

# SACRED HEART OF MARY GIRLS' SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Policy adopted</b>	<b>September 2020</b>	
<b>SLT Member Responsible</b>	<b>Miss B McConville</b>	
<b>To be reviewed</b>	<b>Annually</b>	
<b>Date agreed at Governors' meeting</b>	<b>29th September 2021</b>	
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Ms V Qurrey</b>	<b>Date: September 2021</b>

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Aims

The Education Act 1996 states that all pupils should attend school regularly and punctually.

We expect our pupils to attend every day and strive to maintain 100%. Attendance is at the heart of realising potential, with school and national statistics recognising the impact good levels of attendance have on overall attainment and achievement. Pupils will have more choices about further and higher education or employment due to their success.

Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. On the basis of equal opportunities, we will take measures to encourage regular and punctual attendance at school, and in all lessons. We believe our pupils have a right to education and to do this they require continuity and progression in their learning. Consistent attendance is an essential foundation in order to achieve potential.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career, and as a school we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. (See appendices 1 and 2)

We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents, pupils and relevant support agencies to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

Every individual in a Catholic school has the entitlement to be treated with the love, respect and dignity that comes from being a child of God, with the face of Christ.

This policy has expectations for all that are rooted in these Gospel Values and conform to the teaching of the Catholic Church. The implementation of all school policies should demonstrate the importance of personal responsibility and the need for justice but also facilitate healing and reconciliation.

## Expectation

**Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- A quality education.

- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality.
- A clear and fully understood registration process, in accordance with statutory regulations.
- Regular, accurate and efficient recording of attendance and punctuality.
- Effective communication between the school and the home.
- Speedy action on any problems identified.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend.

### **We expect the following from all pupils:**

- That they will attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will inform their parents or a member of staff of any problem that may hinder them from attending school.
- That they will accept help, support and guidance when offered and deemed appropriate.

### **We expect the following from parents/carers:**

- To ensure their children attend school.
- That they contact the school whenever any problem occurs that may keep them away from school. The easiest way for parents to do this is **via the SchoolComms app or telephoning school, Option 2**
- To ensure that they contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school punctually and well prepared for the school day.

Minutes Late Per Day	Equal Days Absent (per Year)
5 Minutes Late	3.4 Days Absent
10 Minutes Late	6.9 Days Absent
15 Minutes Late	10.3 Days Absent
20 Minutes Late	13.8 Days Absent
30 Minutes Late	20.7 Days Absent

- To work cooperatively with the school and education authority to ensure that attendance is treated as a priority.

- Pupils to be on time to school. School starts at 8.45am. A late detention will be given for pupils not attending school on time (various staggered times are currently in operation). After each set of 10 detentions, pupils will serve a Senior Staff detention.

## **6th Form Attendance**

Attendance to the 6<sup>th</sup> form is monitored closely and action is taken where it causes concern (falls below the school target). The Attendance Officer will contact all parents if their daughter has not arrived to school.

Pupils in the 6<sup>th</sup> form are expected to provide a note from their parents to cover absences or a medical note to cover longer term medical absences.

Where a pupil's attendance falls below the school target she will receive a letter home. If attendance does not improve the Head of Sixth form will meet with the pupil and will monitor her attendance. Should there be no improvement, then the Head of Year will meet with the parent and pupil.

If attendance drops below 90% a meeting will take place with the pupil, parents and the Head of Sixth Form.

## **Punctuality**

The punctuality to school and to lessons in the 6th form is also monitored. A discussion will take place with individuals about their lateness will occur in the first instance. If lateness continues parents will be contacted. Pupils in the 6th form will serve a late detention on the day they are late. After each set of 10 lates, they will serve a Senior Staff detention.

## **Encouraging Attendance**

**We will encourage attendance in the following ways:**

- Set appropriate targets for individuals, groups and school.
- Accurate completion of registers at the beginning of each session and at the start of each lesson.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- Recording of attendance in individual Progress files and reports.
- Acknowledgement for 100% attendance in any one term.
- Targeting and visiting pupils who have attendance problems in the feeder primary schools.
- Holding Parent consultation meetings, for those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulties in school that impact upon attendance.

- Sending parents attendance figures, as part of reporting modular assessment data.
- Act upon parental, staff, and agency requests for support with attendance issues, in an appropriate and flexible manner.
- Introduce a reintegration plan for pupils returning after long term absence.
- Put in place preventative procedures wherever possible.
- Offer a range of interventions and support aimed at overcoming barriers to learning which may impact upon attendance.
- Appropriate liaison with external agencies.
- Regular contact with parents of pupils with a worrying pattern of attendance.
- Legal action will be taken with pupils who persistently show attendance and punctuality problems and fail to respond to initiatives to raise attendance or improve punctuality

## **TYPES OF ABSENCE**

### **Authorised Absence:**

**Remember: Only the Headteacher can authorise absence.**

**Parents cannot authorise the absence.**

- Illness  
[If absence is prolonged the Headteacher may decide not to authorise the absence without medical evidence]
- Unavoidable medical appointments when supported by official medical documentation.
- Recognised religious observance.
- Funeral.
- Traumatic event.
- Wedding of close relatives i.e. siblings, parents, aunts and uncles only.
- X code will be used for COVID/self-isolation absence
- The Headteacher will not authorise family holidays in term time. **This is not an entitlement and holidays taken in term-time will adversely affect your child's attendance record.**

### **Unauthorised Absence:**

**The Headteacher will not authorise absence in the following circumstances:**

- Shopping.
- Birthdays.
- Looking after other family members.
- Waiting in for Trades People.
- Holidays, if permission from the headteacher is not obtained,
- Unapproved sporting events.
- Hospital visits for family members.

**An Explanation of Unauthorised Absence:**

Truancy which includes;

- Unexplained absence [no note/contact from parents/carers]
- An unacceptable reason for absence is provided.
- School has previously informed the parent that absence will not be authorised without official medical documentation and none has been provided.
- Lateness after register closes [**arriving after 9.30am**]

<b>175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR</b> 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, and other appointments					
<b>190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</b>					
0 days absence <b>190 days for education</b>	10 days absence <b>180 Days of Education</b>	19 days absence <b>171 Days of Education</b>	29 days absence <b>161 Days of Education</b>	38 days absence <b>152 Days of Education</b>	47 days absence <b>143 Days of Education</b>
<b>100%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Good</b> Best chances of success		<b>Worrying</b> Less chance of success Makes it harder to make progress		<b>Serious Concern</b> Not fair on your child Court Action	

**Responding to Non- Attendance**

## **When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner**

- The Attendance Officer will contact home on the first day of absence via SchoolComms to;
  1. Make parents aware that the pupil is absent.
  2. Ask for an explanation for absence.
  3. Log parental responses in order to determine appropriate registration coding.
  
- If attendance falls to below the school target a letter will be sent home advising parents of the concern.
  
- If there is no improvement, parents will be contacted by the Head of Year and a target to improve will be set.
  
- If attendance falls to 90% your daughter will be referred to the Attendance Team in Havering who may visit you at home.
  
- The Attendance Officer will inform the relevant form tutor and any other necessary person of any failure to obtain an adequate reason for absence.
  
- If an acceptable reason for absence is not provided the absence will be classified as unauthorised.
  
- *In the case of persistent non-attendance, and following a period of intervention by the Local Education Authority, we will support any recommendations for statutory action (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) made by Officers of that service acting on behalf of the Local Authority.*

## **Reintegration**

The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires special individualised planning.

The relevant Assistant Head Pastoral will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.

All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the AHT as soon as possible.

Programmes will be tailored to individual needs and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in lessons as appropriate.

Support will be arranged between the Head of Year, SENCO, Form tutor, learning mentor (as appropriate).

Parents will be involved and informed at each stage of the planned reintegration.

All strategies will be fully logged and form part of the pupil's file.

Staff will be notified of the return of long-term absentees via staff briefing sessions, school bulletin and emails from the AHT.

## **Organisation**

### **Procedures for staff**

In order for this policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and the importance of the education being provided.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching must lead by example.

In addition to this there are the following specific responsibilities:

#### **Headteacher:**

- To oversee and keep attendance and procedural policy under review with Senior Leaders and School Governors.
- To report to Governors on levels of attendance
- To pursue statutory legal action for cases of poor attendance and punctuality.

#### **Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral**

- To liaise with Heads of Year to set and monitor targets for individuals, groups and years.
- To liaise with the Local Education Authority and agree appropriate actions/allocation of resources.
- To oversee the operation of the attendance and registration systems and the collation of attendance data.
- To oversee the work of the Attendance Officer.
- To produce the attendance profile for the whole school.
- To facilitate reintegration and formulate a reintegration plan in conjunction with the Attendance Officer, learning mentors and SENCO and others, as appropriate.
- To report to SLT and school leadership on attendance matters.
- To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and on time.
- To ensure that attendance remains a priority of the school.

## **Head of Year**

- To receive and analyse attendance data for the relevant year group.
- To reinforce good practice at meetings.
- To organise attendance assemblies for the issuing of awards and rewards.
- To initiate contact with parents in cases of prolonged and unexplained absence.
- To liaise with the Attendance Officer.
- To set and monitor attendance targets for tutor groups.
- To be responsible for the allocation of rewards for attendance for individuals in the relevant year.
- To ensure that any sanctions issued for attendance and punctuality are completed.
- To scrutinise attendance data on a weekly, half termly and termly basis, in order to recognise patterns of absence likely to impact upon progress and achievement.
- To ensure that the AHT is aware of patterns of attendance and punctuality.
- To work with the AHT to ensure that attendance remains a high priority in the school.

## **SENCos**

- To provide support and guidance to any pupil on a reintegration programme.
- To work with the relevant AHT/Head of Year to ensure that attendance remains a high priority in the school.
- To attend regular attendance strategy meetings.

## **Form Tutor**

- Challenge absences on a daily/weekly basis with individual pupils and return authorisation / amendment list on a daily/weekly basis.
- Praise good attendance on an individual and group basis.
- Challenge any anomalies in daily/weekly attendance, which suggest truancy.
- Encourage/advise individual pupils on the importance of attendance and punctuality.

- Monitor all pupils' attendance, especially those pupils returned following improvement. Advise and recommend to Head of Year trends of attendance and areas of concern.
- If possible, make personal contact with parents by phone, if time allows.

## **Class Teacher**

- To complete the register accurately and within the first 10 minutes of each lesson and during the additional 5 minutes of period 5 for the official afternoon register
- To amend the register as necessary during the course of the lesson.
- To challenge non-attendance in lessons.
- To advise pupils of the impact of non-attendance on attainment and progress.
- To monitor attendance of individuals in lesson and advise the Attendance Officer immediately and Head of Year by incident form of any anomalies.
- To inform individuals of work missed due to absence from lesson.

## **Attendance Officer**

- To liaise between school and home in cases of pupils with poor attendance.
- To liaise with relevant individuals in cases of reintegration for pupils with poor attendance.
- To meet with the HOY as appropriate, to discuss individual cases concerning attendance.
- To manage the school's system of registration, advising the AHT on any incidents of inaccuracy for relevant action.
- To produce data required for the scrutinization of attendance by all relevant persons.
- To text all parents of pupils on the first and subsequent days of absence from school, if a parent has failed to make contact to explain pupil absence. To make follow up phone calls as necessary.
- To update Covid absence sheet and monitor X code
- To produce notification of absence letters as required.
- To act as a conduit for the flow of information concerning attendance between school and parents.

- To arrange the rewarding of high attendance
- To assist with the preparation of Notification of Absence letters and to make ready and available.

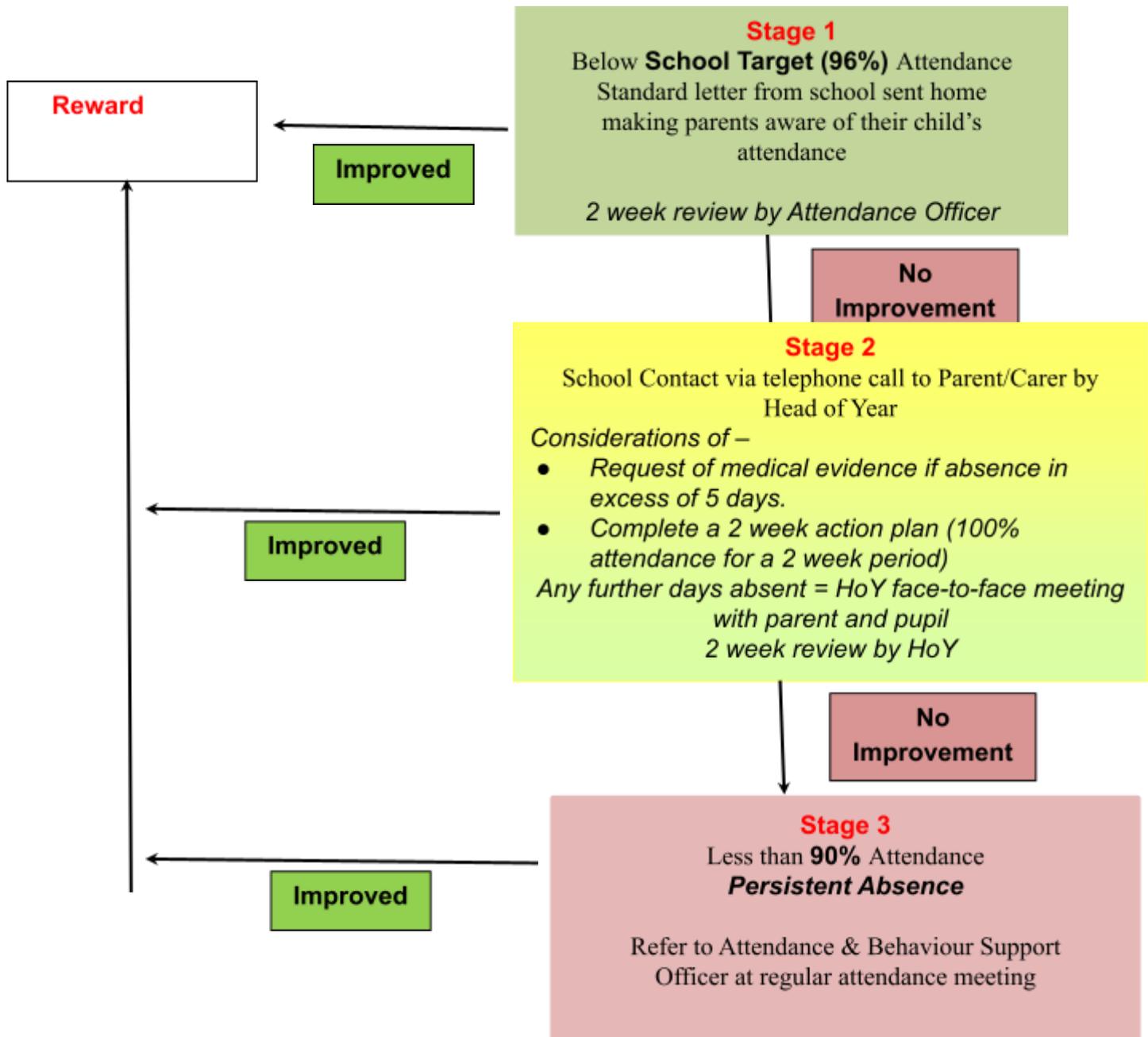
### **Other Administrative Support**

- To assist with the preparation of Notification of Absence letters and to make ready and available for posting as requested.

### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School Absence Escalation Process**

The absence escalation process below follows a set of guidelines set out by the Attendance, Behaviour & Traveller Support Team to re-engage students who are missing a significant number of education days.



**APPENDIX 2**

**Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School Punctuality Escalation Process**

The punctuality escalation process below follows a set of guidelines set out by the school to improve pupil punctuality.

