



## Pupil Attendance Policy

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### Rationale

Our Mission is to educate the young people entrusted to our care in a Catholic, Christian way that ensures each one is valued and cared for and achieves the best of which he or she is capable.

**The highest possible level of attendance is one of the most essential prerequisites for the successful growth of every child and of the school. Ensuring it occurs for every child is one of our principal priorities.** The health and successful development of the school community also depends on all pupils' commitment to playing a full, constructive part and contributing to school life and work ethic. This can only be achieved with their fullest possible attendance. We aim to ensure each child is enabled to achieve and exceed his or her expected potential within and beyond the curriculum and so enabled to benefit from the highest possible quality teaching and learning.

### Purposes

The purposes of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy are:

1. To ensure all members of the immediate school community, pupils, parents/guardians/carers and staff, are fully aware of the importance of full attendance for every child and maintain at least 98% attendance for the full academic year.
2. To ensure all members of the immediate school community are fully aware that all absences, authorised or otherwise, should be kept to an absolute minimum;
3. To minimise the disruptive effects of broken attendance on all involved – the pupil who is absent, those pupils whose continuity of learning is disrupted when absentees return and the staff responsible for maintaining the progress of individual pupils and the whole classes of which they are members.

4. To highlight the importance of punctuality both to registration sessions, and lessons, in order to maintain an orderly start to school sessions and minimise the disruption caused to teaching and learning;
5. To provide pupils and staff with guidance on how to ensure highest levels of attendance;
6. To provide all teams of school staff with the basis of clear procedures for promoting high attendance and responding appropriately and proportionately when problems arise;
7. To clarify our high expectations with partners in our work – pupils and parents/carers;
8. To maintain effective partnerships with other services and external agencies.

## **Guidelines**

1. The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) is responsible for the operation of the Attendance strategy and its component systems.
2. The Family Support Officer is responsible for liaising with any outside agencies, and in monitoring and responding to pupils whose attendance causes concern.
3. All pupils and parents need to be made aware (by staff, as appropriate) of the value of full attendance and punctuality.
4. Good and improving attendance will be identified, celebrated and rewarded as a positive contribution to the progress of pupils and the school community. Attendance rewards are an integral part of the Rewards System.
5. All pupils are individuals and have different attitudes towards school. They have different reasons for wanting or needing to come to school. Others have powerful reasons for not wanting to attend. It is our responsibility to provide the greatest motivation for attendance, by meeting their different, disparate needs. It is also our responsibility to fully investigate when a pupil does not want to attend.
6. It is essential that all Form Tutors actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality of their Tutor Groups, and apply sanctions where necessary.
7. Equally, it is essential that all subject specialists actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality of their teaching groups.
8. To support the efficient recording of attendance records, and the fast and efficient generation of the necessary reports and analyses, all school attendance data are maintained on the school's administration network via the SIMS Attendance Module.
9. The Attendance Register is a legal document and it is a legal requirement it is maintained accurately. We are required to be able to define at any time of the day whether a child is present or absent.
10. The Attendance Register for each Tutor Group must be completed at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session in the designated registration period. The school day starts at 08.45 with all children either attending a Form Period or an Assembly, within this time a formal registration certificate is taken and recorded on SIMS. It is here where form tutors and pastoral managers identify absentees. If we have cause for concern you will receive a call or text to ask the whereabouts of your child.
11. If a child is late to school it will be recorded on their registration certificate. If punctuality becomes a problem, there is a Punctuality Intervention Framework that is followed where detentions are issued and meetings conducted. Form Period starts at 08.45, if a pupil

arrives after 08.50 they will be given a late mark off their Form Tutor and will need to sign in at the main office and give the reason for their lateness. The official school register closes at 9.30am so any pupils late after this time will be classed as unauthorised for that period. 10 unauthorised lates' to school could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by Lancashire County Council.

12. All pupils late to school, without a valid reason communicated before 8.30am to the school office will receive a 40 minute: Late Gate detention the following Monday Lunchtime. All pupils and parents are aware of this, so no detention letter will be sent home.
13. All absence is a hindrance to learning and significant issues will be carefully and sensitively investigated and support put in place where appropriate.
14. Home Visits will be completed to all pupils who have 3 days absence consecutively, or to pupils who are displaying irregular patterns of absence.
15. From September 2013 the law was changed regarding leave of absence and in accordance with that change, the Governors have agreed that no leave of absence will be authorised, unless it is for exceptional circumstances. All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' form from the school office or website. The forms must then be sent into school and presented to Mrs G Reader who will process the application, or emailed in to [g.reader@ismchs.com](mailto:g.reader@ismchs.com). Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional and your child's attendance is at least 98%.
16. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral services and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.
17. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, use of Pastoral Support Plans, Individual incentive programmes, parenting contracts and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.
18. In some cases Parents/ carers will be liable for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for reasons which can include Truancy, Unauthorised leave of absence in term time, Unwarranted delayed return from an extended holiday (without school's agreement) or Persistent late arrival after the register has closed. Changes in legal Interventions took place from September 2013 and focussed on the Governments statement of 'tackling the causes of absenteeism', therefore stating that a FPN can be applied for when a child has 10 unauthorised absences in a term or 14 over two consecutive terms. These incur a charge of £120 per pupil, per parent, to be paid within a 28-day period and are issued by Lancashire County Council. School will try and use these as a last resort and will maintain the view that we should try to work together with parents/carers where possible to resolve any attendance issues.

19. Attendance Framework and milestones are set out in the table below:-

Level	Action	Lead Staff
98% +	Positive rewards and data given	Form Tutor/Celebration Assemblies
97.9 - 95%	Targets set, Parents informed	Form Tutor
94.9 - 93%	Weekly Mentoring/ Meetings	Pastoral Assistant/Leader
92.9 – 90%	Attendance Panels / Home Visits	Attendance Team
89% -	Collation of all evidence / External support	D. Stearstree / G Reader

## Conclusion

It is essential that all members of staff support this crucially important policy, and its procedures, fully and consistently. Any queries should be directed to the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) or the Head teacher as soon as possible.

## PROCEDURES

1. Any pupil who is not present whilst the register is being taken must be marked **late**. Any pupil arriving after the registration session must sign in the 'Late Book' and will be given a signing in 'ticket'. This will then be given to the teacher of the lesson, they are late to. It is then recorded on the register and on the Late Gate sheet using the symbol 'L'.
2. Registration sessions are 8.45 am and 12.20 pm
3. Explanation of Late symbols
  - 'L' indicates that a pupil, though not present when the register was called, arrived before the register was closed, **or** arrived after the register was closed but with a good reason;
  - 'U' indicates that a pupil arrived in school after the register closed, but without good reason. This counts as unauthorised absence.
4. The register should be called at the *beginning* of the session and any pupil not present must be marked absent.
5. Form Tutors are requested to keep their registers until 09.00 am and then return them to the school office.
6. The morning register session officially closes at 08.50 am, any pupil arriving after this time must follow the procedure in 1. The pupil will be marked absent in the register for that session, although the 'Late Book' **must** be completed, in case of a fire drill. If no reason for absence is forthcoming by note/phone then the symbol 'N' should be used, until a reason has been supplied.

## How are lates dealt with?

All staff should deal with pupils in the way thought to be most appropriate at the time, but to achieve consistency throughout the school the following should apply the punctuality framework.

1.
  - 1a If a pupil arrives **late once**, he/she is given a **Late Gate detention**, which takes place for 40 minutes the following Monday Lunchtime and a merit is lost.
  - 1b If a pupil arrives **late twice or more** for Registration in a 5 day period then he/she will also receive a Pastoral Detention on a Thursday evening after school for 45 minutes.
  - 1c Pupils may be detained for **10 minutes** after school without prior notice (NB please be aware of pupils' travel arrangements).
  - 1d Late after 09.30 am with no explanation constitutes truancy and sanctions will be issued in accordance.
2. If any pupil fails to attend Late Gate detention, they will automatically be issued with a Pastoral Detention on the Thursday of the same week, and a detention will be recorded on Class Charts.
3. If this action proves to be unsuccessful then further referral should be made to the appropriate **Pastoral Leader** or **Assistant Headteacher**.

**Punctuality Framework: Late to school = Late Gate (LG)**

Level	Action	Staff
1	Form Tutor	LG + Form Tutor to log on SIMS
2	Pastoral Assistant	LG + PA to meet with pupil and log on SIMS
3	Pastoral Leader	LG + PL to meet with pupil and contact parents – log on SIMS
4	Pastoral Team	LG + PT to meet with parents in school – log on SIMS
5	Attendance Team	LG + AT to arrange panel with pupil and parent – log on SIMS

**Contact with parents**

1. Parents should be aware of problems at an early stage through the pupil's Planner and Class Charts.
2. Curriculum Leader/Achievement Leader should inform parents of recurrent problems with punctuality at the earliest appropriate stage.

**All members of staff should deal consistently with all instances of lateness**

**What this policy means for you as a member of staff**

- If you are **Senior Teacher** you must ensure there are **good systems** for monitoring attendance and that these are **communicated effectively** and used consistently
- If you are a **Pastoral Leader** you must ensure that all absences are accounted for. Pastoral Leaders have a role in **identifying why children are absent** and then helping the children

overcome any barriers. Pastoral Leaders **interpret patterns**, communicate this to stakeholders and **monitor changes**.

- If you are a **Form Teacher** you have a **statutory duty** to take a register and process the information using the adopted school system. **You are in the best position** to see **changes in the behaviour** of children which may impact on attendance. Reasons for non-attendance are wide and varied from poor routines at home to extreme cases such as gender ambivalence which can cause stress for youngsters. Form Teachers have the first role in communicating expectations to pupils.
- All teachers should **take a register each lesson**. The school system must be used. If a child is absent, but known to be in school, it is expected that an **alert (e.g. using email) is sent out**. Teachers should monitor attendance at their lesson and **look for any patterns of absence**. Sometimes such patterns become pronounced in KS4.