

SAINT BEDE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL LYTHAM



ATTENDANCE POLICY

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School Mission Statement

“We aim to reflect the true Christian Values proclaimed in the Gospel, and seek to provide a caring community in which young people can grow as balanced individuals, morally, intellectually and spiritually and so participate fully in the real world”

The staff of Saint Bede’s Catholic High School are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community commendably and of which the community is proud.

The school staff, alongside the LA, firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day;
- discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher or Year Leader, any problems that deter them from attending school.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance (at least 97% attendance for most pupils, except where there is a known medical condition which would impact on this) and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is unable to attend school;
- contact the school on the first day of the child’s absence and provide a reasonable explanation for the absence. In some cases, there may be an agreement in place whereby parents are expected to provide a medical note, too;
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We expect that school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every pupil's attendance;
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain reasons for authorising the absence;
- encourage good attendance;
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children; provide a safe learning environment; provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns;
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, expressing their concern and clarifying the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance;
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the School Attendance Improvement Worker, and other agencies when appropriate;
- meet, where possible, the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them.

Holidays

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time and it is important that you understand that leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional. (Please see "Family Holidays During Term Time: Advice to Parents and Carers on our website)

However, if you believe such circumstances would be met then all applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' form from the school office. As stated, requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Readmission cannot be guaranteed.

The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

Encouraging Attendance

Saint Bede's Catholic High School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment;
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils;
- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the pupil's name recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill;
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics;
- by requiring pupils to regularly record their own attendance and punctuality in Class Charts each week;
- by celebrating good and improved attendance;
- by monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) process if the irregular attendance continues.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- Failure to produce notes or explanations will be dealt with according to the Behaviour for Learning Policy (B4L).
- If no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer the Attendance Officer will report to the Year Leader who, in turn, will decide on the necessary action, i.e. monitor the situation and/or instruct the Attendance Officer to contact the parent/carer.
- Persistent absence is measured below 90% attendance; however, we would seek to support pupils in avoiding that threshold by intervening at an earlier stage. Thus, where a pattern of declining absence is detected, a series of letters will be issued. These seek to engage parents in a dialogue with school so that we can work together to improve a pupil's attendance. Our Attendance Improvement Worker will maintain this communication in some cases and continue to look at relevant support and interventions. Further meetings may lead to an Attendance Contract being agreed between home and school. Finally, it may be appropriate to seek to open a CAF in order to access support from external agencies.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform Saint Bede's Catholic High School staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address, if it is known.

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the pupil will be registered with the Local Authority as a "Child Missing Education".

School Organisation

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

Headteacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- adopt the whole policy;
- ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence, where appropriate;
- ensure that key staff have time-tabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Attendance Improvement Worker and appropriate access to attendance data;
- consult and liaise closely with the appropriate agencies on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay;
- institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards;
- ensure that attendance percentages/graphs are displayed around the school and to set whole school attendance targets;
- monitor and evaluate attendance with the Attendance Officer, Attendance Improvement Worker and Year Leaders.

Year Leaders

- to oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually;
- to liaise regularly with Attendance Improvement Worker;
- to liaise with appropriate agencies regularly;
- to reinforce good practice at year group meetings;

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

- to complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily;

- to follow up any unexplained non-attendance and administer sanctions as outlined in the B4L Policy;;
- to record all reasons for absences in the register;
- to inform Year Leaders of concerns;
- to be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Year Leader.

Attendance Officer

- to oversee the registration of pupils electronically twice daily;
- to produce letters regarding attendance/lateness/absence of pupils;
- to produce reports/statistical data regarding pupils' attendance/absence for Year Leaders/Attendance Improvement Worker/Review Meetings;
- to liaise with parents/carers/Attendance Improvement Worker regarding absence.

Attendance Improvement Worker

- to work alongside the Attendance Officer to identify pupils' whose attendance pattern is a cause of concern; to liaise with YLs and DHT regarding pupils' causing concern
- to initiate a dialogue with parents to discuss reasons for a poor attendance record, to identify exceptional circumstances, to develop strategies for improvement
- in some cases to maintain close and regular contact with families, including making home visits, when necessary, and where appropriate to liaise with YLs to begin the CAF process in order to access support from external agencies

Signed:	Signed: On behalf of the Governing Body
Headteacher's name: MR P GRICE	Chair of Governors name: Mrs J Jones
Date: 04/02/2021	Proposed Review date: February 2025