

# John Paul II MAC



## Attendance Policy Statement

### **Policy Statement**

To ensure our children derive maximum benefit from the educational opportunities available to them, we believe it is imperative for children attend school regularly and punctually. This attendance policy identifies the approach of the MAC to promote and improve attendance and punctuality.

### **Attendance Register**

All schools in the John Paul II MAC maintain an Attendance Register which is marked twice daily. Schools in the MAC determine their own session times and lengths, including the time registration close at the beginning of each session.

### **Communicating Absences**

Parents are required to inform the school by a telephone call or written correspondence the reason for their child's absence.

The school operates a 'first day response initiative. In the event of a child being absent and no explanation received by a telephone call or written correspondence, the office will contact parents by text/telephone to ascertain the reason for the child's absence.

Where an explanation is not obtained then further telephone contact is made from the school, followed by a letter.

### **Leave of Absence**

All requests for leave of absence (other than sickness) must be made in writing using the relevant forms used by each school.

DFE regulations from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that the Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are some examples of exceptional circumstances in the DFE guidance but this is not an exhaustive list. Under their discretionary responsibilities, Principals consider each request on a case by case basis before a decision is made whether to authorise. Where a request involves a family with children at more than one of the schools in the MAC, the Principals of those schools will consult with each other before a decision is made. As discretion remains with each Principal this will not necessarily result in the same decision being made for all children in the family. The Principal also determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### **Lateness**

All children are expected to arrive at school, ready to learn and on time. Punctuality is monitored at each school according to local procedures.

### **Long Term Absences**

Schools and academies are required to inform the Local Authority of unexplained absences longer than 2 weeks.

Parents taking their children out of school for unauthorised or unexplained absences for longer than 2 weeks may result in them being taken off the school roll. The admission committee of the relevant school has responsibility for making this decision, taking the advice of the Principal and the Local Authority. Where the absence involves a family with siblings at one or more of the schools in the MAC, the decision will be taken following consultation with admissions committees of the other school(s) involved.

### **Dealing with attendance concerns**

Where there are any concerns regarding attendance or punctuality (E.g. if attendance is below 90% and/or there is persistent lateness), a letter is written to parents notifying them of concerns over attendance and the need to improve. If attendance does not improve following this or if attendance is on or below 85%, parents are asked to meet with relevant staff in school to discuss strategies for improvement. If appropriate, the school may refer parents to the Education Welfare Service for further advice, support or actions.

The John Paul II MAC does not routinely issue fines for parents taking leave during term time. However, in circumstances where a child's attendance is still causing concern after the above actions, a fixed penalty notice or prosecution will be considered.

### **Role of Academy Committees, Directors and Principals**

Attendance is reported to each academy committee through the Principal's termly report and to the Board of Directors on an annual basis. If attendance at any school becomes a cause for concern, it will be reported to the Board of Directors at the next available meeting. The role of academy committees and directors is to provide support and challenge to the school in order to ensure that attendance remains high at all schools. Management of the policy at school level is the responsibility of the Principals through identified members of staff.



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
ATTENDANCE POLICY**

*Mission Statement*

*We follow in Jesus' footsteps as we care for each other when we work, play and pray.*

**Statement**

All pupils are valuable members of St. Joseph's Catholic primary School and all are entitled to the best possible education to help them to attain their full potential. This cannot be achieved if attendance is poor. It has been shown that attendance of less than 95% (absences of 9.5 days or more out of 190 pupil days) will compromise pupil attainment. At 90% attendance pupils miss the equivalent of almost 4 weeks education (19 days). Any pupil who misses a significant amount of time will inevitably fall behind other pupils and will be unable to reach their full potential.

We believe that attendance and punctuality are a shared responsibility between the school, the parents and the pupils themselves. It is essential that parents support their children in attending and receiving what they need from school.

**Aims**

To promote regular attendance of pupils, enabling them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and raise standards.

**Objectives**

- To foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community – teachers, parents and pupils
- To provide a framework, with agreed roles and responsibilities
- To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, including set procedures for attendance information
- To develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data.
- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce unauthorised absence
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions
- To promote affective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies
- To use outside agencies as appropriate and to best effect.

**Procedures**

The register is completed at the beginning of the morning and afternoon and is immediately returned to the office for security and Health and safety reasons. A pupil will receive a late mark if they arrive at school after the bell has been rung and the children have entered school.

All pupils who are late must be brought to the Office by their parent(s) / guardian(s) who will sign the late book, giving the pupils name and the reason for being late.

## John Paul II MAC Attendance Policy – July 2014

The office staff are responsible for collating Attendance Records in school and works closely with the Principal to identify any reasons for concern. At the end of each school year, each child's attendance is analysed and absences and late are recorded on each child's school report. CMIS Attendance software is used for this purpose.

### **Absence**

If your child is absent from school, it is the parents' responsibility to contact the school office before 10.00am to provide a verbal reason. On your child's return to school, please send a note explaining their absence.

### **Concerns**

The Attendance registers and Data kept on the main Administrative Computer are examined regularly. If there is a frequent pattern of absence or poor punctuality, the Principal will write to parents in order to ascertain the reason for persistent absence or poor punctuality. Details of attendance or percentages of late arrivals to school are extracted from the computer database. The Principal will show this to the parent(s) or Education Welfare officer.

The Education Welfare Officer meets with the Principal each half term to discuss attendance issues offering action, advice and support.

### **Extended Leave and Holiday during term-time**

All requests for leave of absence (other than sickness) must be made in writing using the relevant forms used by each school.

DFE regulations from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that the Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are some examples of exceptional circumstances in the DFE guidance but this is not an exhaustive list. Under their discretionary responsibilities, Principals consider each request on a case by case basis before a decision is made whether to authorise.

The Principal determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

On application for a lengthy period of absence, the Principal will fully explain that in the event of the child not returning to school on the agreed date, the child may lose their place.

If your application is considered, but not granted, you will be informed. If authorisation has not been agreed but your child is taken out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. You will receive a letter informing you that if your child has not returned to school four weeks after the first date of absence your child will be taken off the school roll.

Ratified by the Academy Committee July 2014

This policy will be reviewed annually