



**Good Shepherd Catholic
Primary & Nursery School**

Attendance & Punctuality

Reviewed November 2017

Next Review November 2020

The aim of Good Shepherd Catholic Primary & Nursery School's Attendance Policy is to provide an environment which encourages all our pupils to attend school regularly and punctually. This policy is designed to support the ethos aims and vision of the school. It has been written in accordance with the five outcomes contained within Every Child Matters.

- Being healthy.
- Staying safe.
- Enjoying and achieving.
- Making a positive contribution.
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

A good education helps to give children the best possible start in life. Regular attendance and punctuality is important for all children whatever their age and is essential for every child's academic, social and personal development.

We want all of our children to achieve full attendance and punctuality.

By law, all children of school ages 5 – 18, **must** receive full-time education. In line with (section 444 of the Education Act 1996,) parents/carers are legally responsible for their child's punctuality and attendance. We are committed to working in partnership with them, seeking to overcome any issues or problems that are causing unacceptable levels of absence.

Parent shall include anyone with parental responsibility.

PUNCTUALITY

Persistent lateness disadvantages children, as they are likely to miss important learning time and disrupts pupils already involved in the lesson.

Classroom doors will be open from 8.40 a.m. for children to come into class and complete early morning work activities. Registration takes place at 9.00am. If a child arrives in class after this time, they are late for school and, therefore, will receive a late mark in the register. The registers close at 9.15am. Any child arriving after the close of registers will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Persistent lates at the close of the register could result into a penalty notice.

The school is planning on moving towards an electronic registration in the current academic year. The above will still apply but pupils' attendance will be recorded electronically. In the event of an emergency, paper register copies will be printed off and staff will continue to do a head count at the designated assembly point. The total number of pupils present on the day is recorded on a white board and staff use this to support numbers counted during the head count.

PM Registration:

Infants: 13.00 and close at 13.15

Juniors: 13.15 and close at 13.30

ABSENCES

Absences are marked as authorised and unauthorised.

What is an authorised absence?

If your child is absent for illness or unavoidable reasons and brings a note from you then we would consider this as authorised absence.

What is an unauthorised absence?

- inappropriate reasons (e.g. to go shopping, for birthdays, holiday's),
- Children arriving late for school after the register has closed Absences for which the school has not received an acceptable explanation.

Children with high levels of unauthorised absences will be referred to the Education and Welfare Officer (EWO). This may result in parents incurring a penalty charge or legal proceedings.

Through illness

If a child is away from school through illness, on the first day of absence the parent/carer should ring the School and press option 1. Then clearly state the child's name, class, reason for absence and roughly when the child will be returning to school. If a child is absent for three days or more, the school will require medical evidence, for example a Doctor's note or the prescribed medication the child received when absent, otherwise, the child's absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Where a child's attendance rate falls below 90%, the school will require a Doctor's certificate to mark any future absences from illness as authorised.

Through medical and optician appointments

All appointments should be made outside school time. Where this is not possible, parents should provide an appointment card for the attendance officer to see, or email a copy of the letter to attendance@goodshepherd.croydon.sch.uk before the appointment.

Where a child's attendance rate falls below 90% due to frequent medical appointments or they are continually late due to medical appointments, the school will require proof of appointments to mark future absences as authorised.

Requests for Term Time Absence

Term time absence is very disruptive to a child's learning. In line with the changes in the Government attendance policy for schools, absence during term time **will not be authorised**. However, should there be exceptional circumstances which do not fall either side of any school holiday dates, an extended leave form should be completed which can be downloaded from the website or collected from the school office. This should be at least 14 days in advance of the absence.

What happens if a child/ren's attendance falls below the accepted level?

The Government states that all children should achieve an attendance rate of at least 95%. 90% is seen as persistent absence, which equates to a child missing an average of ½ day each week.

Where attendance is consistently below 90%, the School's Attendance Officer will contact families to discuss the causes of poor attendance or punctuality and support the family in improving it to an acceptable level.

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 includes the provision for the issue of Penalty Notices to prevent unauthorised absence. This means that for pupils with unauthorised absences (this is any absence which the School has not given permission for – including those absences where the School has not been notified of a reason), the adult(s) with parental responsibility may be subject to an 'on-the-spot' fine of £60 if paid within 28 days and £120 if paid within 42days. If the fine is not paid during this time court action might be taken. Each adult with parental responsibility will be fined individually for each child. For example in a family with two children and two adults with parental responsibility each adult will be fined £120 rising to £240 if not paid within 28 days.

If there is a continuing problem with a child's attendance or punctuality, it is a legal requirement that a referral is made to the Education Welfare Service (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

HOW CAN WE HELP?

If a parent is having difficulties with attendance or punctuality, come into school and talk to us. We can talk through the problems to see if there is some way in which we can help.

If there are any concerns advice should be taken from the Class Teacher, the Attendance officer or a senior leader.

