

Sacred Heart Primary School



Attendance Policy

Updated March 2016

Aims and Ethos

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

This will be achieved by creating a caring, welcoming and secure environment in which our pupils feel valued, and a stimulating and accessible curriculum delivered in an attractive environment.

This school has a good record of attendance, which it aims to maintain. An overall level of 94 % attendance is the target.

In order to accomplish this we actively seek the co-operation and support of parents in the shared task of educating our children and believe that good attendance is essential to this.

AIMS

- ★ To improve/maintain the overall attendance to pupils at Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School.
- ★ To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- ★ To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
- ★ To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

The Management of Attendance

Responsibilities of Parents

The Education and Libraries Order 1986 states that it is a parent's legal and statutory duty "*to ensure that children have an efficient education suited to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs.*"

If a child is registered in school, their parent has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

Parents are asked to

- ★ phone the school on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason for absence and expected length of absence.
- ★ The reason for a child's absence **should ALSO be confirmed** with a written note on the first day the child returns to school.
- ★ If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with Homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.
- ★ To discuss with the child's teacher, principal or Vice Principal any concerns regarding school attendance.
- ★ To endeavour to organize holidays and medical, dental appointments outside school hours.

Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the ultimate responsibility for school attendance but this is delegated on a day-to-day basis to the Principal. The Board of Governors has a responsibility to monitor attendance and the effectiveness of the school's attendance policy and practice.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for attendance on a day-to-day basis. However this is delegated on a daily basis to the Vice Principal. The Principal and Vice Principal will meet on a regular basis to identify pupils with irregular patterns of attendance and to decide on an agreed course of action. This will include:

- Informing parents annually of the procedures that are implemented in cases where children's attendance falls below an acceptable level. (*school threshold - 90% statutory referral to EWO - 85%*)
- To monitor attendance on a monthly basis and refer pupils causing concern to the principal.
- To contact the parents of pupil whose attendance has fallen below the school's threshold and inform them of the school's concerns in relation to these matters.
- To contact the parents of pupils whose attendance has fallen below 85% and inform them that it is a statutory requirement to refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer.

- To liaise with the Education Welfare Officer on a monthly basis regarding new referrals, on-going referrals and attendance issues.
- To lead policy development.
- To collate and report attendance information.

Role and Responsibilities of Teachers

- ★ To regularly monitor punctuality and attendance, e.g. marking register, collecting absence notes and identifying pupils with irregular attendance patterns.
- ★ To request a written explanation for absence on the first day the pupil returns to school, if none is provided the teacher will send a school absence form home to parents to complete and return. (*blank format for this letter will be created in Attendance Folder*)
- ★ To send a follow up note to parents of pupils who have not returned an absence explanation note by the end of the week. (*DENI headed paper letter*)
- ★ To talk to individual pupils about their attendance.
- ★ To talk to parents about their child's attendance.
- ★ To promote class attendance throughout the curriculum.
- ★ To provide information for the E W O.
- ★ To provide support to pupils after long absence from school.
- ★ To provide support for pupils during a prolonged absence from school.

Roles and Responsibilities of School Secretary

- ★ To operate the SIMS system.
- ★ To taking phone messages from parents when pupils are absent from school and recording this in the messaging book. A copy of this will be given to the teacher who will adjust the register and retain the message in their attendance file.
- ★ To compiling lists of children whose attendance is below the school threshold of 90% for internal monitoring purposes.
- ★ To compile lists of children whose attendance is below 85% for E W O.
- ★ To provide full page print out on individual pupils who have been referred.
- ★ To compile group analysis of attendance per month and up to the current date.
- ★ To collate registration data.

To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2015/02 which can be found in the following link:

www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance/recording-pupil-absences/htm

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent/guardian **MUST** be provided to your teacher when you return.

Family Holidays during Term Time

Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. **Family holidays taken during term will be categorized as an unauthorized absence.** Only in exceptional circumstance will a holiday be authorised.

Education Welfare Service

Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service have a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

Punctuality

Parents

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their children arrive in school on time and to provide an explanation for lateness.

ALL pupils are expected to be in school at 8:45am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

Teachers

If a pupil arrives after an agreed time (currently 9:00am) the teacher should place a late mark beside the child's name and should request an explanation.

Teachers should discuss concerns about lateness with the pupil's parents.

Any concerns about individual children's lateness should be referred to the Vice Principal.

Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality

Sacred Heart Primary School aims to reward good attendance and punctuality with certificates and house points.

Attendance

Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of term will be presented with a certificate during the school assembly. Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the year will be presented with a certificate and a gift.