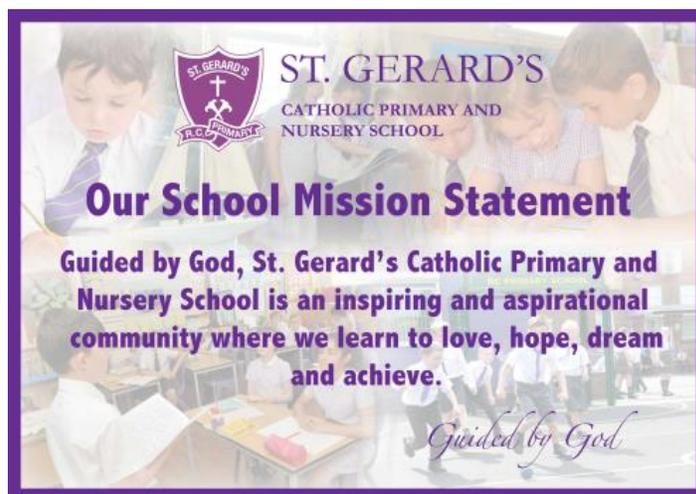


St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School



Attendance for Learning Policy

Agreed by Governors
Signed (Chair of Governors) Ms Sharon Miller



SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT



“St Gerard’s Catholic Primary and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”.

ATTENDANCE FOR LEARNING POLICY

Rationale

This Policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of pupil attendance at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School.

The Policy is a result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all pupils at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School.

Principles

The Governors, Head Teachers and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life
2. Enjoy and achieve
3. Feel a valued member of the school community

Aims

- ◆ To ensure that persistent absence (national average currently 10.5% primary) is no more than 5.5% by 2018.
- ◆ To achieve 96% attendance (LA target)
- ◆ To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance
- ◆ To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence causes concern
- ◆ To identify pupils persistently absent from school (10% or more absence)
- ◆ To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress
- ◆ To identify main causes of absence and take action to address them
- ◆ Ensure that robust reintegration processes are in place to support pupils returning to school after a period of absence.

Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have.

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Parents must:

- ◆ Contact school on first day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance
- ◆ Update the school on the third day of non-attendance if the absence is expected to continue
- ◆ In advance request leave of absence from school only in exceptional circumstances
- ◆ Work with the school and any other agency to resolve difficulties which may affect regular school attendance

School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Mr Landrum (Headteacher) and Miss Gilbert (Administrative Assistant) are responsible for school attendance. As the attendance leader of the school she will ensure:

- ◆ Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- ◆ A whole school approach to reinforce good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and achieve
- ◆ Individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents and pupils
- ◆ Raise awareness of the impact of poor attendance upon attainment.
- ◆ Provide termly report to Governing Body on school attendance
- ◆ Set an annual school attendance target with the Governing Body.
- ◆ Ensure that the school complies with its statutory duty to notify the Local Authority of all pupils' absence from school for 10 days where no explanation for the absence has been provided by the parent/carer.
- ◆ Ensure that the school complies with its statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of any pupil that has left the school where the pupil destination is unknown prior to removing the pupil's name from the school admissions and attendance registers.
- ◆ Provide the Local Authority with the details of any pupil seeking admission to the school that subsequently are not offered a school place.
- ◆ Inform the Local Authority of any pupil that parents have decided to electively home educate.

Registration

Parents should ensure pupils are in school for 8.50 am for morning registration and 1.00 pm for afternoon registration.

A pupil arriving after 9.00 am and 9.15 am will be marked late.

A pupil arriving after 9.15 am and 1.15 pm will be marked as late after the register closes. This is regarded as an unauthorised absence for the session.

Parents whose child(ren) are persistently arriving after 9.15 am on 10 or more occasions will be invited in to school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with Education Welfare Service and consideration given to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school, it is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a pupil is:

- ◇ Unable to attend school due to illness
- ◇ Requires emergency dental/medical appointments. Where ever possible routine dental/medical appointments should be made after school or during school holidays
- ◇ Absent due to other exceptional circumstances.

School will not authorise absence for:

- ◇ Shopping
- ◇ Birthdays
- ◇ Days out
- ◇ Looking after brothers/sisters

School may request medical verification where a pupil's attendance falls below 94%.

School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

School will:

- ◆ Contact parents on first day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received from the parent/carer by 10.00 am to ensure the safety of the pupil
- ◆ Analyse individual attendance pupil data to identify patterns of absence causing concern
- ◆ Contact parents by letter when pupils' attendance falls below 90% to highlight concerns
- ◆ Invite parents in to school for a discussion when a pupil's attendance is below 90%
- ◆ Consider referral to Education Welfare when school action has failed to bring about an improvement in the pupil's attendance
- ◆ Use Individual Attendance Support Plans for pupils with attendance difficulties
- ◆ Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school
- ◆ In partnership with LA use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions, to support improvement to attendance
- ◆ Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence
- ◆ Implement a range of rewards for pupils with high levels of attendance and those improving attendance
- ◆ Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents evenings, pupil reviews and home-school agreements
- ◆ Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate pupils, including use of SEAL to promote emotional wellbeing
- ◆ Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment
- ◆ Persons responsible for attendance in 'Any school'
- ◆ Head Teacher – attendance leader
- ◆ Designated attendance officer (outline responsibility)
- ◆ First day contact link
- ◆ Governor with special responsibility for attendance
- ◆ Review of Policy
- ◆ This policy will be formally reviewed every two years
- ◆ This policy will be less formally reviewed on an annual basis
- ◆ A copy of this policy is available on the school website

- ◆ The policy is given in full to all parents of children who are starting at 'Any school'
- ◆ A paper copy of the policy is in the staff handbook and the handbook for governors
- ◆ The principles of this policy will be raised in the school newsletter regularly throughout the year
- ◆ Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance.