SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale:

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we recognise that attending school regularly has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for children. We will encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which pupils feel valued and part of the school community.

DCSF guidance states that all schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance which should be set out in an attendance policy. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstances of the school.

Aims

We will

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school; including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Set targets to improve individual and whole school attendance levels, including statutory targets.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We will develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for

- **Parents and carers**
- **Pupils**
- **School staff**
- **Governors**

to complement this policy, and identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This procedural framework will include guidance on

- Registration
- Punctuality
- What constitutes unauthorised absence
- Holidays in term time/extended leave.

- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual pupils
- Systems for dealing with absence
- Criteria and systems for referral to and working with the Early Intervention Team and School Attendance Consultant.
- Systems for monitoring whole school attendance and action planning
- Appropriate alternative curricular arrangements

Holidays in Term Time/Extended Leave

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School will not authorise holidays in term time.

Use of Penalty Notices

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This includes holidays which are taken without a prior request being made; and those taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the holiday been taken regardless of this advice. Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School may also request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice for days taken in excess of the agreed period of leave; without good reason.

Partnership Working

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School will work with the Early Intervention Team, The School Attendance Consultant and other support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School will use electronic systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

Persistent Absence

The minimum attendance level which is expected of all primary aged pupils nationally is 95%. It is when attendance falls below this level that school will consider whether it is appropriate to offer support in order to improve the situation. Both local and central government pay particular attention to reducing the number of pupils who fall into the persistent absence category (PA). A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance falls below 80% at any point during the school year; whether the absences are authorised or unauthorised. When attendance nears this level children miss significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is put at risk. We need parents' full support in ensuring that attendance does not reach this level. However, if for any reason a child's attendance does fall into this category parents will be asked to do all they can improve the situation.

Families will be supported in this via school's robust systems for managing PA. This support may involve the need for parents, and children of an appropriate age, to agree to a parenting contract. Due to the seriousness of PA status it is highly likely that such cases will be referred to a local government attendance officer (Early Intervention Team). Furthermore, the names of individual pupils who are classed as persistent absentees are reported to the Department for Children, Schools and Families annually; along with whole school absence figures.

Review of Whole School Attendance Policy

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School will review this policy and the associated procedural framework.

Review date: January 2025