



ST. EDMUND ARROWSMITH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

A High Performing Technology & Music College
with Leading Edge Status

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2017

The Mission Statement

Prepare the way of the Lord

Education -

Dignity – To respect the value and work of ourselves and others as children of God (Genesis 1:17) – Created in the image of God).

Mission – To let God be known through word and actions (Mt 7:12 – “Do for others, what you want them to do for you”).

Understanding – To respond to the needs of others (Mt 7:7 – “Ask, and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you”).

Nurture – To allow all to grow to full potential (John 15:5 – “I am the vine and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit”).

Discipleship – To follow Christ in Faith, Hope and Love. (Mk 1:16 “Follow Me”).

Staff Responsible: School Leadership Team

Review: Curriculum & Standards Committee

1. RATIONALE:

The school recognises that pupils must attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. We, as a school, seek to maximise attendance rates both in relation to individual pupils and for the student body as a whole. The school recognises that parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend school but endeavours to work in partnership with parents to support and monitor attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance.

2. PURPOSES OF THE POLICY:

- 2.1 To state the legal requirement of parents to ensure that their child receives an efficient full time education by regular and punctual school attendance.
- 2.2 To clarify the school's procedures for
 - a) registration of pupils
 - b) notification of absence
 - c) identifying and reporting incidence of persistent absence
 - d) families taking holiday in term time (HITT)
 - e) supporting pupils returning to school after a period of absence.
- 2.3 To recognise the responsibility of parents to inform the school of the reason for absence from school. Parents should also provide further information regarding absence as required by the school's attendance policy.
- 2.4 To define the role of our Pupil Services Department in relation to school attendance and as a channel for other agencies (e.g. Gateway / Social Services / Legal Services, etc).

3. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES:

- 3.1 A bell will ring at 8.35 a.m. to indicate that pupils should proceed to their registration bases.
- 3.2 Registers will be taken at 8.40am
- 3.3 Pupils arriving after 8.40am will be marked late.
- 3.4 Pupils arriving after 8.55am must sign in at reception to receive their attendance mark. This will be shown as L (Late). The time of arrival and reason for being late will automatically be recorded in SIMS. Pupils arriving late after an authorised absence should have their absence recorded accordingly. The morning register closes at 9.30am. Pupils arriving after this time are marked absent for the morning session.
- 3.5 Subject teachers must take an electronic register of pupils in their teaching set at the beginning of each session. This is of particular importance in preventing post registration truancy.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE:

- 4.1 Pupil journals can be used to convey messages explaining reasons for absence.
- 4.2 Only the school, not parents, in the context of the law, can approve absence.
- 4.3 Parental contact on the first day of absence is expected. If no communication is received, Pastoral Assistants will make contact with parents where appropriate via phone text or email.

5. IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING INCIDENCES OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

- 5.1 Notification of absence on the first day should be the normal expectation.
- 5.2 If no communication is received parents should be contacted to ascertain the reason for absence. This can be by telephone call, text, email or standard letter of enquiry. On receipt of an explanation, the register can be marked accordingly.
- 5.3 If we are unable to confirm an absence as authorised / unauthorised, within two weeks, the Pastoral Assistants will attempt to make contact with the parents / carers via text or email. If we are still unable to ascertain the reason, an absence may be marked unauthorised. The Pastoral Assistant will inform the Senior Learning Coordinator and a decision will be made.
- 5.4 All detected instances of unauthorised absence should be reported to the Senior Learning Coordinator and parents immediately informed.
- 5.5 A plan of action will be compiled that is aimed at helping improve the child's school attendance. Failure to comply with any such plan without valid reason will, if the child's school attendance does not improve, result in a referral being made to the Start Well Service (See below) who will aim to support the family in ensuring the child attends school regularly.

6. SUPPORTING PUPILS RETURNING AFTER A PERIOD OF ABSENCE:

- 6.1 The school is committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies to achieve a high level of school attendance.
- 6.2 The appropriate agency will be informed by the school's attendance officer of any pupil whose attendance is giving cause for concern.

Discussions between the parents, the school and outside agencies will result in an intervention plan being drawn up.

- 6.3 The school is committed to support any such agreed plans which result in an improvement in the attendance of its students.

7. THE START WELL SERVICE:

- 7.1 The Local Authority provides the Start Well Service to help carry out the statutory duties relating to compulsory school attendance.
- 7.2 The Start Well Service brings to the school many skills and sources of support which should be fully utilised. The school is committed to working closely with the start well workers to ensure a high level of attendance and to ascertain problems which may cause erratic or non attendance within the wider family context.
- 7.3 The start well worker attached to the school visits the school regularly to inspect registers and liaise with staff / pupils regarding attendance / welfare issues
- 7.4 Any member of staff concerned about attendance / welfare of a child should consult the appropriate Senior Learning Co-ordinator. This may lead to an Early Help being opened or referral to the Start Well Service and requires the completion of the appropriate referral document. In discussion with the school, an intervention plan will be drawn up at Pre-Referral Meeting and a review date set. The school will be informed of the progress of each case.
- 7.5 The school works closely with the Start Well Service to set challenging targets for attendance. These are regularly reviewed and strategies put in place to optimise the chances of success.

8. EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICE:

- 8.1 An Education Penalty Notice is a fine issued to parents or carers and can be either £60 per parent or carer (if the payment is made within 21 days of receipt) or £120 per parent or carer (if paid after this, but within 28 days). Education Penalty Notices are issued by first class post to your home and will explain how and where to send your payment. You must pay the whole of the amount owing in one payment. You cannot pay in instalments or part of the amount.
- 8.2 Before Education Penalty Notices are issued, a written warning which will explain the extent of the child's non-attendance and the possibility of receiving a Penalty Notice if their attendance does not

improve in 15 days. During this period, the child must not have any further unauthorised absences from school. There is no limit to the number of times a formal warning of a possible Education Penalty Notice issue may be made in any particular case.

- 8.3 Absences will be unauthorised in the following instances:
Where pupils are openly truanting (this includes pupils found during truancy sweeps by Start Well workers and the police).
Absences from school of which parents or carers are aware, but that are not authorised by the school.
Holidays taken in term time which the headteacher has not authorised. (National stance is no holiday in term time)
An unacceptable delayed return from an extended holiday if the parents or carers have not received permission beforehand from the school.
Regular late arrival at school (after the register has closed).

We follow national guidance and pass it on to the enforcement team in Wigan.

9. RECOGNISING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE:

- 9.1 The School recognises excellent attendance as a positive achievement and seeks to reward students who demonstrate this quality on a regular basis.
- 9.2 Pupils who achieve 100% attendance over a year will be rewarded and presented with a Certificate of Attendance at the Annual Awards Ceremony.
- 9.3 These certificates will be presented yearly and can be kept in pupils' files, eventually being part of the students' record of achievement.

10. CONCLUSION:

This policy is to be viewed as an aspect of the Pastoral Care provided by the school as defined in its Mission Statement. It should be considered in relation to other policies and be clearly articulated to staff, pupils and parents. This policy is open to evaluation on a regular basis.

Meeting and Date Policy Adopted ...26 September 2017.....

SignedMr S Westhead.....Chair of the Governing Body