English Martyrs’ Catholic Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

 *Our English Martyrs’ School community aims to follow the example of Christ in welcoming, recognising, fostering and developing each individual as a unique and special gift of GOD with value and dignity*

 Date Reviewed: January 2018

 Review Date: January 2020

****English Martyrs’ Catholic Primary School

**Rationale**

Regular attendance at school is essential for the continuity of the learning experience and for children to enjoy school and achieve their outcomes.

Therefore, we expect all children to attend school unless they are unwell or there is some unavoidable reason or cause for absence.

**AIMS**

* We want all the children to benefit from regular and punctual attendance, so that they have full access to the curriculum we provide.
* 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.

**Procedures**

**Absence:**

If a child is absent, the parent must contact the school by making a telephone call EVERY day the child is absent with a detailed reason.

If parents do not call the school with a reason, the school will call or send a text message informing them that their child is absent and to contact the school.

All reasons for absence will be recorded and monitored by the school.

If your child will be absent due to a medical appointment, the school will require a copy or evidence of the appointment letter.

**Lateness** is defined as arrival in school after 09:00am.

Pupils are required to be in class at 8.40am

The registers will be closed at 09.10am. Therefore, arrival after this time is recorded as an absence. Children who arrive after may have their lateness authorised depending on the reason. Late children must be signed in by an adult, with an explanation for the lateness; these reasons will be monitored by the school.

**Monitoring Lateness**

School will closely monitor the lateness recorded for individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular lateness will prompt the following stages:

**Stage 1** Three lates or more over a six week period will prompt the action of an initial letter from the school requesting parents’ co-operation for improvement.

**Stage 2** If there is no improvement, parents will be invited in to discuss the issues causing the lateness and be offered support to improve punctuality.

**Stage 3** If lateness is still causing an issue, a third letter will be sent to parents stating that due to lack of improvement, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will need to be involved. The EWO will write to the family or request a meeting with the family. The monitoring of lateness will then be the shared responsibility of the EWO and the school.

**Monitoring Absence**

The school will closely monitor the attendance of individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular absence will prompt the following stages:

**Stage 1** Attendance Officer notifies Attendance Lead of any issues and trends on a half-termly basis. This will trigger questions regarding regular absences of individual children. Class teachers may speak to parents to talk to them about their child’s attendance. If a child has missed more than three separate days of schools in a six week period, a letter will be sent out identifying the number of sessions missed, explaining their legal responsibility and invite parents for a meeting with the school and EWO to discuss any support.

**Stage 2** After a formal meeting with the school, the child’s attendance will be monitored regularly. If no improvement is made, parents will be invited to attend a further meeting with EWO and the school to discuss an improvement.

**Stage 3** If there is still no improvement, the school will formally refer to the Education Welfare Service (EWO). Continued tighter monitoring will then be undertaken by the EWO and a legal process begins. From the 1st June 2014, the local authority has started issuing penalty notices for unauthorised term time holiday. The penalty notices will begin at £60 and increase over time if not paid. If there should be a second unauthorised absence, this could then lead to a prosecution. This new protocol will bring all Southwark schools in line with other local authorities.

**Authorised Absence.**

The following occasions when an absence will be authorised:

* When a child is ill
* Medical or dental appointments which cannot be made during the holidays or after school
* Family bereavements
* Days of religious observance
* Offsite educational activities which occur on an occasional basis, i.e. school trips, sporting events, music examinations or public performances in which children are participating.
* Attendance at other educational establishments

**Unauthorised Absence**

The following are occasions when an absence will not be authorised:

* No reason given
* No written letter received explaining the absence
* When there is reason to doubt the explanation
* Shopping trips during school hours
* Birthdays
* Early removal from school – unless agreed by the Head Teacher / Deputy Head

**Holidays during Term Time**

Leave of absence during term time will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

The school cannot condone holidays taken during term time and would request that wherever possible parents arrange holiday absences that do not result in children missing learning opportunities.

Permission for absences in term time may only be granted for exceptional circumstances and approved educational experiences at the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher’s discretion.

If the holiday absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the Education Welfare Service may look into the specifics of the case. Achieving for Children Educational Welfare Service monitors attendance regularly of all schools and their children.

**Referral to the Education Welfare Officer**

* Unexplained absences may be referred
* All pupils who fail to attend regularly
* Any absence where the school experiences difficulty in determining whether or not the absence is authorised or unauthorised
* Repeated lateness will be referred.
* Repeated early removal from school.

**No child is to be removed from the school premises during school hours without parental authority.**

**Children removed from school during the day**

There is an “absence during school hours” record book at the office. Entries need to be made for every child that leaves/returns to school during the school day

**School Organisation**

In order for the school’s Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

**Head / Deputy Headteacher, governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:**

* adopt the whole policy
* ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
* initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence
* Key staff will liaise and follow-up work with EWO and appropriate access to attendance data
* consult and liaise closely with EWO on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
* work in close collaboration with EWO during their termly/half termly register analysis
* set whole school attendance targets
* monitor and evaluate attendance with EWO

**Attendance Officer:**

**RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE**

The Admin Officer will print off attendance reports every fortnight and analyse for any 1-day patterns/persistent absences where attendance is below 95%

It is our routine procedure to:

* Contact the parent by telephone on the first day of unauthorised absence
* If no explanation has been given for the unauthorised absence by the third day, make every effort to secure an explanation either by telephone or by post
* to oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
* to liaise with Education Welfare regularly
* to reinforce good practice
* to share the class teacher’s concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Educational Welfare Officer

**Class Teachers:**

* to complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
* to record all reasons for absences in the register
* to contact parents/carers to discuss concerns about attendance
* to inform the Head Teacher of concerns
* to be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Head Teacher?

**Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning**

English Martyrs’ Catholic Primary School will use electronic systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level. We will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

**REVIEW**

This policy will be subject to evaluation and review and subject to changes in local and national policy.