

**CHORLEY ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY**



WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Governors Approval: March 2018

With Christ, we live, we love, we learn, we grow

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery
Whole School Attendance Policy 2018

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale:

At **Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery** we recognise that attending school regularly has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for children. We will encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which pupils feel valued and part of the school community.

DfE guidance states that all schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance which should be set out in an attendance policy. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstances of the school.

Aims

We will

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school; including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Set targets to improve individual and whole school attendance levels.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We will develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for

- **Parents and carers**
- **Pupils**
- **School staff**
- **Governors**

to complement this policy, and identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This procedural framework will include guidance on

- Registration

- Punctuality
- What constitutes unauthorised absence
- Authorised leave of absence in exceptional circumstances only (as below)
- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual pupils
- Systems for dealing with absence
- Criteria and systems for referral to and working with the Early Intervention Team and School Attendance Consultant.
- Systems for monitoring whole school attendance and action planning
- Appropriate alternative curricular arrangements

Leave of Absence

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, head teachers no longer have the discretion to authorise leave in term time to allow pupils to go on holiday.

Leave of absence **SHALL NOT** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
- the head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

Additional Factors for Consideration

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The Local Authority expects that all parents/carers ensure their children attend school whenever possible. Absence during school time is largely prohibited by regulation and hinders academic progress. Even in exceptional circumstances, the following factors may be taken into account when considering an application for leave:

- Will leave at this point in time be detrimental to the pupil's education?
- Will he/she miss any national tests or examinations?
- Is his/her attendance a cause for concern?
- Is the proposed absence during the month of September or any other transition period?
- Has he/she already had leave during term time this year?
- Did he/she have leave of absence during term time in the previous school year(s)?
- Does he/she have any absences which have been recorded as unauthorised this year?

If work commitments are stated as an exceptional reason for requesting leave, parents will be asked to provide employer details and any additional evidence which shows why leave cannot be taken during the school holidays

Religious Absence

The school will authorise one day 'leave' per religious festival, eg Eid, but no more than 3 days in any one academic year. Parents must request this leave in advance.

Use of Penalty Notices

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School will request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This includes Leave of Absence which is taken without a prior request being made; and leave taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the leave is taken regardless of this advice. **Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery will** also request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice for days taken in excess of the agreed period of leave; without good reason.

Partnership Working

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery will work with the PAST Team (Pupil Attendance Support Team), The School Attendance Consultant and other support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery will use electronic systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

Persistent Absence

The minimum attendance level which is expected of all primary aged pupils nationally is 95%. It is when attendance falls below this level that school will consider whether it is appropriate to offer support in order to improve the situation. Both local and central government pay particular attention to reducing the number of pupils who fall into the persistent absence category (PA). A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance falls below 90% at any point during the school year; whether the absences are authorised or unauthorised. When attendance nears this level children miss significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is put at risk. We need parents' full support in ensuring that attendance does not reach this level. However, if for any reason a child's attendance does fall into this category parents will be asked to do all they can improve the situation.

Families will be supported in this via school's robust systems for managing PA. This support may involve the need for parents, and children of an appropriate age, to agree to a parenting contract. Due to the seriousness of PA status it is highly likely that such cases will be referred to a local government attendance officer (Pupil Attendance Support Team). Furthermore, the names of individual pupils who are classed as persistent absentees are reported to the Department for Education annually; along with whole school absence figures.

Monitoring the attendance of pupils who are educated off site

The attendance of all pupils who are educated off site will be monitored in accordance with the procedures outlined within the procedural framework.

The 'Y' Code – Exceptional Circumstances

- Y = School closed for an unexpected reason (e.g. boiler breakdown)

Exceptional circumstances in which a pupil may be marked as unable to attend which would justify the use of the relevant code (Y) are where:-

- a) If the school, or part of it, is closed for an unexpected or unavoidable, reason, or
- b) (following the amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment) 2010, when a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. In this case, the school may be open to all pupils and a discrete group of pupils may be affected.

Review of Whole School Attendance Policy

Chorley St Mary's Catholic Primary and Nursery will review this policy and the associated procedural framework annually.