

# All Saints Catholic Primary School



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<b>Consultee/s:</b>	School Governing Body
<b>Approved by:</b>	All Saints RC Primary School Governing Body Mrs P Zagozda
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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **Regulations**

#### **Background**

Both the Education Act 1944 and subsequent Acts and the Pupils' Regulations 1956 enshrined the principle that parent, schools and local authorities would share legal responsibilities in respect of school attendance.

The 1944 Act required that:

Parents of children of compulsory school age must ensure that they receive an efficient and suitable full-time education at school or otherwise.

Local Authorities must ensure that parents fulfilling their statutory obligations as to their children's education, including, where necessary, action through the courts.

The Pupils' Registration Regulations 1956 provided that;

All schools (other than independent schools for boarders only) must keep an attendance register in ink, on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions, a pupil should be marked present or absent. This is now kept electronically.

## **Aims**

We at All Saints Catholic Primary School feel that the social climate of the school is critical in creating a suitable environment for learning. We aim to create a warm welcoming and secure atmosphere where children will feel valued and to provide a stimulating and accessible curriculum suitably differentiated to cater for children with Additional Learning Needs.

At All Saints Catholic Primary School we feel that attendance is the responsibility of all staff, parents, pupils and governors.

To help promote regular attendance we will endeavour to work closely with the Education Welfare Officer who at the moment is Lisa Adams of Blaenau Gwent LA.

The school also endeavours to promote good attendance and punctuality by:

- Updating parents with the rolling school percentage on the school's weekly newsletter having shared the whole school target with parents. Giving a termly award for all pupils on 100%.
- Making awards to all children who achieve 100% attendance for the year on Presentation Day in July.
- Focusing on groups of learners who fall below 90% and discussing these students with the Education Welfare Officer in regular meetings. Previously, the target group was under 80% and then under 85% respectively but witnessed improvement has led to an increase in the minimum performance level for pupils on this project.

## **Registers**

An admission register is kept for pupils each morning and each afternoon.

Registers are maintained on the SIMS programme.

A computer programme is used to collate all attendance information and this is monitored by the HT, school clerk and the EWO.

Because schools will be obliged to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence, it is vital that the correct notations are used.

## **Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**

Existing law authorises certain categories of absence and protects parents from prosecution where a child is absent on any day. Even where absence is authorised schools should be alert to emergency patterns of absence, which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning.

For a school such as All Saints the following constitute as authorised absence;

When prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause.

Day of religious observance by religious body to which pupil's parents belong.

Medical and Dental appointments.

On the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided and that the school is not within suitable walking distance.

Excluded children; where a pupil has been temporarily excluded.

Sporting events and educational visits, which are school directed.

Family bereavement – or associated events such as a pupil attending graduation of an older brother or sister.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

1. Shopping during school hours.
2. All holidays taken during term time are classed as unauthorised except in exceptional circumstances.
3. Time off for birthdays.
4. Minding the house, looking after a brother or sister.
  - a. Pupils whose absence is authorised should be marked with the appropriate letter.
  - b. Unauthorised absence should be marked with the appropriate letter. When a note or telephone message giving a reason for absence has been received the appropriate letter should be marked on the SIMS programme.
  - c. When notes explaining absences are received they should be dated and initialled by registration teacher. They should be retained for at least six months after the absence to which they refer. Telephone messages from parents about absences should be written down in an exercise book. If the school clerk receives the message, SIMS is adjusted electronically.
  - d. Any queries regarding authorised or unauthorised absences should be referred to the Head teacher or SMT where appropriate.
  - e. Where following the absence of a pupil a note or telephone message has not been received, then the parents will be contacted by phone or sent a letter, which will require an explanation for the absence. Stage 1.

### **Fixed Term Penalty Notices**

School policy in this area will be in line with that of the cluster. In general, once a pupil has hit the figure of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) being lost due to unauthorised absence during a rolling 12 week period (these do not need to be consecutive), parents/carers will be sent a letter warning them that a FPN will be issued if the child has another unauthorised absence during the monitoring period of fifteen school days.

### **Lateness**

This should be shown with the appropriate letter. At All Saints we will allow 15 minutes only (morning and afternoon) before registration closes.

- a. We should do our utmost to discourage pupils from arriving late except in exceptional circumstances that are known to the school.
- b. Enquiries will be made as to why each child is late. When instances of poor punctuality occur a phone call will be made or letter sent to the parents of the child involved (see appendix 1). Pupil's lateness is recorded in the Late Book.

### **Absence-Initial Contact**

If a child is absent for more than three days and no message has been received, the school clerk will phone the home to ascertain the reason for absence. In exceptional circumstances, a first day call will be made.

### **Process of Reporting Continuous Absences**

When an unexplained absence occurs parents will be contacted in the first instance in Stage 1. In the case of the pupil being absent for 50% of the time over a period of 2 weeks and no message has been received Stage 2 will apply. In the case of continuous absences of two weeks or more, or when a pupil fails to attend school regularly and parents have already been consulted at Stage 2, Stage 3 will then apply, and the matter will be reported to the E.W.O who visits regularly and will be notified accordingly of any absences that require investigation.

It is recognised at All Saints that, through their home visiting, E.W.O.'s are well placed to assess a non-attender's problems in the wider family context.

We also acknowledge that an early and firm approach to parents may bring a prompt and sustained improvement.

### **The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991**

Under the provision of the 1991 Regulations, the Pupils' Registration Regulations 1956 have been amended so that;

1. The existing duty on schools to take an attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session is made more specific, through a

requirement that attendance registers show whether, in the case of pupils of compulsory school age, an absence is authorised or unauthorised;

And,

2. Schools are permitted to computerise their attendance and admission registers subject to satisfactory safeguards to protect the integrity of the record.

In addition,

3. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 1992, Maintained schools' prospectuses and annual reports must include specified information on notes of unauthorised absence.

Mr. J Price Headteacher

Appendix 1

All Saints Primary School  
Heol Yr Ysgol  
Ebbw Vale  
Blaenau-Gwent  
NP23 6QP

Date

Dear Parent

\_\_\_\_\_ has been late in school on \_\_\_\_\_  
occasions and he has consequently missed assemblies and/or various lessons on these  
days. It is important that \_\_\_\_\_ arrives every day in school  
punctually so that he/she does not miss any of the school day's activities and disrupt  
the class.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. J Price  
Headteacher

**Stage 1**

All Saints Primary School  
Heol Yr Ysgol  
Ebbw Vale  
Blaenau-Gwent  
NP23 6QP

Date

Dear Parent

We have notices from our records that your child was absent from school recently.

I would be grateful if you would indicate below the reason for this absence.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Mr. J Price

Headteacher

Please tick the correct box;

My child was ill

My child was visiting the doctor/dentist/hospital

Other reasons (please give details)

**Stage 2**

All Saints Catholic Primary School  
Heol Yr Ysgol  
Ebbw Vale  
NP23 6QP

Date

Dear Parent

Our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ has been absent 50% of the time over the last 2 weeks. Could you please contact the school and give reasons, or let us have a doctor's certificate for this. If this situation persists we will have to consult with the Education Welfare Officer.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. J Price  
Headteacher

### **Stage 3**

Date

Dear Parent

We have written to you previously regarding \_\_\_\_\_'s poor attendance at school. There has not been an improvement since that date and so we are asking the Educational Welfare Officer to approach the Local Educational Authority to see what further action is necessary.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. J Price  
Headteacher