



*in God's hands*

## **St Ignatius Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Policy Originator	St Ignatius Primary School
Person /Governor Responsible	Lourdes Keever
Status	Statutory
Last reviewed	September 2017
Ratified on	
To be next reviewed	September 2018
Signed	

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### **1. Aim:**

The aim of St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School's **Attendance and Punctuality Policy** is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its Attendance and Punctuality Policy is adhered to as much as possible.

St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and punctuality and it is the joint responsibility of parents/carers, pupils, and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance or punctuality are given the right attention and appropriate support.

This policy is supported by our policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying, and behaviour.

### **2. Legal Framework:**

The Education Act 1966 states that:

The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- a) To their age, ability and aptitude, and
- b) To any special education needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age –

- a) When they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on prescribed day.
- b) Otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year –

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a) If they attain the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,

b) If they attain that age on that day, or

c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following year attaining that age. St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this Attendance and Punctuality Policy accordingly.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities:**

#### Governing Body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

Ensure that the importance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff;

- Review the school's attendance and punctuality policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff parents/carers and children to implement the policy effectively;
  - Nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and punctuality and coordinating provision and policies for attendance and punctuality;
  - Ensure that all legislation regarding attendance and punctuality is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents/carers, children and staff;
  - Work out appropriate and accurate annual attendance numbers and future attendance targets in partnership with the local authority and submit these to the local authority within an agreed timescale each year;
  - Ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and punctuality and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site;
  - Ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance and punctuality data and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff;
  - Use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance and punctuality coordination and target set for the future;
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## School Leadership Team

- As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance and punctuality, the school leadership team will:
  - Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance and punctuality to pupils and their parents/carers which includes forming positive relationships with families;
  - Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and good punctuality and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement;
  - Coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance and punctuality policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full policy review;
  - Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance and punctuality policy and government legislation, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance and punctuality issues;
  - Ensure that government legislation on attendance and punctuality is complied with and that the Leadership Team are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them;
  - Report to the governing body each term and the lead governor for attendance and punctuality half-termly on attendance records, data and provision;
  - Ensure that systems to record and report attendance and punctuality data are in place and working effectively;
  - Develop multi-agency relationships, in particular with **Haringey Education Welfare Service** and our **school nurse**, to help with poor attendance and punctuality and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend and/or be punctual;
  - Document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance and punctuality in case of future legal proceedings.
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### Teachers and support staff

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance and good punctuality, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance and punctuality to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming relationships with families;
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and good punctuality and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance and good punctuality for their own personal progression and achievement;
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and government legislation and that they will speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Attendance and Punctuality Officer;
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and punctuality and that attendance and punctuality;
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed;
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance and good punctuality.

### Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance and good punctuality, we request that parents/carers;

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school;
  - Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance and good punctuality, at home;
  - Encourage and support their children's aspirations;
  - Follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (see Section 4);
  - Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absence and poor punctuality, such as, by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours;
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- Use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises;
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and punctuality;
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc., so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance and good punctuality;
- Do not take their child/ren out of school during term time. If parents/carers would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Head teacher (see Section 4.6);
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance and punctuality;
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable;
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents/carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen;
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and punctuality and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance and punctuality and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation;

#### **4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences**

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents/carers cannot authorise absences.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child is present or absent.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents/carers should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and every day whilst the child is absent from school.

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#### 4.2 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents/carers will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day and each day of absence.

When the child returns to school they should bring a note from their parent/carer explaining the absence – this is for the school records.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents/carers may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper.

#### 4.3 Medical or dental appointments

Parents/carers should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside of school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

#### 4.4 Authorised absences

There may be some instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement. This must be applied for and authorised by the Head teacher.

#### 4.5 Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The Head teacher/class teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

#### 4.6 Family holidays and extended leave

Parents/carers should ensure that the family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents/carers do not have the automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for this reason. Request for leave must be in writing to the Head teacher 14 days/2 weeks in advance of the leave being taken.

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In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement, that requires a child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration.

Retrospective applications will not be considered and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence.

If permission is not granted but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice.

#### 4.7 Lateness

Registration begins at 8.55am.

Pupils who arrive after the close of the register (9.05am) are registered as Late (**L**)

Pupils who arrive after 9.25am are registered as an unauthorised absence (**U**)

Pupils who arrive after the registration period will have entered school via the office and their parent/carer will be requested to sign them in and give a reason for their lateness. It is vital that parents/carers sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

A register is also taken at the start of the afternoon session by the teacher, and any unexplained absences reported back to the school office.

Persistent lateness is closely monitored – letters / texts will be sent home requesting reasons for lateness and parents may be called to a meeting at school to discuss reasons for lateness and to draw up an action plan for improvements.

#### **5. School action: following up absences and poor punctuality**

Class registers are passed to the school office after registration. Where there are unexplained, or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents/carers. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, a member of the School Attendance Team will contact the parent/carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

Where pupils have been away for either short or long term, the school will support that child when they re-enter school to help them catch up on learning and any work that they have missed.

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## **6. Attendance and Punctuality Incentives**

Attendance and punctuality rewards are given out regularly at the whole school assembly.

On a weekly basis, pupils are given stickers and certificates for good or improved punctuality and attendance.

Each term, pupil attendance is celebrated with our Attendance Olympics, where pupils who have 100% attendance will receive certificates and badges for their success.

Bronze for one term of 100% attendance

Silver for two terms of 100 % attendance

Gold for three terms of 100% attendance

Practices and Procedures - See Appendices

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