





St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy



St Thomas Aquinas
Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi Academy Trust

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Implementation	Mrs Clair Dedman
Monitoring	Mrs Clair Dedman
Written	06.02.22
Signed (Head Teacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Review Date	January 2023

Attendance

The school has a major role in monitoring levels of attendance and punctuality and in creating the appropriate climate in the school to foster regular attendance and excellent timekeeping all of which the school believes promotes a basis for each child to achieve their potential.

We take our responsibilities seriously and carefully record all absences and lateness. Parents are asked to notify the school on the first day of any absence, either by personal call, by email, by telephone message or by sending a note with another child. If the school has not been notified of an absence by 9.30 am the school secretary will telephone home to reassure us that a child is safe with a responsible adult.

Parents are requested to confirm absences **in writing**, giving details of reason and date(s). Regulations state that if the school is not informed by parents of visits to the doctor, dentist, illness, holidays etc. then these absences automatically become unauthorised. It is therefore

essential that any reasons for absence (even short absences) be given **in writing**.

The school keeps records of all authorised and unauthorised absences; these are published annually in the Prospectus and Governors' reports but may also be published in the school newsletter.

The Headteacher and all members of staff monitor attendance closely and any irregular attendances or children who are away from school for more than a week through illness or hospital attendance are brought to the attention of the Headteacher and also are discussed with the LA Education Welfare Officer who visits the school termly. The school's Education Welfare Officer is a key partner in supporting the school in this area and the regular meetings with the Headteacher enable the school to seek further advice and guidance in this area. Following these discussions, all children who are identified as a concern in terms of attendance are noted by the Headteacher. These are usually children with attendance levels less than 95%.

The Headteacher, after further consultation with the relevant member of teaching staff or SLT will contact the parents/carers of the child/children concerned to request an informal meeting to see how the school can support the parents/carers in improving attendance.

The school is very aware that issues of attendance are sometimes due to factors beyond the control of parents or carers, such as long-term illness or hospitalisation and the school is committed to working with parents to limiting the impact of these events on the development of individual children. However, where attendance is due to factors within the control of parents or carers the school will seek to establish an agreed plan of action to improve patterns of attendance. This plan of action will be shared with the school's EWO and the impact of such plan closely monitored.

Should this plan not have the desired impact or if, during discussions with parents or carers, the Headteacher identifies wider issues of concern, then the process will be formalised by either the Headteacher wanting to outline the concerns and the required action needed or by asking the Education Welfare Officer to contact or write to parents. Where it is deemed appropriate to refer a problem to the Education Welfare Officer, a referral form is completed giving details of the nature of the problem, any difficulties and action already taken by the school.

At all times, the school and EWO will seek to work together with parents to respond to the issues identified. In certain circumstances, other agencies such as the school Doctor / Nurse may be called on to support the process.

The school is committed to ensuring that parents and carers are fully involved and informed about every stage of these processes. Organisations concerned with issues of attendance will not contact parents/carers before the school has raised the issue of concern itself, unless there are extreme circumstances and it is judged that this would be in the child's best interest. This approach has been very successful in helping the school and parents to work together to ensure that the welfare and development of all children in our care is supported.

Punctuality and Collection

School starts at 8:45am (Soft Opening) and registers close at 9am. Any child arriving after 9 am is deemed late.

Parents are requested to ensure their child(ren) arrive on time for school as poor attendance and lateness disrupt the education of the individual and other members of the class. Children arriving late enter the school via the front entrance. The school receptionist notes down in the signing in/out book the names of any latecomers, date and time of arrival and any reason given for lateness. This also ensures an accurate record in case of fire or other emergencies on the premises. The book is kept in the school office and parents are asked to make sure an entry is made should they bring or collect their child at other than the normal school times.

The class teacher records lateness in the class register.

On the occasions when the school has been informed in advance of late arrival due to a doctor, dentist or hospital appointment for example, the reason is recorded by the clerical

staff on a form in the class register, to inform the class teacher why a child is absent. The Headteacher is made aware of any child who has three entries in the late book within a half term/termly period. Parents are contacted in person, by telephone or letter to discuss the school's policy on this matter. Persistent late coming will result in parents being invited to discuss the reasons with the Headteacher and any further late coming may involve a meeting with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors and may result in a referral to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer).

A record is also kept in the school office of any children who are collected late at the end of the school day at 3.15 pm. After approximately 10 minutes a telephone call is made to parents/carers to determine if there is a problem or how quickly the child can be collected. In the event that a child is regularly late in being collected from school at the end of the school day, the class teacher or Headteacher will contact parents to request a meeting to discuss the situation. Teaching staff have a wide range of commitments after the end of school teaching day and it is not their role to supervise children on a regular basis. It is a parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their children are collected promptly from school and is a responsibility which the school will actively promote. A child who is still persistently collected late from school will be referred to the EWO who will advise the school of the appropriate action to take.

Family Holidays in School Time

The school does not permit the taking of holidays in school time.

Leave of Absence

Parents seeking permission to take a child out of school for other reasons should request in writing a meeting with the Headteacher.

A letter will be sent with arrangements for this meeting.

The Headteacher will consider each case in light of the individual circumstances and decide whether the reason given is exceptional.

Following the meeting you will receive a written confirmation of the decision made.