



Achieving together in faith

**Holy Cross Catholic
Multi Academy Company**



*"Hand in hand, we listen to God's call, we learn from God's word
and we share God's love through service."*

Attendance Policy

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| Responsible for policy | Marina Kelly |
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2 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Catholic schools aim to be places where love of one's neighbour is obvious at all times. As St. John reports, Christ said to His disciples at the Last Supper 'This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you'.
- 1.2 Catholic schools are staffed by teachers and support staff who are not only qualified and expert in their own field but who also, having freely chosen to work in a Catholic institution, commit themselves to care for and support each other in every way possible consistent with the teachings of Christ, Gospel values, Catholic doctrine, and the ethos of the school.
- 1.3 Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company (MAC) has adopted this policy in order to promote positive attendance and help to improve future life chances for our young people by ensuring that all pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance in helping our young people achieve their full potential.
- 1.4 All members of our school communities have a duty to ensure that Gospel values underpin the relationships within the school and should draw on the guidance offered in 'Christ at the Centre'. Whilst not definitive, the core values based on the Beatitudes may be summarised as follows:
 - faithfulness and integrity;
 - dignity and compassion;
 - humility and gentleness;
 - truth and justice;
 - forgiveness and mercy;
 - purity and holiness;
 - tolerance and peace;
 - service and sacrifice (Christ at the Centre' 2008 Fr Marcus Stock STL MA).
- 1.5 This policy will be applied in accordance with statutory regulations for attendance of pupils at Holy Cross schools which may apply at any time in accordance with the procedures and delegations adopted by Holy Cross Catholic MAC under those regulations.
- 1.6 This policy is for use by Holy Cross Catholic MAC and some academies' governance terminology differs within Archdiocesan Multi Academy Companies. This policy uses the term Director to represent Trustees of the Company. The term Local Governing Body is used throughout.

2. Aims

At Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company (MAC), we view regular attendance as an essential part of a child's academic and social success. Learning and friendship opportunities are enhanced by sustained periods of unbroken attendance, and we rely on our partnership with parents/carers to ensure that this is achieved. Good attendance means that children usually make good, consistent progress in their schoolwork. If a child is registered at school, parents and carers have a duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and is punctual.

At Holy Cross Catholic MAC, we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-MAC culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality to school and in attending lessons.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) (May 2022) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#) (May 2020). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions \(updated 1 September 2022\)](#).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The link governor for attendance is Anne McQuillian

4.2.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Claire Carey and can be contacted via 02476596988 or admin@st-augustines.coventry.sch.uk

4.4 Attendance Officer or School Lead for Attendance: Learning Mentor

The lead staff member is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Ensuring the correct codes are used when recording attendance
- Contacting social workers of any absence (children with a social worker)

The learning mentor is Wendy McMahon and can be contacted via 02476596988 or admin@st-augustines.coventry.sch.uk

4.5 Class teachers (Primary)

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis by 8.45am and 12.35pm or 1.05pm.

4.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the lead staff member in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

4.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend prepared for the day

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

All pupils will be placed on the school attendance register which will be completed twice daily. Attendance registers will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See **Appendix 1** for the DfE attendance codes.

The following will also be recorded:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

A record will be maintained for every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm and 1.00pm will be kept open until 12.35pm and 1.05pm.

The school day finishes at 3.10pm.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 8).

Absence due to illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will not be requested unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Where the school suspects that a child is absent due to a holiday, steps will be taken to investigate further. This will involve a home visit during the absence period. Parents will also be required to produce evidence (for instance medical evidence and evidence of change of travel plans if holidays have had to be extended for medical reasons) in support of the period of absence in order to avoid the issue of a Penalty Notice and / or prosecution.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (see Appendix 2).

If the pupil is female and from a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practising community, the Safeguarding Lead will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer and use direct questioning to ascertain whether 'cutting' of the girl will be undertaken during the leave of absence. The Safeguarding Lead will then take the information from this meeting and make a decision on whether to refer to local Referral and Assessment Services or the Police.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Persistent lateness to school after the register is closed, which is equivalent to 10 sessions in any five-week period, will result in the liable parent/carer receiving a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 20 school days to affect an improvement.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, a home visit may be carried out by a member of our Safeguarding Team.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via a half-termly report.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Requests for Exceptional Leave of Absence During Term Time

- Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in very exceptional and unavoidable circumstances.
- Except in an emergency, permission for any period of leave must be sought from the school before it is due to begin and in advance of making any arrangements.
- Any request must be made on an Exceptional Leave of Absence Form (Appendix 2), which can be obtained from the school office. The appropriate information and documentation must be provided to back up the application.
- Evidence of any travel bookings, if applicable, may be requested by the school.
- Each request for exceptional leave of absence is considered by the Headteacher on behalf of School Committee. Where necessary, a meeting will be arranged between parents and the Headteacher to discuss the application.
- Absence for the purpose of a family holiday does not constitute exceptional leave. Taking holidays during term time will affect your child's learning and we expect parents to take holidays during official school closure periods.
- If you take your child out of school for a holiday, then your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised holiday. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

6.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6.3 Children missing from education

If a child is missing and their whereabouts are unknown, the school will follow the Local Authority procedures in taking immediate steps to locate that child as soon as possible. A child who is Missing in Education may be:

- A child who is not at their last known address and:
- has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:
- left school suddenly and their destination is unknown.

This policy does not refer to children who are missing from view or absent from home or care. When a child goes missing from the home, or from care, or where the school has significant safeguarding concerns for the child, the school must refer these children immediately to the Children's Advisory Support Service (CASS), and/or to the Police.

A member of the school Safeguarding team will complete the relevant a Children Missing from Education referral form and notify the Local Authority.

In the event of school transfer or a pupil moving to another area, a pupil will normally remain on roll until notification is received from the receiving school. Should no notification be received, the school will make every effort to locate the pupil in conjunction with the Local Authority. If unsuccessful, a missing person form must be completed and sent to the Local Authority and the pupil removed from roll after twenty days.

In the case of unauthorised holidays, pupils' names will be removed from the roll after twenty days of absence. Parents are made aware of this before the leave of absence, and by letter, when the child's name has been removed from the roll.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance Rewards

- At the end of each week:
 - the class with the highest attendance for the week will receive a certificate in assembly. The class will also receive £5 (£10 for 100%) to save and spend on a whole class activity at the end of the academic year
 - each child with 100% attendance **for that week** will have their name entered into a raffle and will be awarded a prize in assembly.
- At the end of the term:
 - children with 100% attendance **for that term** will receive a certificate in assembly and they will also have their name entered into a raffle for a prize such as a tablet.
- At the end of the year:
 - children with 100% attendance will receive a certificate in and they will also have their name entered into a raffle for a prize such as a tablet and voucher (separate to termly prize).
 -

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data fortnightly (during attendance meetings), half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Local Governing Body.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Liaise with appropriate external agencies to offer appropriate support

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Claire Carey, Deputy Head. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Local Governing Body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| / | Present (am) | Pupil is present at morning registration |
| \ | Present (pm) | Pupil is present at afternoon registration |
| L | Late arrival | Pupil arrives late before register has closed |
| B | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school |
| D | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| J | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| P | Sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| V | Educational trip or visit | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school |
| W | Work experience | Pupil is on a work experience placement |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Authorised absence | | |
| C | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E | Excluded | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| H | Authorised holiday | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| I | Illness | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| R | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| S | Study leave | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations |
| T | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school |
| Unauthorised absence | | |
| G | Unauthorised holiday | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school |
| N | Reason not provided | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| O | Unauthorised absence | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence |
| U | Arrival after registration | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|-------------|---|--|
| X | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| Z | Pupil not on admission register | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school |

| # | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |
|---|------------------------|---|
|---|------------------------|---|

Holy Cross Catholic MAC Exceptional Leave

The school is very reluctant for a child to miss any part of his/her education.

1. There are a number of sources regarding attendance, including our school newsletters, the school website www.staugustinesprimary.net/ and the DfE (Department for Education) www.education.gov.uk Term dates are published well in advance on the school website.
2. The reference in law to Headteacher's being able (at their discretion) to agree up to 10 days of leave of absence has been removed. **This means that holidays in term time will not be granted.** Under Government regulations, leave of absence can only be granted by the Headteacher in the case of exceptional circumstances and is for a maximum of **10 days**. The leave must be authorised **before** any tickets are booked and where possible, be at least 4 weeks before the beginning of the absence.

The decision to authorise absence rests with the school and once the decision is made, it is final.

3. When considering exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher will take into account:
 - Attendance - A child with any less than 97% attendance is unlikely to be granted extended authorised absence, regardless of the reasons for their prior absence.
 - Proximity to exam dates – No child in year 2 or 6 will be granted leave in the same term as the testing period.
4. If permission is granted, children must ensure they are up to date with their schoolwork before they leave and in addition, it will be parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their son/daughter makes up any missed work in his/her **own time** upon return to school.
5. If a child becomes ill whilst abroad, please note that before returning to school they **must** be seen by their GP in the UK and be certified fit to return.
6. If permission is granted photocopies of airline or travel tickets will be required by the school office **before** travelling.

Should you decide to take your child out of school without the Headteacher's permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice by the Children and Families First Team under S23 (1) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 will be issued and may result in a fine of up to £120. If a child does not return to school, they may be taken off the school roll.

Please note: Local Authority Guidance states that if two Penalty Notices have already been issued for periods of unauthorised leave, a Penalty Notice will NOT be issued on the third occasion and you will be taken straight to Court under the higher level aggravated offence. This means that you may be subject to a much more severe penalty i.e. a maximum fine of up to £2,500 or 3 months in custody or, a community order which may involve you doing a number of hours of unpaid work.

St Augustine's Catholic Primary

Application form for Exceptional Student Leave – Academic Year 2023 - 2024 (to be emailed where possible)

Please read the information overleaf before completing this form

The school will only authorise this absence if this form is completed and returned to the school at least **4 weeks before** you leave. In the event of an emergency situation at very short notice, please contact the school office who will refer to the Headteacher as necessary.

| CHILD'S DETAILS | |
|---|------------------|
| Name | Class |
| Address | Telephone Number |
| PROPOSED DESTINATION | |
| | |
| DATES | |
| First day of absence | |
| Last day of absence | |
| Date return to school | |
| REASON FOR REQUEST | |
| | |
| ANY OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION OR MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES | |
| | |
| EVIDENCE MUST BE PRODUCED FOR MEDICAL AND PASSPORT APPOINTMENTS | |
| | |

IMPORTANT: If your child is ill whilst away from school or he/she returns to the UK feeling unwell, it is essential that your child is examined by your local G.P. A medical note confirming that the child is not suffering from any infections or contagious illnesses and is fit to attend school **must** be received by the school before the child returns to school.

I agree to the conditions outlined in this document.
I understand that it is my responsibly to ensure my son/daughter makes up any missed work in his/her own time upon return to school.
I have read the school's extended authorised absence policy.

SIGNED(Person with Parental Responsibility)

PRINT NAME **DATE**

Appendix 3: Assessment dates 2023/24

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Year 1 | Phonics Screening End of Year Assessments | 10 th June – 21 st June 2024 4 th June – 14 th June 2024 |
| Year 2 | KSI SATs | May 2024 |
| Year 3 | End of Year Assessments | 4 th June – 14 th June 2024 |
| Year 4 | Multiplication Check End of Year Assessments | 4 th June – 14 th June 2024 |
| Year 5 | End of Year Assessments | 4 th June – 14 th June 2024 |
| Year 6 | KS2 SAT Week Writing Assessment | 13 th – 16 th May 2024 June 2024 |