



St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy **September 2023**

Our Mission Statement

'Nurturing Hearts and Minds'

God's love is at the heart of all that we do at St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School.

Hearts and Minds are nurtured in a stimulating and safe environment. We believe that every child is unique and we nurture each child through a creative and rounded curriculum to reach their full potential. Talents are celebrated and differences are respected within a strong, supportive Catholic community.

At St Gabriel's children learn to love, respect and care for each other and God's entire world. Our school is a place where children are filled with a love of life and learning.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2022-25

1.1 Regular attendance and punctuality is essential if children are to make good progress at school.

1.2 The school aims to maintain good attendance and punctuality by implementing a policy within which staff, children, parents and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school maintains attendance records and initiates quick and early intervention when a problem is identified. We feel it is crucial that children develop the habit of regular and punctual attendance and learn to be responsible and reliable. Staff encourage and acknowledge good attendance and punctuality, and liaise with colleagues, parents and other agencies when appropriate. In addition, good attendance and punctuality are seen as achievements in their own right and are recognised as such by the school.

1.3 This policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

1.4 This policy applies to all children from Early Years (Foundation Stage) to KS2.

2. REGISTRATION

2.1 There are four broad classifications in the attendance register:

Present: - Pupil on the school premises at the time of registration.

Approved educational activity: - Pupil is engaged in an approved supervised activity off site.

Authorised absence: - Pupil has the authority of the school to be absent, either given in advance or afterwards.

Unauthorised absence: - No explanation received or unacceptable reason given.

2.2 Symbols Used:

/	Present
B	Educated off site
V	Educational Visit/Activity
M	Medical/Dental Appointments/Confirmed Illness
O	Unauthorised Absence
L	Late
G	Unauthorised family holiday
C	Other authorised circumstances

N.B: Latecomers are counted as present and details noted in the Late Book or register.

2.3 Guidance on Completion of Registers

Registers are completed by the class teacher at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.

Each week is dated in the space provided.

Weeks are completed in the correct section for the appropriate term.

3. FIRST DAY CONTACT

3.1 DCSF (DfE) guidelines on school attendance stress that the single most effective initiative designed to improve rates of attendance is the implementation of first day response to pupil absence. Parents and carers are expected to support the school's policy on attendance, by:

- **Being aware that Registration closes at 9:00**
- contacting the school on the first day of absence
- establishing the reason for absence at an early stage,
- preventing unauthorised absence,
- informing the school of any potential difficulties with attendance, and access support from the Attendance team.

3.2 The school operates a first day contact policy as follows.

- Parents/Guardians are expected to contact school before 9.00 a.m. or leave a message via voice mail. In the event of no contact being made, Parents/Guardians are telephoned by a member of the attendance team.
- The outcome of the conversation is recorded and passed to the teacher on the standard telephone absence memo. Should there be no reasonable explanation for absence, this will be categorised as 'unauthorised.' Absence which falls below 90% which be classed as 'unauthorised' unless medical evidence is provided.

4. Monitoring Pupil Attendance

4.1 Registers are reviewed daily by a member of the attendance team, usually the school administrator, to ensure that attendance problems are addressed promptly.

- persistent or unexplained absences
- continual broken weeks
- patterns of non-attendance on specific days
- % attendance below the school average
- repeated medical absences and patterns of illness
- persistent lateness

It is school policy to communicate promptly with families and work with children and families to provide appropriate support to improve a child's attendance.

Persistent absences, or sudden changes to attendance, will trigger a response from the school attendance team. Parents/carers will be contacted to meet with the Headteacher or senior leader, to discuss attendance.

4.2 Class teachers also have a responsibility to support the school's policy, by monitoring attendance and forward any concerns, directly to the Headteacher.

4.3 If the Headteacher remains concerned regarding a pupil's welfare or attendance, a referral is made to the Education Welfare Officer, requesting a home visit. Parents/carers will be informed, either verbally or in writing.

Persistent Absence

The school attendance team has developed rigorous procedures for monitoring lateness and absence, under the guidance of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

Procedures are as follows:

- A pupil who has been identified with frequent absence is identified and recorded.
- If attendance falls below 95% a letter will be sent informing parents that their child's attendance is being monitored.
- If attendance falls below 90% parents will be called into school for an attendance clinic with the Principal.
- Should families be reluctant to access support, and the pupil attendance continues to cause concern, there will be a formal referral to Education Welfare, to further address the issue.

5. MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

5.1 The school discourages medical/dental appointments during school time. The following statement is printed in the in the newsletter at least once a term.

“Parents are requested to arrange non-emergency, non-urgent medical/dental or other appointments at the end of the school day”

6. HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

6.1 In line with government policy, the school will not authorise holidays to be taken during term time.

Parents who decide to remove their child from school for any period during the term, must complete a Leave of Absence request form, available from the school office.

Please note, persistent pupil absence may be classed as a legal offence and could result in legal proceedings.

Any unauthorised absence which exceeds more than four weeks may result in a child losing his/her place in the school.

7. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AND FIXED PENALTY NOTICE

7.1 Following changes in regulation, Leave of Absence may only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher and Governing Body will determine what the exceptional circumstances are.

7.2 A Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter can be issued when a pupil has had 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 days) from school within a whole term or two consecutive half terms.

7.3 If an absence is requested, a 'Request for Leave in Exceptional Circumstances' must be completed with a letter addressed to the Headteacher explaining the exceptional circumstance.

Please refer to the chart below for details of the FPN process including fines and timelines.

Penalties for unauthorised absence		
Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per parent
After 28 days	You will be summonsed to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	You will be summonsed to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance

8. ACKNOWLEDGING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The school has introduced a series of positive strategies to promote and reward good attendance.

8.1 Weekly trophies are awarded to the class for best attendance of the week. Staff constantly praise and offer positive encouragement to children who are regularly punctual and have good attendance.

8.2 Attendance for each class is reported on each fortnightly newsletter.

8.3 A Champions of Attendance termly certificate is awarded each term and at the end of year, highlighting the class with the best attendance.

8. PUNCTUALITY

8.1 A member of staff is on duty each day, meeting and greeting all pupils, whilst supervising and encouraging children to be punctual.

8.2 Senior leaders monitor punctuality and attendance on a weekly basis.

8.3 A "Late Book" is kept in the office to record the date, time and reason for being late.

This policy was agreed by the Governing Body on _____