



**St. Robert of Newminster Catholic School
and
Sixth Form College**



School Attendance Policy

2019-2020

Next Review: October 2020

We expect every child to be at school on time every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence. The School will encourage attendance by providing a caring learning environment which is underpinned by our vision and mission statement. Staff will work with students and their families to help ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

Responsibility for attendance is shared by all school staff in their various roles.

The School will maintain an effective reward system which acknowledges the success and efforts of students to improve their attendance and will challenge students and families who give low priority to school attendance.

Commitment

School will:

- Promote the importance and value of regular school attendance and punctuality to students and their parents/carers.
- Monitor and record the attendance and punctuality of each student each lesson.
- Reward students with excellent attendance - 'excellent' is defined as being above **98%**. This may be a lower percentage for pupils with special circumstances.
- Intervene when student attendance is low.
- Talk to each returning student about the reason for their absence and ensure that they are given the means and encouragement to catch up on class work and homework that they have missed.
- Support families in raising their child's attendance and deal sympathetically with any issues a student may have which is causing attendance to decline.
- Stay in regular contact with parents/ carers during monitoring periods.
- Report school attendance data to the **Local Authority** and **Department for Education** as required.
- Refer a family to the **Local Authority Attendance Team** when intervention and school strategies have failed.
This could lead to **Statutory Enforcement Procedures** under **Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996** i.e. **Fixed Penalty Notices**, or the seeking of an **Education Supervision Order, Parenting Order**, a fine up to **£2,500**, and/or **3 months imprisonment**.
- Refer a family to the **Local Authority** if a request for a holiday during term time is received. This could lead to **Fixed Penalty Notices** being issued under **Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996**.
- Monitor punctuality. Persistent lateness will result in an after-school detention with a member of the **Senior Leadership Team**.
- Telephone or Text parent/carer informing them of their child's absence if no call or message has been received and their child is missing from morning registration.
- Request the **Police** to do a **"safe & well"** visit to the family home if there is a cause for concern.

Parents/ Carers will:

- Actively ensure that their child attends school every day, unless there is a valid reason why this is not possible.
- Ensure their child arrives on time to school each morning - **8:45 am prompt**. If a student is late for unavoidable reasons; parents/carers should contact school and inform us of the reason.
- Telephone the school if their child is ill by **9:00 am** and provide a full explanation for the absence. A telephone answer 'phone system is in operation with the option to leave a message for the **School Attendance Team** to record using schools' **electronic registration system – SIMS**.
- **Provide a note for their tutor** on the day their child returns to school, indicating the period of absence and explaining the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the school has updated contact numbers.
- Co-operate with the school if their child's attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern.
- Under the **Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006**, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence.
- Inform their child's **Head of House** or **House Assistant** of any problems which might be affecting their child's attendance.
- Co-operate with the school if their child's attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern.
- Schedule, where possible, medical appointments outside the hours of the school day.
- In the event of a hospital appointment unavoidably scheduled during school time; inform the **Head of House** in advance. Students are expected to return to school immediately after any appointment.
- **Parents/carers are not expected to take family holidays** during term time. **St Robert's** school will NOT authorise holidays taken during term time, unless agreed in advance by the **Head Teacher** under the '**exceptional circumstance**' criteria.
Any leave of absence that has been declined or the parents/carers have not sought approval will be recorded as unauthorised. These cases will be referred to the **Local Authority** and a **Fixed Penalty Notice** could be issued.

Responsibilities of the Student:

- To aim to achieve **100% attendance and punctuality** and to actively work towards this target by arriving to school every day and attending registration and lessons on time.
- Take pride in their school attendance and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- If a student has been absent as a result of illness they should return to school with a note for their tutor from their parent/carer explaining the reason for the absence(s).
- To provide a note from a parent/carer requesting permission to attend a medical/ hospital appointment - to present the note to the **Head of House** enabling **Student Office** to issue a pass out slip.
- Take responsibility for catching up on school work, missed due to absence, including homework.

Role of the School Attendance and School/Home Liaison Team:

Mrs Devlin and Mrs Moran are the **Team** responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality also liaising with pastoral staff in school. **The Team** check on a daily basis, student's attendance and punctuality records and follow the school procedures where concerns or patterns of absence are identified.

- Ensure any messages received into school, telephone calls, e-mails or texts are individually logged and noted using the schools' **electronic registration system – SIMS**. Any issues raised by parents/carers at this point will be directed swiftly to the child's **Head of House** by the **School Attendance Team**.
- Ensure the appropriate legal codes are entered onto each student's school record e.g. ill, medical appointments, educational visits etc.
- Identify individual students with good attendance records or improved attendance and prepare certificates and special rewards for the end of each term and the end of year presentations.
- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality at assemblies with each **Head of House**.
- Liaise with and support parents/carers to improve their children's attendance and punctuality.
- Engage families into the **Early Help** process or other relevant support agencies where appropriate.
- Liaise, if necessary, with any agencies to help address the needs of the child and/or family to facilitate improved attendance and punctuality.
- Publicise & display attendance percentages around school.
- Monitor the attendance and punctuality of identified cohorts of children, giving timely and regular reports to **Heads of House** and **Senior Leadership Team**.
- Keep student case notes and information enabling the **Team** to use the school's policy and to progress any cases through the school non-attendance procedures.
- Telephone or Text parent/carer informing them of their child's absence if no call or message has been received and their child is missing from morning registration.
- Carry out home visits when attendance is a concern or has not improved.

ATTENDANCE REWARDS AND PROCEDURES

Rewarding positive attendance:

Excellent attendance.

Each half term **Attendance Certificate** printed off for students' **Record of Achievement** file.

House achievement points entered on **SIMS** by **tutor – termly**.

Each half term **Assembly**, the top **Tutor Group** receives acknowledgement with small prizes. **Attendance** is discussed with individual students in learning conversations, positive attendance is shared by tutors during morning registration.

The importance of **Attendance** is embedded in the schools ethos, shared via **House Boards, House Assemblies, School Display Boards, School Information Evenings** and of course by issuing information letters and texts.

Exceptional attendance challenge – prize draw

Attendance Procedures:

Stage 1 - a letter is sent home to parents/ carers.

Tutor may talk to each returning student about the reason for their absence and ensure that they are given the means and encouragement to catch up on class work and homework that they have missed.

Any concerns at this stage will be dealt with sympathetically and any problems raised, will be discussed with **Head of House** and, if required, intervention will be put into place.

Stage 2 – a further letter with a request for a meeting with parents/carers will be made.

A home visit may be made by the **School Attendance, School/Home Liaison Team**.

Any concerns at this stage will be dealt with sympathetically and any problems raised, will be discussed with **Head of House** – school supportive strategies will be implemented.

Any genuine medical or health issues should be discussed and officially noted.

Any **GP** or **NHS/Health letters** copied for **Head of House** files.

The offer of a referral to any appropriate Agencies will be discussed and made, eg. **Early Help, Together for Children, Social Care, Triple P – Positive Parenting, CAMHS, CYPS** etc.

Stage 3 – a period of monitoring and a significant improvement is expected at this stage.

Persistent absentees will be referred to the **Local Authority** for their statutory action.

The **Local Authority** may issue a **Fixed Penalty Notice**.

If attendance remains below the required level, following the issue of a **Fixed Penalty Notice**, the **Local Authority** may then issue legal notices and proceed to court.

PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURES

Excellent punctuality to school and all lessons is important to ensure pupils receive their attendance marks for the AM and PM sessions each day.

Pupils should be on the school site by 8.40am each morning. AM registers will be completed by tutors at 8.50am. Any pupils arriving after this time will receive a late mark.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Where a pupil has been outside of education for a prolonged period of time the school may work with external providers to provide an alternative to normal school attendance.

Attendance and punctuality marks for this provision will be collated by the school and used for monitoring and reporting purposes.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Information regarding Sunderland Authority's attendance procedures and the issue of Penalty Notices can be found on their website at:

<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/12820/School-Attendance>

Policy Approved:

Chair of Governors

Date

Head Teacher

Date
