



## **ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

# **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

*"We will provide a Christian Education for all pupils based on the teachings of Jesus and the Spirit of the Gospels. The whole life of the school will be determined by the Gospel Values of Love and Justice. We will always value and care for all members of the All Saints Community according to their needs, and will affirm and nurture the development of all"*

*School Mission Statement*

**Policy Reviewed by Governing Body**

**Date Reviewed: March 2014**

**Next Review Date: March 2016**

# **ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

At All Saints we believe that high levels of attendance and punctuality are essential for the continuity of pupil's learning and subsequent progress to achieve their potential. The school will take action to reinforce good attendance and punctuality in a consistent manner and will liaise with parents when difficulties arise.

### **Aims**

- To make attendance a priority for the whole school including governors, pupils, parents and pupils.
- To ensure pupils receive a quality education.

### **Communication**

Our policy will be given to staff, parents/guardians and Governors and will be available on the School's website.

### **School responsibilities**

- To regularly and effectively monitor school attendance and to inform parents when their child is absent on a daily basis.
- If no telephone contact is possible, letters to be sent daily advising parents of child's absence. A follow up home visit will be made.
- Interview a pupil on their return to school, if irregular attendance is a concern.
- Set achievable targets for pupils whose attendance is less than 95%.
- Liaise with the external agencies to improve school attendance.
- Address and support any pupil who has difficulties attending school.
- Progress Leaders/Tutors to inform Attendance staff of any absences that are a concern.
- To accurately record attendance and punctuality.
- Establish and maintain effective communication between school and home.
- Keep parents informed of any attendance concerns.
- Ensure that All Saints is a caring and stimulating school, at which, pupils enjoy attending.
- Monitor the School's attendance and related issues through termly reporting, at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education, as required and on time.
- Ensure that there is a named member of the School Leadership Team to lead on attendance.

### **The School Leadership Team will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/ guardians.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/ carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance & Punctuality Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the Attendance & Punctuality Policy and are adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Return school attendance data to the Department for Education, on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site, are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently, to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions implemented.

#### **School Attendance Team Manager**

- Manage the Attendance Team.
- Arrange contact with parents on first day of absence.
- Co-ordinate the communication to parents for a child's absence. (Written/Verbal/Visits).
- Organise and co-ordinate visits made by the Home School Liaison Team (HSLT) and the LA School Attendance Team.
- Co-ordinate interviews with pupils in school.
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- Collate information on all pupils with attendance problems.
- Liaise with PL/APL, School Mentors and local authority school attendance team to ensure every problem is being addressed.
- Hold half termly meetings with SAIO (School Attendance Improvement Officer) and (EOs) Education Officers to discuss attendance concerns.
- Monitor pupils with authorised absences e.g. medical or educated off site.
- Monitor all administration work relating to attendance.
- Produce reports relating to attendance.

## **Local Authority School Attendance Service**

The school attendance service works in partnership with the school and parents/ guardian, offering support and advice in a bid to ensure regular school attendance.

The education officers work to a structured pattern, addressing pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. Duties include home visits assessing problems and if necessary referring on to other agencies or to SAIO for further action.

The SAIO works closely with the school in an advisory and consultative role. Liaising with the primary feeder schools and working to the staged action planning model (See Appendix A). They perform the statutory duties of the LA with regard to school attendance.

The SAIO will co-ordinate visits during the summer holidays, to pupils who will be starting Year 7 at All Saints in the September and, whose attendance has been identified as a cause for concern whilst in year 6.

### **The Pastoral Team/Tutors and Teachers will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/ guardians.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/guardians.
- Contribute to a whole School approach which reinforces good attendance at School, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Contribute to the evaluation of School strategies and interventions.

### **Pupil Responsibilities**

- To attend school regularly.
- To be punctual and appropriately prepared for the day
- To inform a member of staff of any problems that may prevent them from attending school.

### **Parent/ Guardians Responsibilities**

- To ensure their child attends school regularly in line with school's attendance target of 95%.
- To ensure they contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend. A letter should be brought in by the pupil on their return to school explaining the reason for absence.
- To keep school informed of an estimated return date for their child who has an illness of more than 1 day.
- To ensure that their child arrives prepared for the school day dressed in full school uniform and with the required equipment i.e. with planner, pen, pencil, ruler and specialist equipment, where necessary, including a bag. (All Saints Way).
- To contact school immediately in respect of the need for intervention should there be a problem that might affect the education or attendance of their child.

### **Support Systems - School Based Strategies to Encourage Attendance**

We will:

- Offer a range of interventions and support aimed at overcoming barriers to learning.
- Liaise with external agencies where necessary

- Set targets for groups, individuals and school
- HSLT to visit homes when pupils reach 10 absent sessions; display poor attendance patterns and/or where there may be cause for concern.
- Display attendance percentages in the atrium on year boards and in form classrooms.
- Recognise students with 100% attendance.
- Liaise with Progress Leaders, Tutors, Mentors, Senco and Attendance Team to discuss any problems arising that may affect a pupil's attendance.
- Provide attendance personnel at parents' evenings, to discuss attendance concerns.
- Communicate with parents and keep them informed of their child's attendance by mailing individual attendance printouts half termly.
- Act upon parental, staff and agency requests for support with attendance issues raised.
- Put in place preventative procedures wherever possible.
- Hold school assemblies, where attendance is addressed and rewarded.

### **Types of Absence**

Categorisation of absence needs to be consistent across the school. It is the School, not the parent who authorises absence.

When a pupil returns to school after any absence, a note explaining the absence should be given into the attendance office, explaining the reason for absence, (this is not an automatic agreement of the absence being authorised).

If a pupil's attendance is irregular (less than 95%), then school will request medical evidence for any future absences due to illnesses. Medical evidence can include an appointment card or prescription for medication.

### **Pupil Illness in School & Requests to leave school during the school day**

- If a pupil is seriously injured in school (See First Aid Policy).
- If a pupil is vomiting or showing signs of illness, then contact will be made with parent/ guardians requesting that they arrange for the child to be collected.

### **Acceptable reasons for leaving school during the day**

- Orthodontist appointments.
- Hospital appointments.
- Urgent doctor's appointments
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**It is advised that routine doctors and dental appointments are made after school hours or during school holidays.**

### **Authorised Absence**

Only the Principal can authorise the following absence criteria. (Parents cannot authorise absence).

### **Possible Authorised Absence**

- Illness.
- If absence is prolonged the Principal may decide not to authorise the absence without medical evidence.
- Unavoidable medical appointment (Ideally, medical appointments and dental appointments should be requested after school time or during holidays).
- Recognised religious observance.
- Bereavement.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Absence will be judged as unauthorised in the following circumstances:

- Unexplained absence - where no contact has been made with parent either through a phone call or written note.
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- Truancy.
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- Holidays taken during term time.
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- Pupils taking time off to go shopping (i.e. Christmas).
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- Pupils taking time off to celebrate birthday's etc.
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- Looking after other family members.
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- Waiting in for tradesmen.

## STAGED ACTION PLANNING & FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

Five stages of joint working may be identified which can clarify responsibilities in cases of pupil absenteeism.

### Stage One (In School)

A pupil has been identified with concerns regarding his/her attendance at school. Pastoral care are undertaking initial actions with parent(s) pupil and/or school staff as prescribed within the individual School Plan and any joint programmed approach with the School Attendance Service.

### Stage Two (Consultation)

The pupil's attendance continues to be of concern.

The pupil's name is entered onto a "List of concern" for discussion between nominated member of school staff and School Attendance Improvement Officer at planned liaison meetings.

### Stage Three (Referral for advice of Assessment)

Information is sought from the School Attendance Support staff to do Persistent Absences visits through routine enquiries or initial assessment, following which further discussions between School and School Attendance Improvement Officer is planned.

### Stage Four (Allocation to School Attendance Service)

Key worker status is undertaken by the School Attendance Service for planned work over an agreed **6 week** time scale. The School Attendance Support Assistant undertakes co-ordination of contacts and responsibility for the arrangements between home and school. Partnership between parents, school and pupil is maintained.

Other agencies are involved as appropriate.

### Stage Five

Concern regarding attendance continues following the planned intervention by all relevant agencies. SAIO and the School Attendance Manager discuss and agree the appropriate action and if the statutory process is to be followed e.g. Section 444 of the Education Act, proceedings and/or consideration of an Education Supervision Order.

### Fixed Penalty Notices

A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued after 10 consecutive unauthorised absences for an individual pupil, during a half term period.

A Fixed Penalty Warning Letter will be issued after 10 scattered absences where absences have been unauthorised, for an individual pupil, during a half term period. Any following absences unauthorised will prompt consideration of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.