

# Holy Trinity Catholic School

## Attendance Policy 2016-17





## Holy Trinity Catholic Media Arts School Attendance Policy

### Attendance Policy

*Revised Sept 2015-*

#### Aims and Targets:

Holy Trinity Catholic School is committed to improving attendance and to raising attainment for all students. It is well known that students with outstanding attendance are more likely to make outstanding progress. At least good attendance is crucial for students to enjoy and achieve both whilst at school and in further education and the world of work. The Government expects all students to attend school and at Holy Trinity we aim to have as a minimum expectation 98% attendance for all students. It is well known that attendance is strongly linked to achievement and to academic success and that less than good attendance impacts negatively upon student progress. Less than good attendance over time will mean that students fail to make expected progress. It is often very difficult for children to catch up, even when they miss one or two days. Attendance should not be a barrier to achievement and the school will seek to ensure that all students especially vulnerable groups, including those at risk, PPG, and pupils with SEND and EAL irrespective of outside circumstances and external issues, are safe, attend regularly, enjoy school and make at least good progress.

There is also a major **safeguarding** implication to attendance. When students are not in school we cannot be certain they are safe. For this reason we will work in partnership with parents and a variety of agencies, including the police and children's social care where attendance issues may arise. The school currently has a dedicated attendance officer (D Butler) and a strong pastoral team (Heads of Year, S Smith (year 7), E Daniel (year 8) T Olton Doris (year 9), S Mahmood (year 10), P Nembhard Year 11) ,who work closely with all staff and parents to support and monitor the welfare of students. However whole school attendance remains the responsibility of all staff who have a key part to play in giving consistent messages and promoting the importance of attendance as well as spotting any patterns of concern early on. The school will communicate regularly and in a timely fashion with all parents/carers and external agencies via the use of phone calls, text messages, first day absence contacts letters, parents meetings, attendance clinics and home visits. The school will also promote the importance of attendance and its link to attainment via the weekly newsletter, at parents' evenings, via the website, throughout the year during attendance focus weeks and as part of the induction process.

At Holy Trinity we will endeavour to provide a learning environment where all students feel valued and welcome within our inclusive Catholic ethos.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it, the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

## **Rights, Roles and Responsibilities**

**It is the responsibility of the LA to ensure that all children have a full time place in Education. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time.**

### **Head Teacher/AHT with responsibility for attendance**

- To ensure that this policy is implemented by the relevant staff.
- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately record individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To make a judgement whether an absence that has not been requested is authorised or unauthorised.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality may be an issue.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.

### **Attendance Officer**

- Maintain and monitor attendance routines, including accurate and up to date registers.
- Monitor the attendance of pupils.
- Ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately record individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- Collate and report attendance information.
- Work co-operatively with, HOY, Family support workers and external children's services to raise attendance levels, in negotiation with the named DSL's of the school.
- To initiate court action (Spotlight Process) against parents and manage the prosecution process, liaising with the court action team.
- Ensure parents are aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Promote a system of rewards and good attendance.
- Lead and contribute to policy development.
- Liaise with SLT, HOY, Middle Leaders; form tutors staff and external organisations.
- Write to parents/carers regarding their child's attendance and ensure swift communications and interventions for those whose attendance is causing concern.
- Arrange meetings alongside HoY with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Implement rewards fairly and consistently (See Section 5 – Strategies).
- Arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Report to all parents at least termly their child's attendance (more frequently for those causing concern)
- To refer any concerns which may be linked to the safeguarding of any child to the DSL and to refer with the appropriate agencies as directed by DSL

### **Pastoral Heads of Year**

- Monitoring of attendance and punctuality with form tutors and attendance officer.
- Assistance with the analysis of attendance data.
- Targeted home visiting work.
- In college family meetings/school attendance review meetings.
- Planned and agreed action plans, working agreements with problematic cases of non-attendance.
- Ensure parents are aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Promote a system of rewards and good attendance.
- Lead and contribute to policy development.
- Liaise with SLT, staff and external organisations as appropriate
- Lead and support with fCafs for students within their year group where pastoral issues have been identified; this is important to ensure early intervention and help at the point of need.
- To refer any concerns which may be linked to the safeguarding of any child to the DSL and to refer with the appropriate agencies as directed by DSL. These may include via MASH referrals (Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board), Think Family Agenda, TAF (Team around the family meetings), Early Help (fCAF) Team
- To follow up absences with first day absence calls and home visits as required

### **Form Teachers/Class teachers/Associate staff**

- To support this policy and follow these guidelines.
- To ensure that all registers are completed accurately and on time and register taking expectations are applied at all times
- To report any attendance/punctuality concerns promptly in order to ensure swift and targeted intervention.
- To ensure Heads of Year, Pastoral Team, Attendance and designated SLT members are kept aware of class/individual attendance issues via on-going feedback and referring of attendance concerns.
- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class/tutor group, completing the register accurately at the designated time.
- When requested to do so by the Head teacher/HOH, to organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.
- Encourage and praise good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all children should be welcomed back after absence.
- Seek help in matters of concern sooner rather than later.
- Ensure Heads of Year, Pastoral Team and designated SLT members are kept aware of class/individual attendance issues via on-going feedback and referring of attendance concerns.

- Contribute to the policy in terms of attendance review discussions during form tutor time.
- Support and maximise the common messages given about the importance of outstanding attendance and punctuality at school.
- Show warmth and respect of all parents in order to make them feel valued and important partners in their child's education.
- Developing trusting and continuing relationships with children.
- Provide a caring, stimulating environment which values every child.
- Promote a climate of achievement, success and praise
- Be aware of the risks associated with all forms of abuse and its impact on attendance, well-being and safety, including those students at risk of exploitation, FGM, extremism, forced marriage and trafficking
- To report any unexplained absence for known vulnerable students immediately to the respective HoY, attendance team and DSL (safeguarding team)
- Seek to discover the underlying reason for poor attendance, which may include difficulties in establishing good peer relationships; problems with school work, pressures and factors outside the school.
- Set good examples of attendance and timekeeping to children
- To refer any concerns which may be linked to the safeguarding of any child to the DSL

### **Governing Body**

- Familiarise themselves with registration practices in college, legislation and LEA support.
- Identify a link Governor for Attendance
- Monitor and review school attendance including the setting of targets.
- Attend Governor Training on attendance/safeguarding issues.

### **Parent/Carer**

- Acknowledge their legal obligations to send children to school regularly and Inform the school on the first day of absence before 9.00am why their child is absent.
- To send their child to school every day, except when illness prevents this.
- Comfort and re-assure their child following a long absence, liaise with form tutors.
- Respond to any communications from the school regarding their child's attendance, including response to letters/phone calls and invitations to meetings.
- Provide medical evidence for illnesses upon request.
- Not to remove students during term time for holidays.
- Accept that the school always has children's safety and attainment as primary concern- this may mean that information may be passed to external agencies on occasion without parents/ carers being informed.

### **Students**

- Understand their own responsibilities in making sure they attend school regularly and punctually and how this links to attainment.
- Show respect by mutually encouraging others to attend school regularly.

- To attend school and ensure that they follow all procedures with regards to attendance at registration and arrival on time for school.
- To support other students, whole school ethos by leading in and promoting common key messages around attainment and attendance.
- To inform staff if there are issues or concerns which may be worrying them and preventing them from enjoying and attending school/

### **Administrative staff**

- Operating the Attendance Module (CMIS) on a daily basis.
- Taking messages and informing teachers.
- Seeking explanation of absence.
- Recording latecomers.
- Compiling attendance data and following up unauthorised absences/medical absences when appropriate.
- Liaising with the staff and sending of truancy call on the first day of unexplained absences.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week, preparing letters on behalf of the Attendance Officer where a satisfactory reason has not been established.
- To prepare and post out 'Wise Up' letters each term. (See Section 5 – Strategies.)
- Collation of accurate weekly and termly data with regards to attendance

### **Learning Mentor**

- To identify children with problem patterns of attendance through official register printouts, liaising with the class teachers, HOY, SLT, Inclusion manager, SENCO and school FSW.
- To support and encourage the attendance of these identified children.

### **Fr Hudson's Family Support Worker (0.3 days per week)**

- To provide targeted family support to referred parents on a bespoke and needs basis as referred by the HoY/DSL
- To conduct home visits to families where attendance may have been identified as a concern by the school

### **Children's Services and LA**

- The college works in partnership with the Birmingham Children's Services. There is no longer any ESW link but HOH and Pastoral Team will work with FSW/Social Workers as allocated by CS. Work with school to improve overall attendance rates.
- Work in partnership with college, students, parents and the local community to ensure educational entitlement and regular attendance at school.
- Link with a cross city network of agencies providing educational, health and social services for individuals with specific needs within a multi-cultural community.

- **Procedures:**

### **School Procedures**

Any student who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. All parents are expected to contact the school if their child is ill before 9.00 am.

In addition to registration during form time, all classes must be registered each period on e-portal. Year and Subject Leaders will monitor this across the school.

The morning registration will be at 08.40 – 09.00 am.

The afternoon registration is taken at 1.00 pm during period 4.

### **Lateness and Punctuality**

Punctuality is an important feature of good attendance and is important in developing essential life-long learning habits which will be important beyond school. In the world of work it is unacceptable to arrive late. This is equally important at school as it can impact significantly upon attainment as well as the development of lifelong skills of independence and time management.

All students are expected to be on the school premises by 8.40 am at the latest. Any students arriving through the gates after this time will be considered as late. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40 – 9.10 am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes and close at 09.10 am.

Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation (e.g. a medical appointment which has come from the hospital and cannot be taken outside of school time). In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Students arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close. Any student who arrives late will be expected to attend a break time detention on the same day. Failure to attend this detention will result in a same day 30 minute detention after school. Further lates in the same week, will result in a 1 hour detention with the Head Teacher on Friday and the loss of behaviour for learning points. Persistent offenders will be monitored and further bespoke sanctions applied if no improvement is made. Parents will be notified if punctuality is a cause for concern and invited in to discuss ways forward. For students whose punctuality is of serious concern (where there has been no improvement following the implementation of all procedures and sanctions), a governors contract will be put into place. It is important that parents contact the school should they have any genuine issues which may be impacting upon punctuality so that we can seek to support and find a way forward.

### **First Day Absence**

Parents/carers are expected to contact the college before 9.00 am if a student is going to be absent or late due to medical appointments etc.

### **Telephone number 0121 772 0184/option 1 for student absence.**

If no contact is made by the parent/carer then the college will make first day contact via Truancy Call, the information will be recorded and the register altered accordingly. (This procedure is carried out by the Attendance Administration Assistant). Further calls will be made by the HOY and may be supplemented by a Home visit if decided that this is appropriate.

### **Attendance Administration Officer- Mrs D Butler**

There is also a Safeguarding and a Health and Safety aspect to First Day Calling – a child who is missing from school may well be injured or worse. It is therefore important that we hold accurate contact details for all parents/carers. All parents and carers should ensure that suitable contact numbers are made available to the college at all times. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that school is notified should the contact change and to provide another number/emergency contact should the main number be unavailable.

### **Continuing Absence**

Any absence is detrimental to children's learning and progress. The school will monitor absence and if patterns of absence or frequent absences occur, then parents will be contacted and invited in to discuss concerns. The school will contact home or make visits for any absences which it has concerns about. This includes absences which are unauthorised but may also include absences where parents have contact the school to report illness. The primary reason behind this is to ensure the welfare of all students, to ensure regular attendance of all students, to support families and students who may be struggling with attendance (including those with medical issues) and to improve the attendance and attainment of all students.

Where there are concerns, (i.e. a frequent absence in a short space of time, the school may choose to make earlier contact, including home visits before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of absence and may be as early as within 3 days, including the first day of absence, if there is sufficient concern.

### **Ten Day's Absence**

For a student who has been absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days, the Local Authority will be notified by the college submitting a referral to the external agencies, including if deemed appropriate MASH teams (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and Children's Services. The school will record details of the actions that they have taken. All reasonable measures will be taken to locate the child/family. These will include phone contact, by post and visits to the home address. Following this process, a referral will be made to the Children Missing in Education Team. The school will also contact this team if a child is due to be removed from roll or if a child has failed to return to school for example after a summer holiday. Students who are absent from school for more than 20 days will risk losing their place at school and all necessary agencies, including Birmingham Children's

Services will be informed as part of the process. The school will amend this policy in line with changes to local Missing children and safeguarding policies.

### **Frequent Absence**

**All staff in school are accountable for developing and ensuring outstanding attendance for all students and for monitoring the attendance of the students in school (for example a form tutor who monitors closely the attendance of members of their form group) .** It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer, form tutor and Pastoral team to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. This will include noting patterns of absence (authorised and unauthorised). The school will refuse to authorise frequent absences unless medical evidence is provided (frequent absence may be defined as more than three illness related episodes of absence during any half term but this may be altered depending on circumstances and the school's assessment of the absence taking into account other factors and attendance history). The school will invite parents in or conduct home visits without prior notification if it has concerns in patterns of absence or in the case of absences of 3 days or more or sooner if the child is deemed vulnerable or at risk.

In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will offer support via the fCAF or if appropriate Think Family model and may refer the student to local children's services .

The nominated senior person will make referrals to external agencies including the police, nursing services and children's services (MASH), the ESW and MCE (Children Missing Education team) if there are possible safeguarding and wellbeing risks linked to attendance and punctuality concerns. This will include any concerns where a child be at risk of trafficking, radicalisation, exploitation, FGM (sometimes called female circumcision), forced marriage and honour based violence.

### **Return to School**

It is important that on return from an absence that all students are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students. The Student Support Centre offers additional forms of support to students who may be re-integrating due to absence alongside the pastoral support from HoY Team and Inclusion manager.

### **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept in school during the student's time here by the Attendance Officer. Parents may also be asked to provide medical evidence of absence/illness.

### Promoting attendance

The school will use all possible opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. This includes for example raising awareness via the weekly newsletter, the school website, at assemblies, display boards, attendance focus week, and letters to parents, Intervention evenings and student planners.

### Attendance becomes Whole School Issue

Holy Trinity regards attendance as a whole school issue with involvement of all staff, stakeholders and external organisations.

### Ways in which Holy Trinity are attempting to raise awareness of attendance as a whole school issue;

The attendance officer will keep attendance high profile with staff and students and regularly review strategies for promoting excellent attendance. This will include Wise Up Campaign, Spotlight on Attendance, Attendance Clinics, Friday Newsletter, Attendance focus weeks. Home visit clinics and drop ins, appropriate rewards which are regularly reviewed. Class attendance is distributed and discussed weekly with form groups.

### Holidays in term time

Leave during term time is not authorised by Holy Trinity Catholic School, in line with guidance issued by the Local Authority. Parents/ carers will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a student's potential achievement. The letter, '**Leave in term time, a very important message for all parents**', will be sent out to all parents/carers at the beginning of each academic year highlighting the fact that Head Teachers are no longer allowed to authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are 'exceptional', (exceptional as defined by the Guidance from the Dfe and Birmingham Local Authority). Any request for absence during term should be submitted in writing to the Head Teacher. Only one day is allowed for Religious observance during term time. Following guidance issued, the school will now follow prosecution procedures for parents/ carers who remove their children from school during term time.

### Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established in line with guidance from the EWS team and a senior school manager (SLT) will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our schools target for the academic year 2015-16 is 95.2 %.; our PA target (based on 85% is 5.1%)

Year group	Attendance target 2015-16
Year 7	97%
Year 8	97.0%
Year 9	96.0%
Year10	96%

Year 11	96%
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### **Attendance Awards**

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- A termly attendance certificate.
- Rewards in line with the college's reward and sanctions policy, including the awarding of termly and half termly behaviour for learning points.
- Rewards for improved attendance and punctuality
- Rewards visits as part of the overall rewards policy
- Additional rewards during attendance focus week
- Home communications to celebrate improved attendance

### The registration system

The school will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

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The school will use **a computerised system** for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	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
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	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

<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.