



Mount Carmel

R.C. HIGH SCHOOL



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Last review date: October 2023 – Mr P Dugdale

Next review date: July 2024

A Family of Faith & Learning

Aims:

- Improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at Mount Carmel RC High School.
- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality and make them a priority for staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate guidance and support for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop and monitor clear procedure for maintaining accurate registers and for effectively and efficiently registering pupils during morning form time and each lesson using SIMS or EduLink One.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance and punctuality data in order to implement targeted interventions.
- Develop a framework within which all staff can work to provide a consistent approach to raising levels of attendance and punctuality throughout the school.
- Ensure that the school has an effective partnership with the Local Authority and other relevant agencies.

Rationale

We recognise the clear link between the attendance, punctuality, safeguarding and attainment of its pupils. The main aim of this policy is therefore to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for individuals, groups and the pupil body as a whole.

To promote a shared commitment to the development of good pupil attendance and punctuality amongst parents, governors, staff and pupils we are committed to generating a consistent approach to attendance and punctuality based on clear expectations, praise, rewards and a firm but fair approach to unacceptable pupil absence.

All members of the school community have an important contribution to make, and this policy reflects this and should be read, in conjunction with the school's attendance procedures, which identify the ways in which we can all contribute to improving attendance and punctuality at Mount Carmel RC High School.

Links to Other Policies:

This Policy is linked to the Teaching and Learning Policy, the school's Anti-bullying strategies and the Behaviour Policy.

Policy Outline:

Encouraging Good Attendance and Punctuality for All

- The accompanying procedures provide details of strategies for raising levels of attendance and punctuality. All staff will ensure that these are followed.

- Roles and responsibilities for each member of staff are clearly indicated in the guidelines.
- An appropriate broad and balanced curriculum, including the use of alternative provision for some pupils, is essential and will be kept under constant review.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school, if we are to encourage good attendance and punctuality, is recognised.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support so that problems do not drive them away from school. The school's approach to bullying is of particular significance here. Where problems outside school are identified as having an impact on a pupil's attendance and punctuality, an appropriate level of multi-agency support will be developed.
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs are identified and given appropriate support.
- Effective partnership with parents through regular contact and support is provided. Parents are kept informed of their child's attendance through first day contact, including letters of praise and concern and through individual 1 to 1 parental meetings when appropriate.
- Holidays during term time are prohibited and parents are actively discouraged from taking pupils away from school during term-time for holiday or other purposes.
- Attendance and punctuality is given a high profile within the school including through assemblies, Pastoral Leaders and form tutors. Appropriate displays during Parents' Evenings and other events further help to raise the profile of attendance.
- Governors are encouraged to play an active role in raising levels of attendance and punctuality, and are kept informed of relevant data and issues through the 'Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development (BAPD)' Governors Committee termly meetings.
- Punctuality is highlighted as an important issue through the use of appropriate immediate sanctions and effective communication with home.

Identifying and Tackling Poor Attendance

- Pupils, tutors and parents are regularly updated regarding each pupil's attendance and punctuality data and early intervention is seen as the key to making immediate improvements.
- Attendance and punctuality levels for individuals, form groups, year groups and the whole school are carefully monitored with actions taken to address poor attendance at each of these levels.
- These levels are set as part of the Red, Yellow, Green, Blue System where pupils are identified as:
 - **Green** when their attendance is 96% and above
 - **Yellow** when attendance falls between 93% and 96%
 - **Red** when attendance falls between 90% and 93%
 - **Blue** when their attendance is below 90%

Such actions may vary from certificates of commendation to phone calls, pupil meetings, letters of concern, parental meetings, external support and legal action.

- **Pupils falling below 90% attendance are classed as PA (Persistently Absent) and every effort to prevent this is made. The school will instigate the relevant actions based on each individual pupil/family case. This may involve Penalty Notice fines or legal court proceedings.**

- Attendance panels, involving pastoral leaders, members of the school's Senior Leadership Team, governors and external agencies are used to encourage and support parents.

- Effective partnership with the Local Authority is central to improving attendance and close communication between external agencies and the school is carefully maintained.

- Attendance and punctuality levels of targeted groups of pupils, such as pupil premium, gender, English as an additional language (EAL), high, middle or low attaining pupils and those with Special Educational Needs are carefully monitored and action is taken to close the gap by addressing any significant differences.

- The school seeks to address patterns of non-attendance, for example at particular times in the week or from particular subjects.

- Long-term absentees are provided with appropriate support to enable them to make a positive return to school. This may include the use of short-term part-time timetables to phase pupils back to school if appropriate.

- Early identification of potential poor attendees is part of the school's primary liaison work during transition.

Conclusion:

A range of strategies and interventions are in place which are designed to tackle poor attendance and punctuality, but this is only a part of the school's approach to this issue. The provision of effective pastoral support and effective teaching and learning are recognised as having a direct impact upon attendance.

If all interventions fail to improve parental engagement and pupil attendance and punctuality, the school will exercise its responsibility to initiate legal proceedings including Penalty Notices (Fines) and court action.

See: Appendix A – Red, Yellow, Green, Blue System

Attendance and Punctuality Policy Procedures

1. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Class teachers will ensure that:

- All lesson SIMS / EduLink One registers are taken accurately by the teacher who must physically see the pupil in class. Missing pupils who have been marked present earlier in the day should be reported to the relevant pastoral office immediately.
- SIMS / EduLink One registration of all pupils is completed accurately and ASAP. *If, in rare circumstances, the electronic register cannot be taken during the lesson, this will be done as soon as possible on paper.*
- Careful monitoring of the attendance and punctuality of individuals within a class takes place and they alert the Curriculum Leader and appropriate Pastoral Leaders where patterns of non-attendance or poor punctuality are detected.
- When a pupil is known to have truanted from the lesson, this is followed up with Curriculum Leader and Pastoral Leaders and by making sure they catch up the missed work in detention time with the subject teacher and/or the Curriculum Leader.
- On request, appropriate work is set and marked for long-term authorised absentees and those on long-term exclusions, so that return to school is made as easy as possible.
- Those who return from long-term absence are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access the learning within the lesson.
- Pupils are welcomed back from absence in a professional manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other pupils.
- Periods 1 and 4 registers are completed accurately as close to the start of the lesson as possible (by 9.30 and 12.45 respectively).

1.2 The Form Tutor will ensure that:

- Registers for morning sessions are accurately completed (pupils must be physically present in the class to be marked present) and maintained.
- Checks of the SIMS / EduLink One data for each day takes place to identify any internal truancy from lessons.
- Good attendance and punctuality is encouraged through constant reinforcement of individual and class targets and through encouraging pupils to want to be the best individuals and form in the year group (data is provided on a weekly basis by the Pastoral Leaders to compare with termly targets set by pupils with form tutors).
- Pupils with 100% attendance for the week will receive a 'well done' stamp in their planner
- Pupils are welcomed back from absence in a professional manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other pupils..
- Parents are informed when their child's attendance falls below 95% or that there is a punctuality concern.

1.3 Pastoral Leaders will ensure that:

- Careful monitoring of the attendance and punctuality of pupils within their year takes place. Where possible pupils are to attend regular lessons and sanctions are undertaken as much as possible during unstructured times.
- Form tutors are led and managed in their role and are supported and kept informed of actions taken in relation to particular pupils.
- Patterns of absence or lateness to school or certain lessons amongst pupils from particular individuals or groups will be acted upon.
- They oversee a target group of pupils agreed with the Assistant Pastoral Leader for their year group achieving a positive impact over time with its attendance and punctuality rates.
- They monitor closely deteriorating levels of attendance and punctuality, in particular those with attendance of 95% and below.
- They liaise with parents and relevant staff.
- Pupils with poor attendance and/or punctuality to school or certain lessons are receiving appropriate levels of support through both in school staff and where relevant external agencies.
- A positive attitude to school attendance and punctuality is fostered across the year group through assemblies, the year notice boards and constant reinforcement with pupils. Attendance also plays a part in the termly rewards.
- Attendance and punctuality rates of forms within their year group are monitored, taking action alongside form tutors where particular forms are identified as having poor attendance or punctuality rates. The use of rewards and sanctions will be used to improve such concerns.
- Pastoral Leaders liaise with subject teachers to ensure that appropriate work is set for long-term authorised absentees and those excluded from school.
- Identification of ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively takes place.
- They liaise with parents on matters related to their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Sanctions are implemented where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days.
- Following liaison with the Assistant Pastoral Leader and senior pastoral staff, correct action is taken when a decision is made to remove a pupil from roll in consultation with the Local Authority.
- Ensure that parents who wish to take students out of school during term-time are contacted and the potential consequences explained.
- Any parental concerns are addressed immediately relating to attendance and punctuality (or any other matter)

ensuring removing from school is a legitimate option e.g. change of address and is only as a last resort.

1.4 Deputy Headteacher (strategic lead for Attendance) will ensure that:

- The Attendance and Punctuality Policy is updated and successfully implemented within the school.
- Successful liaison with Pastoral Leaders, Assistant Pastoral Leaders and other staff to identify students for attendance panels.
- The Pastoral Leaders are line managed and supported effectively.
- The use of attendance and punctuality data to analyse patterns of poor attendance and punctuality amongst particular year groups or other groups of pupils takes place and relevant actions to address any concerns are undertaken.
- The efficient running of the SIMS system and actions when registers are not being completed accurately take place.
- The importance of good attendance and punctuality to school and lessons is regularly promoted through assemblies and other forums.
- When new admissions are decided upon, any initial action to be taken to encourage good attendance and punctuality by liaising with relevant staff such as the Assistant Pastoral Leaders takes place.
- With the rest of SLT, Pastoral Leaders and Assistant Pastoral Leader, parents are discouraged from taking pupils out of school during term-time.
- The SENCO, Pastoral Leaders, Assistant Pastoral Leaders and other staff, identify Year 6 pupils for targeted support on attendance at transition from primary school.
- Systems are in place and adhered to which maximise pupil attendance to school and lessons.
- When pupils are legitimately not in lessons (alternative provision on or off-site) the systems, which include safeguarding, are in place and adhered to, providing support and academic work to be completed outside of the classroom.

1.5 Assistant Pastoral Leaders will ensure that:

- First day absence texts and calls are made.
- Pupils who arrive onto site after 8.45am will receive a 30 minute after school detention.
- Those arriving after 9.05am and therefore who are missing lesson time will receive a 1 hour after school detention.
- Pupils who arrive to school late on several occasions may receive longer after school detentions.
- Instances of suspected whole-day or lesson truancy are investigated and appropriate action as per the behaviour policy, including making contact with parents and informing the relevant Pastoral Leaders takes place.

- Accurate records are kept regarding contact with home and actions taken, including recording attendance actions on CPOMs.
- Attendance and punctuality data is collated, working with relevant Pastoral Leaders to identify pupils and families for support and close monitoring.
- Work with targeted pupils to improve attendance through parental contact (phone calls, texts, email, letters and meetings) attendance reports, short-term targets and rewards constantly takes place.
- Contact with parents of pupils with unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality is made to ensure improvements are achieved.
- Home visits are carried out when necessary (all home visits should be risk assessed to decide whether the APL should be accompanied or whether the visit should take place or not).
- Regular contact with long-term absentees and liaison with Pastoral Leaders takes place to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used, identifying "catch up" needs.
- Contact parents where absences have remained unexplained despite the interventions implemented takes place ('N' codes will be 0%)
- With Pastoral Leaders and using attendance and punctuality data pupils are identified for referral to the Local Authority and relevant agencies for further action to take place.
- Preparation for cases to be referred to the Local Authority, where fines or court action is required, takes place.
- Accurate records regarding Penalty Notice fines and court action are kept.
- Work with Pastoral Leaders, often through the Early Help process, to involve outside agencies with individuals and groups of pupils.
- Liaison with Children Missing in Education (CME) and Elective Home Education (EHE) services is undertaken when necessary.
- The school's official registers are in line with legal requirements and that any anomalies are reported to the DHT.
- Contact with parents of absent pupils takes place from day 2 onwards.
- In cases where the school has concerns regarding the number of "illness", (pupils with less than 90% attendance) parents will be requested to provide medical evidence, such as doctor appointment cards, hospital letters or prescriptions (NB school cannot request letters from GPs). If no evidence is provided the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Support will be offered via the school nurse.
- Official pupil roll is accurate and up to date. Any adding or removing pupils from roll is only done via the Deputy Headteacher.
- Provide names and data for rewards certificates to reprographics every half term.

- Generate relevant letters regarding attendance issues as and when required.

1.6 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Following contact from parents/carers by phone, letter, pupil planner or electronically, the school may authorise the absence. Leave of absence may be granted only in exceptional circumstances and proof of reason may be sought. Pupils with less than 90% attendance will be asked for medical proof to authorise 'illness' or 'medical' absences. The minimal amount of time needed will be considered. The following may be authorised by the school:

- Close family member wedding (1 day)
- Short term emergency
- Certain days of religious observation
- Bereavement of a family member or friend
- Student illness or injury
- Dentist or doctor appointment (when an appointment out of school hours has been unable to be made)
- Hospital/medical treatment (when an appointment out of school hours has been unable to be made)

Where possible the expectation is that parent /carer will give advanced notice before the absence occurs. Where the school is not consulted and/or decides not to grant leave then unauthorised absence will be recorded and legal proceedings in most cases will result in fines or court proceedings.

Requests for holiday leave will not be granted. Unauthorised absence will be recorded and legal proceedings in most cases (5 or more days absence) will result in fines or court proceedings.

Regular absences through illness will require medical proof (e.g. appointment card, prescriptions, consultant's letter)

Parents will be required to attend an attendance panel meeting should their child's attendance hit triggers according to the table in Appendix B

There is an expectation that all pupils should achieve attendance of 95% or above.

Reviewed by P Dugdale, Deputy Headteacher, October 2023 to reflect changes in government guidance (May 2022) [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

Appendix A

Attendance and Punctuality

Red, Yellow, Green, Blue system

Green	Pupils have 7 or fewer days absent over the year (over 96%) Recognition through the rewards system (half term rewards assemblies and / or the Carmelite Awards)
Yellow	Pupils have between 8 and 13 days absent over the year (between 93% and 96%) Monitored and interventions via Form Tutors, PLs and APLs
Red	Pupils have between 14 and 18 days absent over the year (between 90% and 93%) Monitored and interventions via PLs, APLs and DHT
Blue	Pupils have more than 18 days absence over the year (less than 90%) This is 'Persistent Absence'. Interventions may include legal proceedings, liaison with Children's Social Care, attendance parenting contracts and education supervision orders. Monitored and interventions coordinated by DHT and PLs involving pupils, parents, APLs, governors, Local Authority and court officer

Appendix B

Attendance Escalation Ladder – all numbers and timings are per term unless otherwise specified

<i>Penalty Notice 1 (PN1) Process</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Trigger 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 day off unauthorised • APL calls / texts home to inform parents
<p style="text-align: center;">Trigger 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 days off unauthorised • PL/ APL calls home to inform parents
<p style="text-align: center;">Trigger 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 days off unauthorised • PL/APL calls home to invite parents into school for a meeting with PL/APL to discuss attendance • PL/APL records on CPOMs with an 'Attendance' lozenge
<p style="text-align: center;">Trigger 4: 4 days off unauthorised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter sent to invite parents in to meeting with PDE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Meeting: PDE/APL/PL • Parenting attendance contract signed with school and parent/carers actions
<p style="text-align: center;">Trigger 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 further day off unauthorised • Meeting to discuss parenting contract (if appropriate) with PDE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority Attendance Advisor may be involved • Follow up letter (previous meeting attended letter-2a or not attended letter-2b) from school informing of update to parenting attendance contract OR referral to court officer for a monitoring period and potential fine • Court officer may issue 15-day monitoring letter if this has been referred to court
Other letters may be issued, such as those informing parents of attendance concerns
If there is a further unauthorised absence during the monitoring period, then evidence submitted to court officer
Penalty Notice 1 issued by court

For legal action, pupils will have 5 unauthorised absences over a term, or 8 over 2 terms.