



St Gregory the Great Catholic School

Attendance Policy

“opera in caritate”

based upon St Gregory’s statement “The proof of works are in love”

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Principles: The Governors and staff of St. Gregory the Great Catholic School recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality to both achievement in education and success in employment. Because our role is to assist parents who are the primary educators of their children, we aim to work together with parents and carers to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality, enabling all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.
2. Our Attendance Policy is framed within the four Gospel values of our Mission Statement:
 - Wisdom** We will promote good punctuality and attendance as essential, not just to acquire knowledge, but to develop an understanding of how to use it wisely.
 - Integrity** We will act fairly and consistently in dealing with attendance matters. We will teach children to value good attendance and punctuality as aspects of personal responsibility.
 - Justice** We will work with others to defend the right of children to an education, in accordance with the law.
 - Compassion** We will respond sensitively to the needs of families, recognising that there are some rare occasions when it is appropriate for children to be absent from school.

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

St Gregory the Great Catholic School:

St Gregory’s staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality. We will work closely with parents & carers to encourage and reward good attendance and to investigate promptly if absenteeism or lateness give cause for concern. We will keep parents and carers fully informed of their child’s attendance and punctuality.

We have signed the Service Level Statement for attendance related work and will work closely with the Oxfordshire Attendance & Engagement Team and other agencies to safeguard children and ensure good attendance.

Pupils: Pupils will ensure that they attend tutor time and lessons regularly and on time. Pupils who arrive after the register has closed will sign the late book, giving a reason for their lateness. Pupils will not leave the school campus without permission.

Parents & Carers: Parents & carers are required by law to ensure their child’s regular and punctual attendance. The Governing Body has endorsed the Local Authority use of parenting contracts and penalty notices for parents / carers of persistent truants according to the provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Parents & carers will ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn. Parents & carers will inform the

school of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first morning of any absence, and in advance if possible. We may require this to be confirmed in writing when a pupil returns to school. Parents will ensure they do not arrange family holidays during term time. They will also ensure, wherever possible that routine medical and dental appointments take place outside school hours.

Authorised/ Unauthorised absence

It is the role of the school to decide whether an absence is to be authorised. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation offered authorises the absence. Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Sickness;
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments (wherever possible these should be made outside of school hours);
- one day of religious observance;
- exceptional family circumstances, such as a bereavement; or
- a catastrophic event at home.

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- shopping;
- looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents / carers;
- minding the house;
- holidays, or
- birthdays.

Procedures for Following Up Absence/Lateness

All unexplained absences will be followed up on the first date by the Attendance Officer by telephone call and/or text message. Should a pupil be absent for any period, the school will require written confirmation of the reason for a pupil's absence, especially where their attendance is a cause for concern. Form tutors will collect written explanations from returning pupils and pass these to the attendance Officer. Lateness will always result in a Late Detention of 30 minutes after school. If a pupil is late to registration, they will sign the late register giving a reason for their lateness. All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence will be stored on the child's file after they have been initialled (and dated) by the form tutor and kept for six months. When a pupil is persistently late or absent without good reason and the school's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, we will refer the matter to the Attendance & Engagement Officer. This may lead to a penalty notice and fine.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

The curriculum will be monitored and developed to meet the needs of all pupils. A variety of teaching & learning strategies will be used to engage and enthuse different groups of pupils. Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices. Good attendance will be rewarded through weekly tutor group & termly year group competitions and termly attendance awards letters from the Head Teacher. Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Termly reports will be made by the Head Teacher to the Governing Body on the issue of attendance and punctuality. Visits to feeder primary schools will be made in order to ensure the fullest support for all pupils during secondary transfer and in order to help identify any pupils who

may need special help. Regular, structured meetings will be held with the school's Attendance & Engagement Officer in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern. Pupils whose attendance falls beneath 90% will be set targets for improvement. Their parents will also receive a letter reminding them that at St Gregory's, unsatisfactory attendance may lead to the requirement to repeat the academic year owing to unsatisfactory progress.

In the case of Looked After children, the threshold shall be 95% attendance. These targets will be regularly reviewed by the Head of Year. Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually-tailored programme, constructed in consultation with parents and the Attendance & Engagement Team.

Collection of Attendance Data

Each week summary attendance data for each tutor group will be collected in order to inform the rewards system and assess on-going performance. Each week punctuality data for late pupils will be collated and parents informed where appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The operation and impact of this policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) This policy will also be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Status and review cycle: annual

Next review date: June 2019