



St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)

Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and SLT prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Community Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Body for approval.

Policy Review Dates:

Date last approved by Full Governing Body: 27th March 2018

Date submitted to governor committee: 15th June 2020

Date submitted to Full Governing Body: 4th June 2020

Review Frequency: Annual

Start date for policy review: March 2021

Please Note:

This policy, as a working document, may be subject to changes as appropriate (such as changes in legislation, working practices, and in response to matters arising in school). Updated policies will always be on the website.

School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our School Mission Statement clearly states that as a community we seek to “set an example of service, as Jesus did, and in so doing fulfil the high aspirations we have for each of our members and foster the fullest spiritual, academic and personal development of our students.”

Introduction

St Gregory’s Catholic High School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community and “in so doing fulfil the high aspirations we have for each of our members and foster the fullest spiritual, academic and personal development of our pupils”.

St Gregory’s values all students. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We recognise that attendance and punctuality have to be modelled by staff and observed by our students on a daily basis.

Principles

St Gregory’s Catholic High School aims to:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality to students and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with parents and students.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces outstanding school attendance through positive teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve.
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off site are implemented.

Links to other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour for Learning
- CSE

Legal framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, requires schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

This policy was written in the light of guidance from DfE 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities'. September, 2018

Students with 90% attendance are missing half a day a week of school and students who have had 90% attendance over 5 years have missed a full year of schooling.

Procedures

The register must record whether the student was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Categorising absence

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received.

Illness

If a student is absent a phone call/text/email (attendance@stgregoryshigh.com) must be made to the school on the first day the student is absent; this should be followed up with a handwritten note, for the attention of the Pastoral Attendance Officer/ Form Tutor. Dental, hospital or any other medical appointments require a copy of the original appointment card or letter; otherwise school must record the absence as unauthorised. Longer term illnesses will require a note from the GP.

If a student is reported to have a contagious illness it is school policy to seek expert advice initially from the school nurse and/or refer to other health professionals for up to the minute information. School has to be mindful of potential contact with our vulnerable students. A risk assessment may be needed, which will be completed in liaison with our Site Manager from a Health and Safety perspective.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Medical/Dental appointments: Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should attend school for part of the day.

Other authorised circumstances: This relates to occasions where there is a cause for absence due to **exceptional circumstances**, for example family bereavement or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Exclusions: Exclusion from school is counted as an authorised absence. The Pupil Progress Manager/Pastoral Support Manager will make arrangements for work to be sent home in line with statutory guidelines.

Family holidays and extended leave: Parents/Carers must avoid taking their children on holiday in term time. Parents/Carers do not have a right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year. To make a request for leave, an Application for Student Leave of Absence Form (**Appendix 1**) must be completed. Parents/carers will be called in to school to discuss the request. This can be downloaded from the school website or parents/carers can come into school to discuss with the Pastoral Attendance Officer.

Requests must be made at least 10 days before the period of absence. For all requests for leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances**, the following must be noted/provided:

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child may become a missing student if the family do not return as expected

If a student fails to return and contact with the parents/carer has not been made or received, school may take the student off the school's roll in compliance with the Education

(Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the student does not attend, the absence will be unauthorised.

NB: All unauthorised absences affect a student's eligibility for rewards.

Religious observance

St Gregory's acknowledges the multi faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Study leave

The Head Teacher will determine when students (Y11) may begin a period of official study leave. This will be communicated to parents/carers and students according to the GCSE examination timetable.

Late arrival

All students must be on the school site by **8.40 a.m.** at the latest. The register is taken at 8.50 a.m. in Form Groups (8:45 a.m. on Year Group Collective Worship days). Students arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9:00; students arriving after the close of register will be recorded absent unless a reason is provided by parents/carers.

On arrival after the close of register, students must sign in using electronic system providing all required information which will be checked by Pastoral Attendance Officer and concerns raised with the relevant Pupil Progress Manager/Deputy Head. They will go immediately to their lesson where the teacher will mark them in to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school. Subject teachers will record time of arrival/minutes late on SIMS.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

Students who are persistently late will be asked to attend the Governor's Panel to explain this behaviour.

Unauthorised absence

Absences will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays/leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school

Deletions from the register

In accordance with the Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- The student ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a student
- Transfers between schools
- Student withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school age
- In custody for more than 4 months
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the local authority has failed to locate the student.

Pupils missing from education

All pupils at St Gregory's, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. The local authority has a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of pupils of compulsory school age who are missing from education in their area.

A pupil going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow school procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with pupils that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing

in future. All staff undergo annual safeguarding training and a CSE policy is part of the suite of safeguarding policies.

St Gregory's will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil: -

- has been taken out of St Gregory's by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of St Gregory's;
- has been certified by GP/Medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent/carer has indicated the intention to continue to attend St Gregory's after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be notified if St Gregory's remove a pupil from its register for any of the five grounds above. The local authority can, as part of their duty to identify pupils of compulsory school age who are missing education and follow up with any pupil who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

St Gregory's will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

St Gregory's follow the Warrington Borough Council's missing education protocol when a student's whereabouts is unknown. The contact person is David Sampson.

Roles and Responsibilities

St Gregory's believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, students and the wider school community. As such, the Pastoral Attendance Officer, Pastoral Deputy/Safeguarding Lead, and the Safeguarding/Chair of the Community Committee will work together to:

- Receive and discuss information from Primary Schools regarding attendance so that pupils joining St Gregory's can be monitored closely.
- Ensure attendance and punctuality are a regular agenda item for Pastoral meetings, Year Team meetings and Pupil Progress Panels.
- Consider parent/carer requests for leave of absence and inform them of school's decision with reasons for authorised/unauthorised categorisation (**Appendix 2**).

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parent/carer.
- Annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Communicate to parents/carers the named member of the governing body who leads on attendance matters.
- Liaise with relevant agencies to support parents/carers and students when issues are identified.
- Ensure the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Produce data for student reports, parents' evenings and as required.
- Produce data and analysis for Governors and the Local Authority as agreed by the Governing Body.
- Monitor 'lates' data and report and review systems in conjunction with attendance data.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

Pupil Progress Managers will:

- Monitor attendance/punctuality on a daily basis and enlist the support of the Pupil Support Managers/ Pastoral Attendance Officer to promote outstanding attendance/punctuality.
 - Receive weekly data from the Pastoral Attendance Officer, discuss at weekly Pastoral and Year Team meetings and work in conjunction with Form Tutors on strategies for improvement. This includes a report of pupils who are below 90% (persistent absentees). Focus to be on pupils at 93% and those in danger of becoming a persistent absentee so early interventions can be applied. Specific key groups will be targeted in relation to FSM/PP/CIC/CIN etc. according to whole school priorities and groups highlighted by IDSR/ Attendance, Behaviour, SEF and Development Plan.
 - Contact/meet with parents/carers regarding concerns and discuss support mechanisms for improvement.
 - Discuss with SLT Pastoral Deputy and Assistant Head Teacher arising issues.
 - Liaise with Local Authority representative as required.
 - Promote outstanding attendance through incentives as detailed in Rewards Policy and through Year Group Collective Worship, Engage Evenings, The Net and report data.
 - Use data at Pupil Progress Panel and Review meetings to determine impact on progress and strategies to employ.
 - Analyse punctuality to lessons data and sanction as appropriate in liaison with subject teachers and curriculum leaders.
 - Use Year Group Collective Worship to stress importance of attendance/punctuality and impact it has on rewards eligibility; this will also be communicated to parents
- (Appendix 3)**

- Organise daily break detentions in liaison with Form Tutors and monitor after school detentions with Pastoral Attendance Officer.

Form Tutors

At St Gregory's Catholic High School, the Form Tutor is seen as the key figure in promoting regular, punctual attendance.

Form Tutors will:

- Role model our expectations by being punctual to registration and Year Group Collective Worship.
- Carry out registration in accordance with electronic register procedures. (Paper copies for Year Group Collective Worship)
- Collect absence letters from students and pass to Pastoral Attendance Officer.
- Raise issues with Pupil Progress Managers relating to attendance and punctuality.
- Use provided data, including individual lesson data, to discuss strategies to improve identified students' attendance and punctuality.
- Praise students who have outstanding attendance/punctuality records.
- Recognise improvement in individual student attendance/punctuality and praise accordingly.
- Report immediate concerns to Pastoral Attendance Officer as a safeguarding priority.
- Arrange break detentions in liaison with PPM.
- Place on a Form Tutor report with Attendance/Punctuality targets.

Attached staff will support and assist Form Tutors in their stated duties.

Subject Staff will:

- Role model our expectations by being punctual to all lessons.
- Carry out registration in accordance with electronic register procedures. Coding of 2 (Lesson) Monitor will be applied at the start of the lesson to indicate present.
- Complete registration within ten minutes of the start of the lesson and amend accordingly. IT issues to be reported to P.Ormsroyde and in **exceptional circumstances** a paper register may be taken, recording absent pupils and sent to the Pastoral Attendance Officer.
- Use Lesson Monitor coding and SIMS to highlight lates (amount of minutes late to be recorded)
- Report concerns to relevant personnel (Head of Department, Form Tutor, Pupil Progress Manager, Pastoral Attendance Officer), following all safeguarding expectations with additional focus on our listed 'Think Twice' pupils.
- Organise detentions for pupils late to their lessons.
- Contact Pastoral Attendance Officer in regards to seeking clarity of how to use SIMS in relation to attendance and punctuality.

Parents/Carers will be expected to:

- Ensure their child is on the school site for **8.40 a.m.** at the latest
- Talk to their child about school and the value of outstanding attendance and punctuality.
- Instil the value of regular school attendance and its impact on academic progress and the importance of forming good habits in preparation for the world of work.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow up this with a note/appointment card/doctor's note.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make any medical or dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Read information in pupils' Learning Organisers.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school: take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home. Avoid taking their child on holiday during term time; where this is unavoidable, send a written leave of request in advance of booking the holiday (at least ten days before the requested start date) stating the specific reasons for the request (**Appendix 1**).

Local Authority Representative will:

- Attend monthly meetings with the Pastoral Attendance Officer to discuss Pupil Attendance, concerns and issues raised.
- Monitor pupils who are classed as Persistent Absentees and pupils with falling attendance.
- Liaise with parents/carers.
- Hold Attendance Days in school, with Pastoral Attendance Officer and other relevant staff.
- Follow Prosecution procedures, in line with Government/LA rules and regulations.
- Provide support and advice to the school.

Our Pastoral Attendance Officer will make home visits with named staff in order to promote full attendance, support parents/carers and ensure safeguarding concerns are checked and reported where necessary to the DSL. The Pastoral Attendance Officer will introduce herself to parents at Year 7 parents evening, offering information and answer any queries.

Incentives

St Gregory's reward pupils for 100% Attendance, improved punctuality/attendance with:

- 100% Attendance Certificates: Bronze/Silver/Gold
- Termly outstanding certificates (97+%)
- Rewards (some examples: -watch a film, Bowling, Pizza Hut)
- Chocolate Bars

- Prize Draws
- Recognition in 'The Net', on website and at Year Group/whole school events.
- Eligibility for whole Year/School rewards (Alton Towers/Early Finish).

Sanctions

These will be applied to work in conjunction with our Behaviour for Learning Policy. A ladder system displayed in classrooms clearly illustrates rewards and sanctions.

Support systems

School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/ separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

St Gregory's hold regular Attendance Days where parents/carers are invited into school when a student's attendance drops below 97%. These days are extremely useful and are attended by School Pastoral Attendance Officer and two members from the Local Authority. Parents/Carers are able to inform school of any changes or issues which the school can support and help with if a student's attendance is being affected.

St Gregory's also hold 'Governor Panels'. Students are invited to attend a short meeting to discuss low attendance/poor punctuality with School Governor, Pastoral Attendance Officer and Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral).

Governor Panels' are also held in school for pupils who are struggling to improve their attendance. Parents/Carers are invited into school to discuss further.

St Gregory's also recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, Pupil Premium, Children in Care and students on our 'Think Twice' list.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents/carers and students including at Engage Evenings and PP Target Setting sessions.
- Attendance panels.
- Referrals to support agencies.
- Time limited reduced timetables.
- Reintegration support packages including Soft Landings.
- Bespoke personalised targets via Augustine Centre is put on Behaviour Plans.
- Reward systems.

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs St Gregory's will consider the use of legal sanctions as directed and supported by the Local Authority.

If pupils are transferring to another school due to moving out of the area, St Gregory's will provide work so the pupil is receiving education during the transition.

Safeguarding

St Gregory's will report any concerns onto CPOMS (Child Protection on line monitoring system)

Posters with pictures of the Safeguarding Team are displayed around school.

If a student has been marked present on the register and found to be missing from a lesson, this will be picked up by the Pastoral Attendance Officer or reported by the teacher. Checks will be made to see if the student has signed out for an appointment or is with another member of staff then the SLT on call will make a search of the building with the assistance of the Pastoral Support Managers.

If a student needs to leave school for medical or other reason they must produce a note signed by parent/carer or a parent/carer must come into reception to sign out the student and use the electronic system. A student cannot leave the building unless the above protocol has been observed. Our Pastoral Attendance Officer, will monitor attendance patterns linked to in school sickness/medical appointments and raise concerns with the appropriate Pupil Progress Manager who will then contact parents/carers and discuss reasons and strategies for full attendance to be achieved.

Staff who fail to / experience problems with taking electronic register, will:

- Provide a paper copy which indicates absent students and send to the Pastoral Attendance Officer using agreed Safeguarding protocols (Staff out of class pass).
- Report problem/issue to IT Systems Manager (P. Ormroyde). The Pastoral Attendance Officer will email staff if a register is not taken and notify Pastoral Deputy/DSL and Head Teacher (Mr McGlinchey) of concerns and they will take agreed actions, in accordance with legality of a register having to be taken, (Teachers' Standards/'Keeping Children Safe in Education') if there is a regular pattern/ continued issue.

St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Cromwell Avenue, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1HG.

Telephone: 01925 574888



Headteacher

Mr. E. McGlinchey BSc (Hons) NPQH

APPLICATION FOR STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

A request for leave of absence **MUST** be made at least a minimum of 10 days before the period of absence.

Good attendance is linked to higher achievement. Poor attendance can be a cause of underachievement. Government legislation states as a parent you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance to school. Under legislation there is no entitlement to Leave of Absence in term time for holidays, therefore holidays should be taken during the school holiday period.

From September 2013, the new law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. (Further information can be obtained from www.dfe.gov.uk.)

PLEASE NOTE: Any declined requests will be recorded on a student's attendance record as unauthorised.

PUPIL DETAILS

Name: _____ Form: _____

Dates of Requested Absence: From ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Reason for absence (*you may wish to attach a supporting letter providing full details*):
Please explain why these circumstances are considered exceptional.

I understand that keeping my child/children off school for longer than agreed or if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date of Request: _____

Please return the completed request to the Pastoral Attendance Officer, Main school office or

email attendance@stgregoryshigh.com

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Telephone: 01925 574888



Headteacher

Mr. E. McGlinchey BSc (Hons) NPQH

LEAVE OF ABSENCE RESPONSE FORM

Leave of Absence Request

Name of Student:

Form:

Period of absence requested: From ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Deputy Headteacher's Response

Authorised absence is granted

Absence is not granted, and will be recorded as unauthorised

Reason(s) for absence not to be granted:

No acceptable reason given for absence in term time	
Attendance is less than the school target of 97%	
Examination/assessments near or during time of proposed leave	
Previous holiday/absence taken in same academic year	
Negative impact on pupil progress	
Holidays in term time cannot be authorised under DfE guidelines	

Other:

Signed by Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Howard-Rigby

Dated:

For Office Use	
Response sent home	
Student record updated appropriately	



ST. GREGORY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

What your attendance means Target 97% and above

