

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Our Mission

**'At SS John and Monica's we learn through the example of Jesus to love,
respect, understand and value each other'**

Rationale of this Policy

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. SS John & Monica's Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. For these reasons the staff have created a set of procedures and practice which we hope will create an ethos whereby children want to be in school and know the reasons why non attendance is not acceptable.

We aim to work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff, governors, the Educational Welfare Service and the Local Authority to ensure that all children reach an optimal level of attendance and secure their long term educational and life skill prospects. We take issues on non attendance and poor punctuality very seriously and will work within the parameters of the law as provided for us by the Local Authority legal team to ensure that a child's right to an education is maintained.

School Attendance is a Safeguarding and Child Protection issue. The school will investigate all absence and will make referrals to Children's Advice Support Service (CASS) and the Missing Child Team if we have concerns about the welfare and location of any pupil at this school.

This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance and punctuality are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the schools commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Legal Requirements

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 apply to all maintained schools, academies, studio schools, free schools and independent schools.

It is a legal requirement that schools will:-

- Be open to all pupils for 380 sessions each school year (This is the same as 190 school days – morning is one session and afternoon is one session)
- Maintain attendance registers (either manual or computerised) in accordance with the relevant regulations. At SS John & Monica's we maintain computerised registers.
- Accurately record and monitor all absenteeism and lateness.
- Clearly distinguish between absence which is authorised and absence which is unauthorised according to criteria laid down by the DfE (schools should remind parents that it is the decision of the Head teacher as to whether or not an absence will be authorised).

- Submit termly absence returns through School Census and publish information relating to levels of attendance and absence and include details of these in the school's prospectus and annual report.
- Set annual targets to reduce absence and submit these targets in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The school is committed to increasing attendance each year and maximising opportunities for pupils to excel. AS part of this commitment we set challenging but achievable targets for children and families for their school attendance.

SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School has had attendance targets of 97%

Current Legislation about Attendance

Amendments (Sept 2016) to the 2006 Regulations removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers may **NOT** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Further updated guidance received from Birmingham City Council in respect of Leave in Term Time requests that legal action be taken in conjunction with the 'Fast Track to Attendance' programme as part of a holistic approach to achieving excellent attendance.

The Regulations regarding deletion from roll, however, remain unchanged.

The Impact of Time Off and Poor Punctuality

This is our aim at SS John & Monica's is GREEN:

GREEN	97.5 – 100% attendance	Excellent! Fantastic attendance 😊
YELLOW	95 – 97.4% attendance	Super Effort! You are trying hard to be in school 😊
RED	Less than 95%	Danger Zone! You are missing a lot of learning time 😞
	Less than 90%	Persistent Absence requiring formal intervention 😞

Please note that the Government changes the regulation about Persistent absence in 2015. Pupils who are away from school for whatever reason, for 10% of their timetable, they are regarded as Persistent Absences and the school has to involve other agencies.

Attendance of less than 95% (i.e. absences of 9.5 school days or more out of the 190 pupil days in the school year) is shown to compromise pupil attainment. At 90% attendance pupils miss the equivalent of almost 4 weeks education (19 school days) and only 10% of pupils who are persistently absent from school achieve 5 A-C grades at GCSE.

Being late adds up to lost learning too!

If you are 5 minutes late everyday you will miss 3 school days in one year.

If you are 15 minutes late everyday you will miss 10 school days in one year.

If you are 30 minutes late everyday you will miss 19 school days in one year – the equivalent of nearly 100 hours of learning.

You need to be on time for school with all of the correct equipment to ensure you get the most from your learning opportunities at SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School.

Responsibilities of the School

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance and punctuality by:

- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively at all levels and reasons for absences are recorded...promptly and consistently.
- Ensuring that staff know, understand and follow the set procedures about registration. The registers are legal documents and must be completed correctly.
- Maintaining an attendance board in a visible area of the school so that children and visitors can see how well they are doing at hitting attendance targets.
- Promoting the need for good attendance with parents and carers so that they understand the need for consistent attendance and support their children in attending school everyday.
- Raise the profile of punctuality among pupils and parents so that they understand how punctuality can affect attendance figures.
- Ensure that clear attendance information is regularly communicated to parents through the school prospectus, through newsletters, through parents' evenings or through other media; (parents will be specifically reminded of their legal responsibilities for ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance).
- Make provision for first-day of absence contact, particularly in relation to pupils who are known to be poor attenders or who might otherwise be considered to be at risk.
- Stress to parents the importance of continuity of learning, particularly in relation to family holidays during term-time (The Head Teacher will NOT authorise any holidays taken during term time and children who take unauthorised holidays in term time and fail to return in good time risk losing the school place for their child).

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered regularly, on time and in a fit condition to learn.

Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should:-

- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance. These will be discussed later in this policy.

- Always notify the school as soon as possible - on the first morning - of any absence. A phone call between 8 – 10am to enable the registers to be kept up to date and accurate. Parents will be texted if we do not receive a message.
- To work closely with the school and it's legal representatives (and agencies such as CASS, Think Family/Children's Services, Health professionals etc) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- Book non-emergency medical appointments outside school hours when possible. Most doctors and dental surgeries, as well as opticians have Saturday and Sunday appointments or late night opening once a week.
- Do NOT book family holidays during term-time. Only a Head Teacher can give permission for absence from school during the 190 days that pupils are expected to attend.
- Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the pupil nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. School and school friendships and relationships can provide pupils with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background to life during times of upheaval.

Implications of Unauthorised Absence

Where a Head teacher has not granted the pupil any leave, and the school suspects that the parents may have taken their child on unauthorised term time holiday, the school will immediately contact by telephone and letter to ascertain the reason for absence.

Parents must be advised that the pupil may lose his/her place at SS John & Monica's School if we are unable to locate them and the statutory period of absence is reached, the family may be reported to the Child Missing in Education Team (CME), that the absence will be unauthorised (using code G) and that the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice. School, as part of our holistic approach to achieving excellent attendance, run the 'Fast Track to Attendance' programme, fast track court action for pupils with 20 or more unauthorised absences over the calendar year. This process will involve legal proceedings and could result in a penalty notice being issued and possibly a criminal record.

Holidays in Term Time:

Holidays during term time are **NOT** authorised at SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School. Whilst we appreciate the advantages of travel to broaden children's understanding of the world, we believe that in 175 days off per year, children have plenty of time to enjoy travel opportunities.

If parents insist on taking a holiday/absence during term time, it will be recorded in the registration record as **G** the code for unauthorised absence. Parents will be asked to sign a Holiday Notification Form stating the date on which the child will return to school and parents will understand that the child's place at SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School may be lost if the contract is broken. This form does not give permission for the leave to take place but merely alerts the school to the pupil's location. As part of the Spotlight Campaign and in light of guidance issued by BCC in May 2017 parents may be liable to prosecution.

We will need to see holiday confirmation documentation such as an invoice and/or flight tickets as part of the Holiday Notification process.

Fast Track to Attendance – An Early Help Approach

When a pupil with attendance difficulties is referred to the Deputy Head and/or the Head Teacher and they will engage in an Early Help approach, appropriate individual casework of the pupil in question to improve the attendance.

Casework is undertaken with pupils and their parents in order to bring about a pupil's return to regular attendance, taking account of individual circumstances and responding accordingly. In the worst cases a legal route to demand a return to full attendance will be sought.

Attendance meetings/surgeries

- a pattern of irregular attendance has developed
- a period of entrenched non-attendance has begun
- communication by the school to the parents has met with little or no response
- there is evidence of a lack of parental co-operation in ensuring a child's regular attendance
- a parent withdraws a pupil from school having expressed an intention to educate him or her otherwise than at school (Elective Home Education)
- a pupil is withdrawn from school by the parents who are moving to another area and the school does not have a confirmed destination school/provider where the child will resume his or her education (such pupils will be treated as "children missing education")
- a pattern of persistent lateness has developed
- there are child protection concerns
- there are specific and identifiable welfare issues which are preventing a pupil from accessing education

Fast Track to Attendance- Local Authority Policy on Prosecution

- Schools should ensure parents have access to the 'School Attendance' whole school letter to parents at least once a year (preferably in September) to alert parents to their legal responsibilities in this area and to deter parents from keeping their children at home/taking them on holiday when they should be in school. Most schools will place the letter on their website, send via pupil post etc.
- In the case of on-going absence schools are expected to try to improve a pupil's attendance via 'FAST-track to Attendance', Birmingham's Early Help approach to improving attendance. This would include an Early Help offer as appropriate and ensuring that 'the voice of the child' is heard.
- Where there is a unauthorised leave in term time which reaches the threshold under the Birmingham Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, schools must use the 'Leave in Term Time (Penalty Notice) Process' in order for the

Local Authority to take action on their behalf.

- When a school's attempts to improve a pupil's attendance have been unsuccessful using either 'FAST-track' or the 'Leave in Term Time' processes, the school will refer the case to the Education Legal Intervention Team
- In order for the Local Authority to act there must be a minimum of 20 sessions of unauthorised absence collected as prescribed in each process over a calendar year
- If the matter proceeds to the Magistrates Court and the parent pleads not guilty, schools must provide the relevant members of staff as witnesses, having already provided ELIT with a statement of witness.

Day to Day Procedures for Managing Absence and Punctuality

FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE: If it is the first day of absence and a parent or carer has given an explanation by telephone we will inform the teacher, record the explanation in the absence book and enter it in the register using the code which tells us why the child is away.

If we have received no information from a parent or carer we record the absence as **N**. This means no reason is given and is unauthorised. The Office will text parents whose children are not in school on the first day to ensure children are safe and to get an explanation.

SECOND DAY OF ABSENCE: On the second day of absence the school will still try to get in contact with parents if we have not heard from them. We are required to have an explanation for every absence. If parents do not contact us on day 2 we will text and telephone you to get a reason over the phone. Non attendance without a reason is still recorded as **N** during this period.

THIRD DAY OF ABSENCE: On the third day of absence if we have not received an explanation we will send a letter home to remind parents about the need for a reason and to request that the reply slip is returned to school. Non attendance is still recorded as **N** during this period.

FOURTH DAY OF ABSENCE: In the case of ILLNESS only

The office will request evidence of illness from **ALL** pupils on the fourth day of their absence (where illness is given as the reason). Parents will be phoned and asked to provide written evidence from their doctor's surgery to prove that the child has seen a doctor. This evidence only needs to be a copy of an appointment card stamped by the surgery reception desk or the patient slip attached to a prescription, issued by a GP practice. A parent note is **NO LONGER** enough evidence after the 3rd day of illness. Parents have the right to not provide us with any evidence however the school then has the right to record any suspicious absences as **N** or **O/G**. It is unfortunate that some families tell the school that their child is ill to allow them to take unauthorised leave during term time.

FIFTH DAY OF ABSENCE: On the fifth day of absence if we have not received an explanation we will send a second and final reminder letter home warning about further

action should we receive no information. This letter will come directly from the named adult responsible for attendance and will instruct parents about the next steps that the school will take if the pupil does not return to school or if we receive no acceptable explanation. The next steps will be a home visit by a member of the senior management team, an investigation and can lead to eventual prosecution.

Medical Appointments:

Children's medical appointments should be taken in the evenings and at weekends except in an emergency (e.g hospital appointments). Medical evidence (e.g appointment cards/hospital letter) will need to be produced with each planned absence. In keeping with the requirements of the Equality Duty, pupils who have complex medical needs requiring repeated hospitalisation or appointments will be viewed differently.

Parent appointments are not an authorised reason for pupil absence and parents are expected to make alternative arrangements to ensure that their children are in school and on time.

Religious Observance:

Children are permitted to have an authorised absence in the instance of a religious festival or observance that is a **compulsory part of their faith**. This includes 1 day for Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha (Islam), 1 day for Diwali (Sikh and Hindu), Rosh Hashanah, Passover and Shavuot (Judaism). Please bear in mind that not all religious festivals and ceremonies are compulsory and those that the Local Authority does not regard as such will not be authorised.

A funeral is not technically a religious observance since it relates to an individual or a family rather than the entire faithful but at SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School we allow 1 day authorised absence to attend a funeral of an **immediate** family member.

Cultural events are not religious observances and will be recorded as unauthorised absence if the child is off school

Time off School

We understand that children will get sick and on these occasions we do not expect them to be in school. We would appreciate if parents took time to consider which illnesses actually benefit from time off school and which are not serious enough to warrant the time off.

School are happy to look after children who require medication. If your child needs medication we have forms to fill in at the school office and we will make all reasonable arrangements to support the administration of vital medications.

We would say that the following list of illnesses and ailments should be a good rule of thumb but none of this advice overrules medical opinion.

- High Temperature – NO SCHOOL as it is usually a sign of infection.

- Infection/Contagion – NO SCHOOL as children pass the infections rapidly between each other but a visit to the doctor is required to determine the infection.
- Flu – NO SCHOOL while the child has a temperature.
- Head Lice – Attendance required once treatment has been applied (which can be overnight after discovery).
- Asthma Attack – NO SCHOOL until breathing is regulated and child feels well. All asthmatic children should have necessary inhalers in school.
- Broken limbs – NO SCHOOL until the permanent cast is put on and then children can attend. We will take all necessary precautions.
- Cuts and scrapes – Attendance required but wounds need to be clean and covered.
- Headache – Attendance required as long as the child has no other symptoms.
- Migraine – Children with Migraine will be receiving treatment from their doctor so follow their advice.
- Coughs and Colds – Attendance required unless the cough goes into a chest infection and a doctor is needed. A cold is a normal childhood illness and will not improve any quicker at home. Coughs can last for many days and vary in severity, so this is not enough reason in itself to stay at home.
- Diarrhoea and vomiting – NO SCHOOL until 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped.
- Stomach Ache – Attendance required depending on the causes of the ache. AS long as there is no raised temperature and no other symptoms.
- Sore Throat – Attendance required.
- Earache – see a doctor. Often attendance is OK once the child is medicated.
- Conjunctivitis – Attendance required once treatment is applied
- Bruises – Attendance required.
- Rashes – see a doctor for diagnosis in case it is infectious. If it is heat rash or allergic reaction the child can still attend school with the necessary treatment. Any rash that may be contagious should be managed at home (eg Slapped Cheek).
- Sickness but no vomiting – Attendance required and we will monitor if you let us know that your child is feeling unwell. If there is any change in their condition we will telephone.
- Allergies – Attendance required so long as we are aware of the allergy and your child has taken whatever medication deemed necessary by your doctor. Please ensure that if your child requires an epipen or Piriton it is in school, in date and that the school has completed a red anaphylaxis card.

Attendance Initiatives

At SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School we have introduced a number of initiatives to encourage children and parents to be more aware of the implications of poor attendance and punctuality. Children will take part in annual curriculum activities designed to raise understanding of these issues.

Parents will be kept informed of their child's attendance informally with class teachers, and through newsletters and communication from the school office.

We hold a monthly Attendance Focus Week that rewards pupils with 100% attendance and punctuality during that week. Children who maintain 100% attendance will also receive termly certificates.

Each week the attendance and punctuality figures for each class are analysed and will be displayed on the attendance board. Attendance and punctuality figures are reported to parents in the school newsletter and in the Head Teacher's report to Governors.

Updated: Nov 2020

Reviewed: Nov 2022

Appendix 1

Addendum Covid- 19

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1. **Scope**

This addendum is to support the existing SS John and Monica's attendance policy.

From September 2020, attendance to school will be mandatory. SS John and Monica School will continue to promote excellent attendance; thus enabling and encouraging all pupils to achieve. Attendance has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils. Securing good attendance is a fundamental responsibility within our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our school.

SS John and Monica School will reinforce that it is the parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age.

It is SS John and Monica School's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence. The school will continue to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with the local authorities' codes of conduct, however we would like to ensure we have exhausted every alternative option prior to issuing sanctions, including fixed penalty notices. It is therefore vital, that we work together to try to resolve attendance problems.

Pupils, parents and staff should continue to follow our normal attendance policy with respect to anything not covered in this addendum.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and students.

2. **Prevention**

In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19 the school has implemented a number of safety measures which must be adhered to by staff and students. These can be found on our school website in our risk assessments

If a student or a member of their household becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must follow the Government guidance named 'stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID19) infection', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should

arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

- Students, parents and staff follow the Government guidelines named 'meeting people from outside your household'

3. Expectations on parents/carers

- To promote the attendance of their child to school, provided they are well enough to be in school
- To work with the school or other professionals to improve attendance
- To not send their child to school if the child or any member of their household are experiencing symptoms
- Parents/carers to contact school if their child becomes unwell
- For parents/carers to arrange for testing immediately if their child or any member of their household develops symptoms related to COVID-19
- Parents/carers to communicate with school immediately if their child or a member of their household is diagnosed with Covid-19
- If their child is self-isolating, to encourage school work to be completed, provided the child is well enough

4. Encouraging and maintaining good attendance to school

- Clear and consistent expectations around school attendance will be communicated to families (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate)
- Parents have been given the opportunity to identify if their child is reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement. Pastoral staff will be working with these families and will help to develop plans for re-engaging them. This will include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic.
- Staff will work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance.

5. Becoming unwell at school

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow '*stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID19) infection*', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should arrange to have

- a test to see if they have coronavirus

(COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

- If a child has symptoms of Coronavirus and is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a room where they can be isolated, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, we will move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they will use a separate bathroom (directed by school staff). The bathroom will be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the '*Safe working in education childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)*' guidance.
- Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive, or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace.

6. Non-attendance in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from September 2020, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19). The following guidance has been taken from '*Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year*'

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

- If symptoms develop, the student and household should immediately seek medical advice
- If a pupil tests negative and they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID 19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19)
- The [NHS test and trace](#) guidance states that a person should self-isolate for

14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID- 19).

- In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-

isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

- As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only

- Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding
- If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high.
- Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school

□

If a student is self-isolating, school work will be sent home for the student to complete, provided they are well enough to complete it.

As per Government guidance, in the event that a parent or guardian insists on a child attending school, Mark Rutherford can take the decision to refuse the child if in our reasonable judgement it is necessary to protect our pupils and staff from possible infection with coronavirus (COVID-19)

7. Register coding

A student will be coded as I (Illness) in the following scenarios:

- Following a negative COVID-19 test result and the student remains feeling unwell and unable to attend school
- Following a positive test result, for the remainder of their period

of isolation A student will be coded as X in the following scenarios:

- School closure/partial closure due to local lockdown
- A student awaiting a COVID-19 test result
- A student awaiting the test result of a member of their household. If the test is negative, the student must return to school immediately
- A member of the students household tests positive for coronavirus and therefore the student must isolate for 14 days
- The local health protection team advise that a student should be isolating following close contact with a person who has been confirmed with coronavirus
- Quarantine following a trip overseas

- If advice is given by the Government for particular vulnerable groups to shield

Safeguarding

- We will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to pupil attendance at school as detailed in the attendance and safeguarding policy.
- Non-attendance of timetabled pupils will be followed up in the usual way and the reason for absence will be documented on SIMS
- Where every effort has been made to contact a family of a child that has failed to attend and there are safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be required. No staff member should enter the property, they should ensure that social distancing is adhered to. If further concerns are raised reporting should take place through the normal channels.

Guidance for staff when undertaking home visits.

- Do not enter the home
- Knock on the door and then speak to parent/carer and child from a safe distance ideally 2 metres from the front door
- If a family is self-isolating, view the child through a window and ascertain as best you can through gestures, thumbs up, waving, lip reading, etc. that the child is safe and well
- It is important to physically **see** the child, even if only through a window
- The home visit must be completed with another member of staff

8. Links with other policies

- Safeguarding policy
- Attendance policy
- Remote learning policy

9. Links to Government guidance

‘Stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID19) infection’ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

'Meeting people from outside your household' <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>

Safe working in education childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

'Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year' <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-aca>

Attendance Codes**DfE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated Off Site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or Dental etc appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical / Dental Appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Covid

I – Positive Covid Case

X – Self-Isolating

Absence Procedures

Office Day to Day Procedures for Managing Absence and Punctuality

The official start to the school day is 8.55am and all children should be in their classroom at this time to ensure they get a present mark in the register. Classrooms are open from 8.45 am with activities for pupils to complete.

Children who arrive after 8.55am but before 9.15am will be marked with an “L” in the register and their names will be recorded by the office staff.

Children who arrive after 9.15am will be given an unauthorised absence and marked with a “U” in the register. U means Late after the Register has closed and this is counted as an absence from school.

Children are registered again at 1.00pm (Infants) and 1.30pm (Juniors)

The Office has an absence file which contains the names of all pupils who are absent on any given day. Once the registers close at 9.15am the Office will follow the procedure for absence depending on how many days the pupil has been off school:

- **FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE**: If it is the first day of absence and a parent or carer has given an explanation by telephone we will inform the teacher, record the explanation in the absence book and enter it in the register using the code which tells us why the child is away.
- If we have received no information from a parent or carer we record the absence as **N**. This means no reason is given and is unauthorised. The Office will text parents whose children are not in school on the first day to ensure children are safe and to get an explanation.
- **SECOND DAY OF ABSENCE**: On the second day of absence the school will still try to get in contact with parents if we have not heard from them. We are required to have an explanation for every absence. If parents do not contact us on day 2 we will text and telephone you to get a reason over the phone. Non attendance without a reason is still recorded as **N** during this period.
- **THIRD DAY OF ABSENCE**: On the third day of absence if we have not received an explanation we will send a letter home to remind parents about the need for a reason and to request that the reply slip is returned to school. Non attendance is still recorded as **N** during this period.
- **FOURTH DAY OF ABSENCE: In the case of ILLNESS only**
The office will request evidence of illness from **ALL** pupils on the fourth day of their absence (where illness is given as the reason). Parents will be phoned and asked to provide written evidence from their doctor’s surgery to prove that the child has seen a doctor. This evidence only needs to be a copy of an appointment card stamped by the surgery reception desk or the patient slip attached to a prescription, issued by a GP practice. A parent note is **NO LONGER** enough evidence after the 3rd day of illness.
- **FIFTH DAY OF ABSENCE**: On the fifth day of absence if we have not received an explanation we will send a second and final reminder letter home warning about further action should we receive no information. This letter will come directly from the named adult responsible for attendance and will instruct parents about the next steps that the school will take if the pupil does not return to school or if we receive no acceptable explanation. A home visit may be conducted by two members of staff in order to try to contact the family. In an event that school

is unable to make contact the Children's Social Care (MASH) will be contacted and a referral will be made.

Office staff must be vigilant to follow and record all steps as detailed above in the Office Attendance Folder (in case we need to use the folder as evidence of how we have intervened to prevent the absence, in legal proceedings against a parent at a later stage).

The N Code will only stay on the registers for 2 school weeks and will then be changed to O after all attempts have been made by the school to get an explanation for the absence.

Whole School Letter

School Attendance – Covid Update September 2020

A very important message for all parents/care

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a message about school attendance.

SS John and Monica Catholic Primary School is working in partnership with parents and Birmingham City Council to encourage children back into school following several very difficult months for parents and schools. We would like to thank parents for the work you have done in ensuring your children have received education during this period.

In March 2020 the government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school at that time due to the Covid 19 outbreak. Schools were then closed to all but a specific group of pupils; those of key workers and vulnerable children.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know that children have missed being with their friends and the wider social aspects of school.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. ***School attendance is therefore compulsory again from the beginning of the autumn term.***

This means from September 2020 (unless parents are formally notified of a local lockdown where schools are closed), the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to send their child to school regularly where they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability of local authorities to use legal sanctions, including penalty notices and prosecution in court.

If you are worried about your child attending school the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with the school directly. The school has specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed.

In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head

Teacher after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the more they will catch up.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

No school or local authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parents' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.

After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that the school and parents work together to get children back into school. The school is ready to listen so please contact them if you have any worries and they will try to help you.

We wish you and your child all the best for the coming academic year.

Kind regards

Education Legal Intervention Team
Birmingham City Council

Letter to Discuss Concerns

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

I'm writing to you to express concern about **«ChildFirstName»** attendance in school. As you may be aware, it is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure children attend school regularly.

We work with parents/carers to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently and to inform the school. If there are other difficulties affecting your ability to ensure your child attends school regularly, which you may need support for, we may be able to help and offer an Early Help Assessment so please contact us urgently to arrange a meeting.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance please contact the school. If you call and there is no one available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

«Name»
Head teacher

Appendix 6

Leave of Absence (LD1)

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

If you decide to take the leave the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

We are sure you would not wish to jeopardise your child's academic progress by taking them away at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Enclosure: copy of 'Leave of Absence Request Form'

Medical Absence and No Authorisation (LD2)

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

Your child's poor attendance at school this year is causing serious concern as **he/she** has been absent for **number** of sessions out of a possible **number** of sessions and this will make it much harder for your child to achieve good results in their school work. **Most/All** of the absence has been due to illness or for medical reasons.

It has been decided that due to the high level of your child's absence, **the Head Teacher will no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by medical evidence.**

I have to advise you that we monitor all pupils with poor school attendance and will take action when absence is unauthorised; this may lead to prosecution.

Therefore should **Pupil's name** have any further sessions of absence because of illness or medical reasons you are strongly advised to provide one of the following which may enable the Head Teacher to authorise your child's absence:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required. Please do not request these from your GP.

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996 Section 444).

We work with parents to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel that your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently.

If you have other concerns about your child or difficulties you may need support with, please contact the school who may be able to assist in the form of an Early Help Assessment.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance please contact me. If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

«School Representative»
Job

Punctuality Letter**PUNCTUALITY NOTICE****Date:**

GREEN	No Lates	Excellent! Fantastic time keeping ☺
YELLOW	Between 2 and 4 lates	Good Effort but you need to try harder to be on time!
RED	More than 4 Lates	Danger Zone! You are missing a lot of learning time by being late for school ☹

Dear Parents of,

Our late book record indicates that your child has been late on a number of occasions. May we remind you that being late reduces your child's learning time and makes them miss the beginning of important lessons.

If your child is 15 mins late for school everyday, this equates to 2 weeks of missed school time in a year. Even if your child is only 5 minutes late each day, this totals 3 school days of missed learning opportunities in the school year.

Volume of traffic on the roads and difficulty parking is not considered as a reasonable excuse. For those who find it hard to come to school on time we recommend that you try to leave the house 10 minutes earlier.

School doors open at **8.45am** and school **starts at 8.55am**. We will be monitoring your child's time keeping and look forward to seeing an improvement in your child's punctuality for next month.

Punctuality is a life skill that we try to teach to the children of SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School and we thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Elliott

Request for Absence

**EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST
(to be completed by parents/carers only)**

Pupil's Name D.O.B Form

Pupil's Name D.O.B Form

I request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

.....

Dates of Absence

From To No of school days

Address where we will be staying.....

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances, penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

<p>Parent/Carer Name </p> <p>DOB.....</p> <p>Address..... </p> <p>Signature.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>	<p>Parent/Carer Name </p> <p>DOB.....</p> <p>Address..... </p> <p>Signature.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>
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Request **agreed / denied**

Signed Head Teacher Dated