **Persistent Lateness Communications**

The school will text parents when pupils have been late 5 times with the following message:

'Your child has been late to school 5 times this term. If we can help you in any way, please let us know.'

The school will text parents when pupils have been late 8 times with the following message:

'Your child has been late to school 8 times this term. Please contact the school to arrange a meeting with Mr Miller to discuss how we can support your child's punctuality.'

The school will write to parents when pupils have been late 10 times with the following message:

'Your child has been late to school 10 times this term. Any more late marks may lead to a penalty notice warning.'

Where the academy sees no change in behaviour, a penalty warning notice will be issued.

#### **Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness**

If a child has had 20 sessions of unauthorised absence or is late 10 times over a twelve-week period, the parent may receive a penalty warning notice and potentially a fine. For persistent absence, it will be measured as 20 sessions in the combination of O and U, if the U codes have not been used for a persistent lateness referral, to be sent in for a penalty notice.

The Penalty Notice fine issued by the Local Authority would be:

- £60.00 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120.00 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to prosecute under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

See Staffordshire County Council's Penalty Notice Protocol:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Attendance.aspx>



## Persistent Absence Procedure and Support

The school will operate the following procedure for pupils who have hit the persistently absence threshold.



### How is the threshold measured?

The threshold for persistent absence is 90%. Therefore, attendance which is below 90% will be counted as persistent absence. There are a number of reasons for absence from school, some which will be authorised and some which will be unauthorised as stated above.

In the Advent and Lent terms, persistent absence can also be defined by the number of both authorised and unauthorised sessions missed. If pupils are absent for 10+ sessions in a half-term, the school will deem pupils are persistently absent.

### **Priority Pupil Meeting**

Weekly meetings will be held with key staff to highlight pupils who may be showing signs of poor attendance. Concerns relating to particular pupils will be shared at this meeting and decisions will be made where preventative action needs to be taken.

Pupils who meet the threshold of having an attendance level of under 95% - or who have missed 5+ sessions in a single half-term - will be closely monitored and first contact will be made by the academy's Pupil and Family Support Worker by text, phone or in person, unless the reasons for absence are clear (eg. one continuous period of time off school due to illness). The aim is to work and communicate with parents/carers and school staff to increase this figure. The academy focusses on this figure to ensure that the earliest possible help is given to pupils and their families where it is needed.

Parents of pupils whose attendance is being monitored and with an attendance of below 90% and which continues to fall - or who have missed 10+ sessions in a single half-term - and have received first contact will be invited to a meeting in school, unless the reasons for absence are clear (eg. one continuous period of time off school due to illness), with the Pupil and Family Support Worker and/or SLT and/or Education Welfare Officer to make an initial assessment of the child and their current needs. At this meeting, specific attendance targets will be agreed and reviewed on a regular basis. Parents/carers will be signposted to agencies to assist with improving attendance and with agreement, a referral will be made to East Staffordshire Family Support Service.

If attendance continues to fall and continues to be an issue, the first formal letter will be sent to parents/carers, informing them of the academy's concerns, what might happen if the issue continues and to come into school to meet.

If you want to read examples of our formal letters, please contact: [attendance@hrb.srscmat.co.uk](mailto:attendance@hrb.srscmat.co.uk)

### **Formal Letters - Lent and Pentecost Term**

At the beginning of the Lent and Pentecost term, formal letters are sent to parents of pupils where there are attendance concerns. All parents of pupils whose attendance is below 95% will receive a letter unless the reasons for absence are clear (eg. one continuous period of time off school due to illness) or the communication and action that is already taking between school and home are deemed to be working. This is to ensure that the academy is living up to its mission and there is an appropriate balance between compassionate support and high expectations. The Headteacher will send these letters on a case by case basis.

A second letter will be sent if attendance continues to be an issue.

A third and final letter will be sent when the academy has serious concerns about your child's attendance. This letter may lead to a penalty notice warning, which could lead to a penalty notice fine.

### **Illness and Medical Appointments**

When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 10.00 am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence. This may be done by leaving a message on the school's answer-phone service. If you are unable to call the school, you can email – [attendance@hrb.srscmat.co.uk](mailto:attendance@hrb.srscmat.co.uk)

It is important for parents to contact the school regarding the reason for the absence otherwise it may be deemed a safeguarding issue and a concern may be raised on the school's safeguarding system, My Concern.

Where a medical appointment is necessary, or your child is ill, please ensure that:

- every effort has been made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- Efforts are made to obtain an appointment card or verification by the doctors/dentist/hospital and shared with the academy.
- pupils return to school directly after the appointment.
- if your child is absent due to sickness and/or diarrhoea, they should not return to school for the **next 48 hours** after their last episode. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults.
- absences of more than 3 days will require a written explanation of why the child was absent. The school office will request this if it is not produced. A letter or email will be acceptable.

### **Deletions from the School Admission Register**

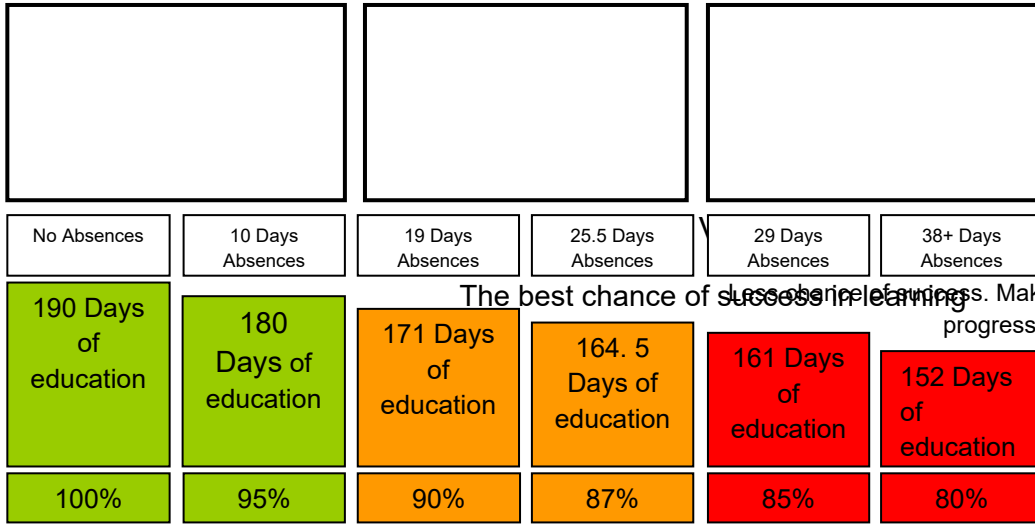
Deletions from the Admission Register will only occur on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The School will inform the Local Authority of all deletions from the Admission Register as stated in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, apart from at standard transition points.

Should a pupil meet the criteria of being deleted from the Admission Register and their whereabouts are unknown, as stated in the grounds for deleting a pupil from the school Admission Register,

section 8 (1)(f) and 8 (1) (h), then the Attendance Officer will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, following the Department of Education's Regulations on Children Missing from Education. The Local Authority will be informed of the enquiries into the whereabouts of pupils and should the absence threshold be met, the School will remove the pupil from the Admission Register. The CTF file will be retained until further advice is provided from the relevant Local Authority.

Should the School receive a written notification, by a parent, to home educate their child, the School must inform the Local Authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. The School will not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding a pupil or because a pupil has a poor attendance record.

## The Effect of Absence on School Progress



The best chance of success in learning

Less chance of missing progress and socialise

There are 365 days in a year.  
A School Year is only 190 days.