



## St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Attendance Policy

Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

### **GREEN GROUP 95% - 100%**

**WELL DONE - This is a GOOD level of attendance**

**We will: celebrate this level of attendance in end of term assemblies, with house tokens and end of year reports**

### **AMBER GROUP 90% to 95%**

**This level of attendance is a cause for concern**

**We will:**

**inform you that your child's attendance is dropping and work with you to improve it  
closely monitor this level of absence  
request medical confirmation for all extended periods of sickness**

**We may:**

**make house visits  
request to meet with you  
request permission to refer your child to the school nurse  
initiate an Early Help Assessment with a family support worker  
issue a monitoring & warning letter**

### **RED GROUP Less than 90%**

**This is a significant and concerning level of absence**

**Your child is now considered to be a PERSISTENT ABSENCE PUPIL**

**We will closely monitor and work with you to improve the attendance.**

**If the attendance does not improve, we may have to refer to the local authority who will consider legal action.**

**This could be a £120 fine (per parent including step-parents and per child).**

## **WHY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY MATTERS**

Across one school year:

- fewer than 5 days absence = 97.3% attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 92.6% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 89.4% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 84.2% attendance

If a child's attendance is as low as 80% this means that they have missed approximately 39 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

Pupils should always **try** to come into school unless they have sickness, diarrhoea or other contagious diseases. The school can always send children home if needed. Over the counter **medicine** and prescription medicine can be given in school – just give the medicine to the office and fill in a form.

If children are upset at the thought of coming in to school, we will work with you to build their resilience and may take advice from Emotionally Healthy Schools. We will work with the child to understand why they are reluctant to come into school and celebrate their achievement when they do.

Absences for the management of long-term/diagnosed illnesses and disabilities will be exempt from absence monitoring in collaboration with the head teacher. All cases of low attendance will be assessed on an individual basis.

We aim to support all pupils who are protected under the Equality Act and the SEND Code of Practice.

### **What to do if your child can't come to school:**

Parents/carers should telephone the school office and explain about the absence, leave a message on the answerphone or pop in to the school office before 9.15am. Absence due to illness will be authorised if school are informed before 9.30am. If the absence is unexplained, it will be coded as unauthorised.

**If** the child has seen or spoken with the doctor, and you are given a medical note we would like it for our records to help explain the absence – prescription, medical note etc.

If parents/carers are unable to get a medical appointment outside of school hours, parents/carers need to provide the school with an appointment letter/card.

Please help your child to maintain good attendance by booking doctor, dentist, or optician appointments either in the school holidays, after school or at weekends. Please provide the school with an appointment card/letter if your child **needs** to leave school for an appointment.

Term-time holidays will be unauthorised absences. Only in exceptional circumstances will they be authorised and requests should be made in writing to the Head Teacher.

It is important to note that unauthorised absences may mean that a **referral is made to the Local Authority** and as parents you may be subject to a fine and a penalty notice may be issued.

The cost of the fine is £60 per child, per parent. If the fine is not paid within **21 days**, this will be doubled to £120. If the fixed penalty remains unpaid after 28 days, the parent(s) will be prosecuted under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. The offence carries a maximum fine of up to £1000.

**This is a last resort**, and we want to work with you to avoid this. However we have a legal obligation to ensure your child is in school during term time and we want the best for them. If you would like to discuss any part of this information with the Head Teacher or a member of the governing body, please make an appointment at the school office.

We will support pupils to understand that their attendance is important for their education, friendships and wellbeing and we will help them to understand how to stay healthy by:

- making school a positive and happy place
- teaching children about good hygiene
- ensuring children wash hands before meals
- sterilising equipment when necessary
- ensuring the building is clean by disinfecting tables, door handles and toilets daily
- supporting children with their social communication development and create a safe and nurturing environment so that children want to come to school
- providing nutritionally balanced meals and encourage healthy snacks
- educating children about a healthy diet and exercise to aid health
- taking advice from external specialists to support children who have anxiety about coming to school

We thank you for your continual support in helping to raise attendance and attainment at St Benedict's Catholic Primary school.