

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Please refer to school specific policy folder for the bespoke policy for each school

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## 1. Statement of Intent

St Gregory's is committed to providing a full and effective education for all its students to ensure they achieve their potential in all that they do.

We recognise the importance of good school attendance and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

St Gregory's will support students to ensure they access the best education that we can offer and will work in partnership with parents/carers in ensuring they are aware of their legal responsibilities regarding their child's education and support their child to achieve their maximum possible attendance, ensuring any problems are identified and acted on promptly.

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and therefore a priority for the Academy.

## 2. Statutory Guidance

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Keeping children safe in education
- Parental responsibility measures for behaviour and attendance

## 3. Expectations

A student's progress is severely hampered if they do not regularly attend school.

<b>98-100%</b>	<b>Expected</b>
<b>95-97%</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Below 95%</b>	<b>A cause for concern</b>
<b>Below 90%</b>	<b>A serious cause for concern</b>

To illustrate:

- 90% attendance is an average of one day out of school per fortnight over a school year.
- 90% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is half a school year missed.
- 80% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is the same as one whole school year missed.

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time, appropriately dressed in school uniform and prepared for the school day
- through our effective guidance system, report any problems which could impact on their attendance or punctuality
- follow school rules

We expect all parents to:

- ensure their child attends school every day and on time
- ensure that their child arrives to school wearing school uniform with the correct equipment fully prepared for the school day
- provide the school with up to date home, work and emergency contact numbers
- inform school in confidence of any problem which might impact on their child's attendance or punctuality
- be aware that it is their responsibility to inform school of the reason for their child's absence. They should contact school on the first day of absence before 9.00 am when their child is unable to attend
- provide medical evidence if requested by school
- arrange all holidays during the thirteen weeks of school holidays and not during term time
- support our school's procedures in promoting outstanding attendance for all and attend appropriate meetings in school to discuss their child's attendance
- work in partnership with the school, emphasising to their children the importance of respecting policies and procedures

Parents/carers can expect that school will:

- provide the highest quality of education
- promote and encourage excellent attendance and punctuality
- raise awareness of the importance of excellent attendance with parents, around school and within the local community
- maintain an effective electronic registration system
- regularly monitor attendance and use data to identify emerging patterns of absence
- closely monitor the attendance of identified vulnerable groups of students
- address the causes of non-attendance
- work with parents, the Local Authority and external agencies to improve attendance
- make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/carer when a child fails to attend school and the school has not been notified of the reason for the absence
- provide work during a period of authorised absence, or on a student's return
- support students upon return to school after a period of absence
- include attendance data in appropriate school reports
- act promptly and confidentially when notified of a problem which could impact on attendance or punctuality
- comply with safeguarding regulations

Governors will:

- attend Attendance Case Conferences when required
- agree attendance targets
- monitor and evaluate attendance statistics
- Governors will set areas for improvement to establish and maintain the best levels of attendance for all students. To assist with this, the Headteacher will report to Governors termly on attendance related issues.

#### **4. Rewards**

St Gregory's recognises the importance of praise and reward. To encourage all students to realise the importance of good attendance and punctuality, not only to achieve their full potential at school but also their life goals, there is a monitoring system which incorporates rewards and consequences. In order for students to be considered to take part in school trips and receive their rewards, they must have excellent attendance and punctuality.

#### **5. Absence**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform school of the reason for their child's absence. Contact should be made with the school on the first day of absence before 9.00 am when a child is unable to attend. If the academy does not receive notification, the academy operates a first-day response as part of school procedures. A home visit may be made at the discretion of the school to ascertain the whereabouts of a student who has failed to attend. Once a student

#### **6. Admission Registers**

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

#### **7. Expected First Day of Attendance**

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year – for example pupils who are registered at a secondary school at the start of Year 7 - unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided.

#### **8. Pupils Moving to a New Address and/or School**

Where the parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, schools must record in the admission register:

- (a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live,
- (b) the new address, and
- (c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register:

- (a) the name of the other school, and
- (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.

## **9. Children at Risk of Missing Education**

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

All schools (including academies) must agree with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school 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 days or more.

## **10. Marking of Registers – Academies must follow Government Guidelines:**

[School Attendance - Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities](#)

There is a legal requirement upon schools to keep an accurate attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session to mark students present or absent. This is also part of the Safeguarding Procedures within all schools. There is also a requirement that attendance records must show whether an absence of a student of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

St Gregory's has a SIM's computerised registration system in place which incorporates a lesson monitor. Taking of registers as an integral part of the school day, as was intended by the law and particular attention is paid to accurate use of codes, falsification of attendance registers may lead to disciplinary action.

Registers in the academies will be checked on a termly basis to ensure the correct codes are entered, this will be completed by Lynn Hunter (Vice Principal, Carmel College) and Andrea Mortimer, Parent Support & Attendance Lead.

## REGISTER CODES

/	Morning Registration	Present	
\	Afternoon Registration	Present	
L	Late arrival before the close of register	Present	
U	Late arrival after the close of register	Unauthorised	
B	Off-site Educational Activity  Schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils who are educated off site.	Authorised	Only to be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by school. The B code certifies the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for unsupervised activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work.
C	Leave of absence authorised by school	Authorised	To be used for exceptional circumstances that warrant an authorised leave of absence.
D	Dual Registered – attending another educational establishment	This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.	Examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis or when a pupil is on a 'managed move' to another school.
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	Authorised	Alternative provision must be arranged for an excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Once alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
G	Holiday not authorised by school or in excess of the period determined by the Head Teacher	Unauthorised	To be used when leave of absence is declined or when no application has been made.
H	Holiday authorised by school	Authorised	Head Teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made in advance.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised	
J	Attending an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment.	Authorised	
M	Medical or Dental Appointment	Authorised	

N	Reason for absence not provided	Unauthorised	Should be followed up using school's first day response to absence. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely (no more than 2 weeks). Once the reason is established appropriate code should be used.
O	Absent from school	Unauthorised	
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	Authorised	To be used to record sessions when pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by school and supervised by someone authorised by school.
R	Religious Observation	Authorised	School must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance.
S	Study Leave	Authorised	Only to be recorded sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations.
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Absence	Authorised	To be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school. Whilst travelling if the pupil attends an alternate educational provision appropriate code should be used (D) – dual registration.
V	Education Trip or Visit	Authorised	To be used for any educational trips or visits, including residential.
W	Work Experience	Authorised	To be used for work experience pupils. School should ensure placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Absence should be recorded using the relevant code.
Admin Codes		X Y Z #	Not required in school Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances Pupil not on admission register Planned whole or partial school closure (half terms, bank holidays, up to 5 PD days).

## 11. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification.

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Only school can approve absence, not parents/carers. The school is not obliged to accept a parental note or other form of notification as a valid reason for absence and further evidence may be requested. If, after investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered, or where no explanation is given, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Where parents condone unjustified absence the school will commence attendance procedures at an early stage and this may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for Statutory Procedures.

Should a student feel unwell in school, the student must follow the Academy's procedure and inform the relevant member of staff if they feel too poorly to remain in school. If appropriate, school will call home to notify parents/carers who can decide if they wish the child to be collected.

The Academy does not allow parents/carers to collect their child during the school day without the Academy's permission as this has serious implications for safeguarding.

## **12. Medical Appointments**

The school recognises that occasionally medical appointments during the school day are unavoidable. However, students are expected to return to school immediately following an appointment and medical evidence may be requested. The vast majority of medical appointments do not require a full day, or even a full session of absence. In line with safeguarding regulations, students are required to sign in and out of school when they arrive or leave during the school day.

## **13. Requests for absence in term-time**

Permission from the Head Teacher must be sought for all absences that occur during term-time. A 'request for leave of absence' form must be completed in advance of the absence (available from the school office). Only the Head Teacher can decide if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

Under current regulations, schools cannot authorise any holidays taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. School will require evidence of exceptional circumstances, which should be attached to the 'request for leave of absence form' and the judgement about what is exceptional will be made by the Head Teacher.

Holidays taken in term time can have a very negative impact on a child's education, as well as school's attendance statistics and examination results. Research has shown that a 10% drop in attendance (equivalent to 19 ½ days in a school year) can mean a one grade drop at GCSE. For absences that are due to sporting or other educational activities which have not been organised by school, evidence of the event must accompany the 'request for leave of absence' form.

## **11. Punctuality**

Punctuality is extremely important. All students are required to arrive punctually for registration at 8:50 a.m. in the morning and 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

If a student arrives for school after the close of registration at 9:00am, the session can be recorded as 'U' mark on the registration certificate which is an unauthorised absence and will impact on their overall attendance.

We also expect students to arrive punctually to lessons. Students who arrive late to lessons not only affect their own learning but also seriously disrupt the learning of others in the class. The academy has strict disciplinary procedures for dealing with persistent lateness and rewards for excellent punctuality.

## **12. Truancy**

When the Academy become aware that a student is truanting, whether it is internal or external truancy, parents/carers may be contacted and the truancy will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

## **13. Persistent Absenteeism**



The Department for Education deems that if a student's attendance drops below 90% they become known as a Persistent Absentee, regardless of the reason for the absence and irrespective of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and parent/carer's full support and co-operation is required to avoid this.

At St Gregory's all absence is monitored thoroughly and any case seen to have reached the Persistent Absence level or becoming at risk of reaching it is given priority. Continued persistent absence may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for statutory procedures.