



Holy Souls Catholic Primary School

Holy Souls Catholic School Pupil Attendance Policy

Introduction

We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils.

Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of children at school.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school, including parents, pupils, teachers and governors.

To achieve these aims for our pupils, we are committed to the following:

- a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment;
- for all staff to feel happy to come to school to work with pupils, developing them to their full potential;
- high expectations of our pupils and all staff;
- a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum;
- recognise and celebrate achievements in all areas of school life;
- equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life;
- high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies;
- a range of resources that are effectively used to support and challenge learning;
- provide experiences, which will develop our pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding;
- support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our children;
- foster and maintain links with our wider community

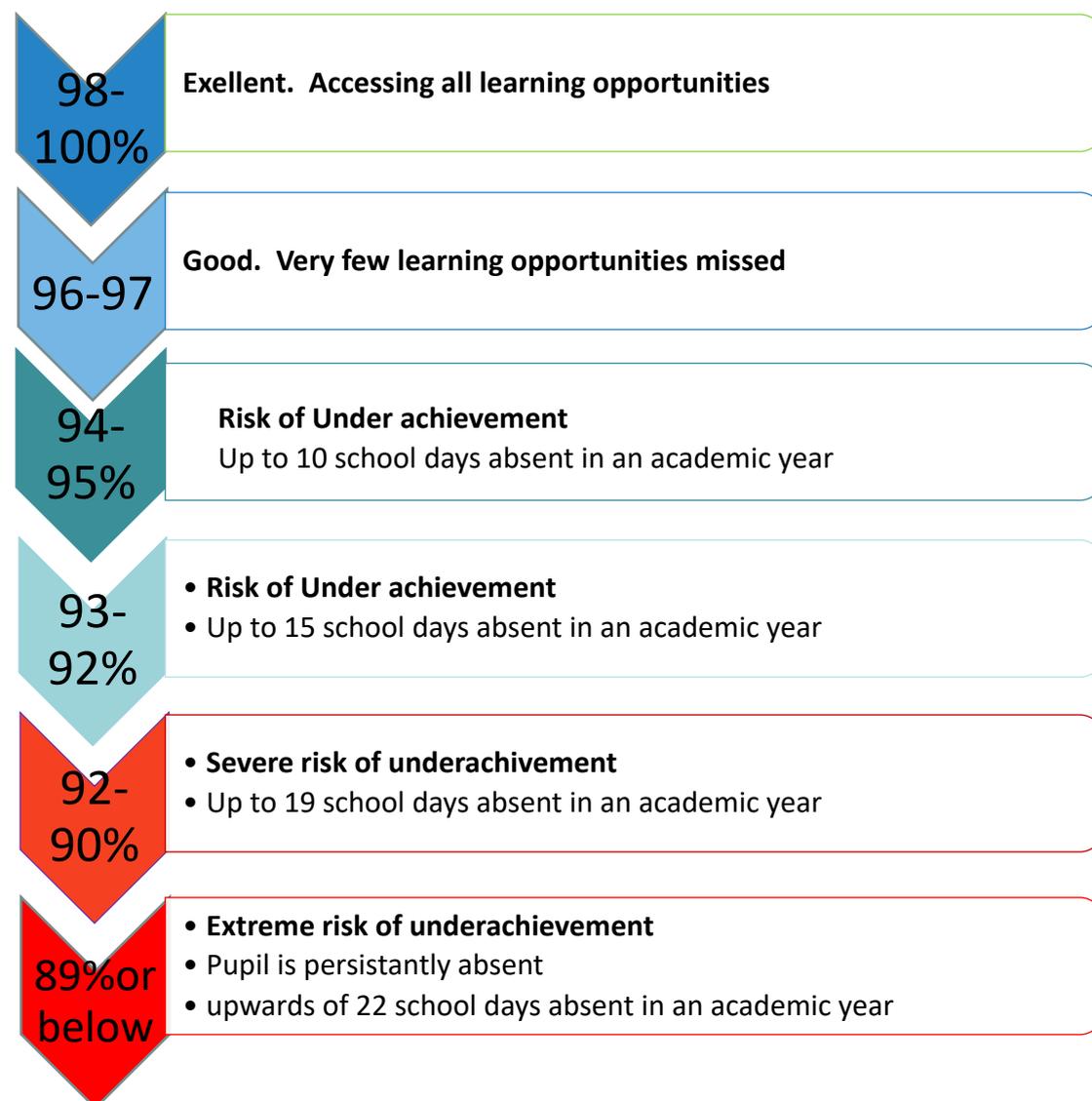
Legislative Framework

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Expected Levels of Attendance

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for pupils. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success. At Holy Souls School we expect all children to achieve attendance that is at least 96%.



Attendance Partnership Expectations

We expect the following from all of our pupils:

- To attend school regularly;
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast or attend breakfast club;
- To tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents and carers:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually;
- To ensure contact is made with school, as soon as is reasonably practical, whenever their child is unable to attend;
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day, having eaten breakfast.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason;
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance;
- Follow up support if needed.

Roles and Responsibilities for attendance

- Holy Souls school has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues.
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school. For detailed roles and responsibilities please see appendix 3
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the head and members of the senior management team.
- Attendance issues are reported, on a minimum termly basis, to the Governing Body.
- We believe that through attending school every day on time children and young people will get the best possible start in life.

Procedures

We will follow the following process for rewarding attendance and addressing attendance concerns of all pupils.



Where attendance has deteriorated rapidly, there are concerning patterns of absence, a number of unauthorised absences, or parents have not responded to concerns raised home visit may be made straight away. The Birmingham Fastrack process for the issue of penalty notices will be followed.

Absence

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence to inform the school of the reason for absence. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.30 am school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given.

School staff will send text messages/phone parents to parents to ascertain a reason for the child absence from school.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence or there is no response to text messages, they will follow the process in detailed in Appendix 1.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated (DFE Attendance guidance 2019)

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.

Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (KCSIE 2019) Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

Illness:

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, ear aches we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school they should follow the above absence process.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Attendance is less than 92%
- There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Where there is a particular medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

Medical appointments

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day. In the majority of cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays.

Where appointments have to be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment.

Parents are required to provide a copy of the appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment to the office. Office staff will mark the register with the appropriate code on the day of absence and add a comment to confirm that the Medical Evidence has been seen. A copy of medical evidence will be filed in the attendance file and the relevant pupil file.

Other reasons for absences:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.

Religious Observance

School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Religious bodies maybe contacted to verify these occasions.

Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must advise school of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return dates

School will authorise absence of Traveller children if their parent(s) are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to and has given indication that they intend to return.

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except

where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

A 'Leave in Term Time' letter is sent to all parents/carers at the start of every academic year to inform them that the Headteacher is unable to authorise leave during term time except where there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents must complete an 'Exceptional Leave in Term Time Request Form' if they are considering taking their child out of school for a period of leave.

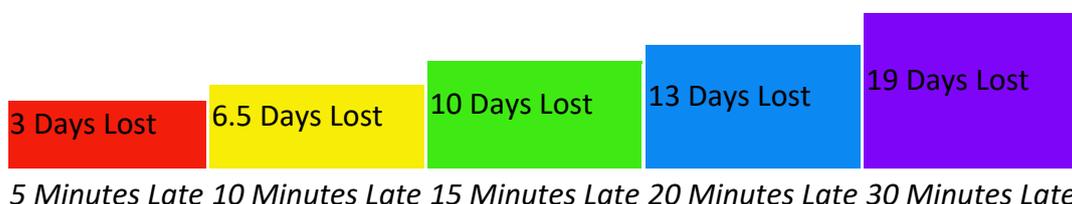
Contact with parents/carers will be made via letters, phone calls and home visits as appropriate.

Any legal action required will be taken by the Education Legal Intervention Team.

Punctuality

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every-day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



(Over one academic year)

Children arriving after 8.45am will be late for school and must report to the school office. Doors are open from 8.30am and children are expected to be in class for 8.40. From 8.30am - 8.40 am there are core skills activities in the classroom.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

School registration will close at 9.15am

The registers monitored daily and to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

Due to possible legal action, after 20 'U' codes the following procedures are put in place to resolve the problem:

- 5 U codes = a letter sent home.
- 10 U codes = parents/carer to meet with the attendance and pastoral lead.
- 20 U codes = Headteacher will instigate legal proceedings where appropriate using fast track process.

Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning, and positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects.

Key Principles

- We should always keep in touch with a student/and his/her family during a long absence.
- We should always make sure he/she is welcomed back
- We should never make sarcastic comments about an absence – a thoughtless word can destroy hours of work by staff.

Head Teacher and SENCO to consider a phased return where appropriate. This includes seeking expert advice from relevant professionals and co ordinating a multi-agency meeting. Consideration needs to be given to any special needs the pupil may have and appropriate support identified. Consideration must be given to a package of support which may include providing a mentor (staff member/student)

Class Teachers should ensure that the pupil feels welcomed back to school in an appropriate way and take any necessary steps to support their re-integration.

Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties.

In September 2016, the Department for Education updated the [statutory guidance](#) to reflect the 2016 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 Regulations.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the 2006 regulations (as amended).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the CME officer, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Alternative Education Providers

On rare occasions, a small number of pupils may be accessing an alternative education provider agreed by the school for all or part of their timetable. In this instance the pupil remains on roll at Holy Souls Catholic School. Attendance to approved alternative providers is monitored and reflected on school registers. The responsibility of ensuring pupils are safeguarded and receiving appropriate education remains with School.

Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations

Every half day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence can be given only when the head teacher has either approved in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the head teacher [see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No.2006/1751) – reg 7(1)].

There are procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks. School complies with and uses the DFE Compulsory National Attendance Codes to categorise absence (Appendix 2).

Use of Attendance Data

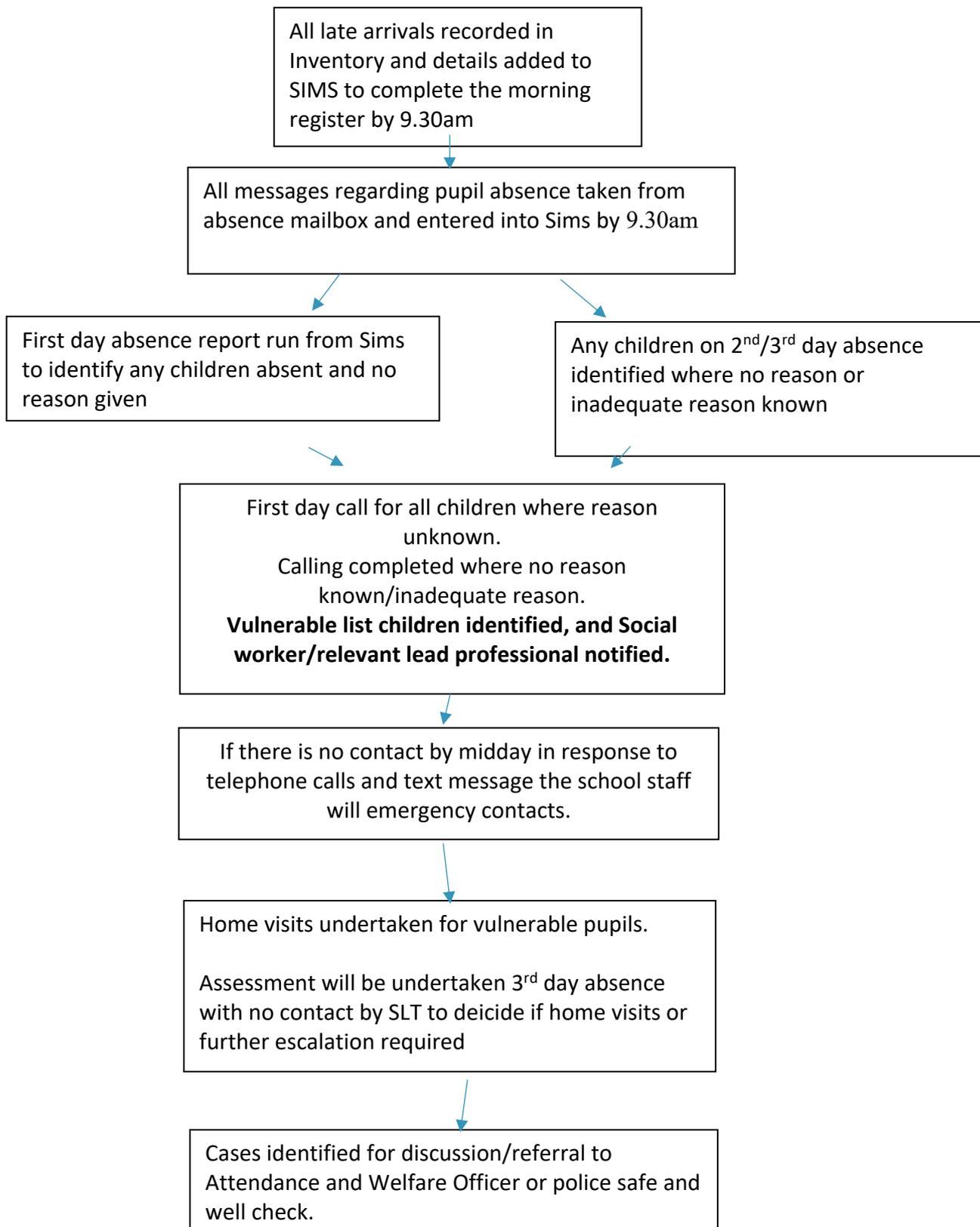
All schools must provide their attendance data to the DFE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about you from your previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with CSAWS during regular attendance meetings held at school. CSAWS then follow up attendance concerns with parents and carers on school's behalf.

Appendix 1

School Absence Procedure



ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 3

Holy Souls Catholic Primary School Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Governor Representation	Schools Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (eg pupil registration, attendance registers) • Reviewing school attendance • Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy
Mrs R Girling	Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with relevant legislation • Data analysis and Strategic Plan for attendance. • Implementing school policy and leading on whole school approach. • Authorising/authorising absences • Leave of absence request • Line management • Contact with parents • Overview of clear and escalating interventions • Evaluation of interventions. • Promoting school attendance. • Responsibility LA Statutory Team.
Class Teachers	Class Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking registers • Promoting importance of regular school's attendance • Providing early warning of attendance concerns • Positive role modelling • Following policy and procedures consistently.
	School Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining registers • First day calling/text messages • Identifying children whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure. • Late arrivals • Process for clearing registers • Administration of school attendance letters, leave of absence letters etc. • Producing attendance reports • Communication with CSAWS.