



School Attendance Policy

Policy Review

This policy was adopted and agreed by the Governing Body on 14th December 2023 and will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body every year.

It is due for review in Autumn 2024.

Signature  Headteacher Date: 14th December 2023

Signature  Chair of Governors Date: 14th December 2023

Revision Record

Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	14.12.2023	SF	FGB	IW Council Education & Inclusion Service model policy. Newly written to provide consistency across Island schools and revised in September 2023 to reflect changes to statutory guidance ' Working together to improve school attendance '
2				
3				

All the governors and staff of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis.

Contents	
Introduction/Aim	4
Legal Framework	4
Roles and Responsibilities	5
Categorising Absence and Attendance	9
Leave of absence	9
Medical appointments and absence due to illness	10
Pupil absence for the purposes of Religious Observance	11
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils	11
Unauthorised absence	12
Our Procedures	12
Register keeping and recording	12
Late arrival at school	13
Expected absence procedure for parents	14
Attendance Interventions	16
Support Systems	16
Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions	18
Reduced timetables	18
Deletions from the Register	19
Related Policies	19
Statutory Framework	19

Attendance Interventions Threshold Document	21
Appendices	22
Appendix 1: Fixed penalty notice whole school warning letter	22
Appendix 2: Example leave of absence request form	24
Appendix 3: Example of School reply to leave of absence request	26
Appendix 4: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents	27

1. Introduction/Aim

At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance;
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences;
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

2. 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 to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school 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.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence;

- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring that their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

3. Roles and Responsibilities

At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School**, we believe that improving school attendance is everyone’s business. That it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Role	Name	Contact details
Senior Attendance Lead	Lucie Banks (Head of School)	01983 292885 or admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk
Attendance Officer	Kerrie Margetts (School Business Manager)	01983 292885 or admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk
Assistant to Attendance Officer	Jess Buckett (Office Administrator)	01983 292885 or admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk
Named Governor/Trustee for Attendance	Rebecca Colman (Safeguarding Governor)	01983 292885 or admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk

The Local Governing Board/Trustee Board of **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school’s ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and work effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Senior Management Team at **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.

- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half-termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance 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.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.
- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance.

All staff at **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff members.

- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of a parenting contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.

- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

4. Categorising Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

4.1 Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances'. At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School**, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave (see Appendix 2). If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** will treat each application individually and discuss with you the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a fixed penalty notice is issued or consider prosecution.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

4.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected by parents/carers and signed out at the school office. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation. If a pupil is returning to school following an appointment they should be brought to the office and signed in by parents/carers.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend an Education Support Meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Isle of Wight Council policies regarding supporting children with health issues.

We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.



Medical Policy
IOW.pdf

4.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School 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 is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

4.4 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school. There are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. Schools and Local Authorities can make a big difference to their life chances through:

- Clear high expectation of all pupils, regardless of their background
- An inclusive culture that welcomes all communities
- Strong engagement from parents

In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because:

- the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him/her to travel from place to place,
- that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and if the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

This provision applies *only* when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business on the Isle of Wight, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. **Holy Cross Catholic Primary**

School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

4.5 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

5. Our Procedures

5.1 Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

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

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Class Teachers take the register on SIMS. Where SIMS is not accessible, paper copies of the register are taken and are then transferred onto SIMS by the office staff before 9.30am for the first session and 1.15pm for the second session.

5.2 Late Arrival at School

At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.45am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this.

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning. Your child is late to school if they are not **through the gate by 8.40am** so that they have sufficient time to hang their coat up and be **ready in the classroom for the register at 8.45am**.

All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents, who will be expected to sign the late book and provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.00am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9.00am. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm and will be kept open until 1.00pm.

5.3 Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible on the same day. Parents must maintain contact throughout the absence and are expected to call the school each day their child is ill, unless they have been advised from the school to keep them off for a set time e.g. 48 hours for sickness and diarrhea.

To make the process of reporting unplanned absence, such as illness, easier for parents and carers, we have also set up an email account specifically for reporting absences, should you be unable to telephone - admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk

If a child is absent unexpectedly the class teacher will record the absence in the register and the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.00am and where no reason for absence is known.

- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned
- If school cannot contact a parent by 12 mid-day and are concerned about a pupil, the school will take whatever actions it deems necessary to safeguard the child and a home visit may be carried out

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

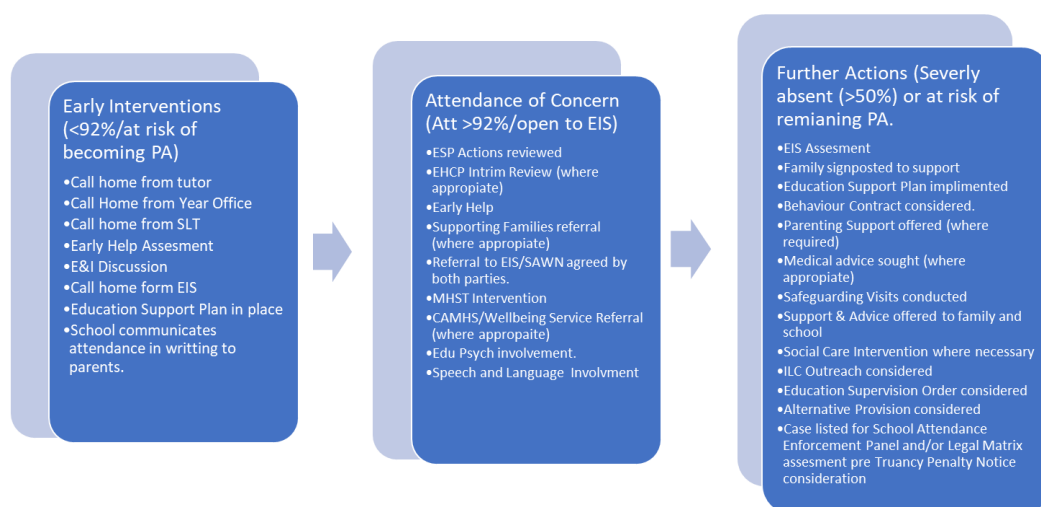
In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement
- Refer to Education Inclusion Service to offer support, guidance, and advice
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through the Isle of Wight CME Policy (see link below).
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Social Care or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.



CME Policy (IW
Guidance) 2023.pdf

5.4 Attendance Interventions



At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

“Severe absence” (SA) as:

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The school tracks attendance of individual pupils whose attendance raises a cause for concern, e.g, patterns of absence, number of absences within a set period, unsuitable reasons for absence/repeated ‘excuse’ for absence. This may include children who have a ‘good’ attendance percentage but whose absences raise a cause for concern. The office team, Education Welfare Officer and Head of School monitor and evaluate the attendance of children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

5.5 Support Systems

At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family’s life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child’s attendance and or behaviour in school,

for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

When we receive a telephone call or email to advise of sickness absence, the Office Administrator will follow up to determine:

- The nature of the illness and a clear definition e.g. vomiting or persistent cough, not just 'unwell' or '
- The treatment being received – either by a medical practitioner or at home
- Whether any medical advice has been sought/ will be sought
- When it is anticipated that the child will be well enough to return to school

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily, weekly or monthly basis depending on the flagged and identified needs of the child.

- If there is a concern about a child's attendance, or persistent lateness, they will contact the School Business Manager or Head of School in the first instance and, if required, follow it up with the Education Welfare (EW).
- The Head of School & Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will liaise to ensure that appropriate information is shared & the EW will be invited to TAF, CIN & CP meetings where appropriate.
- The School Business Manager will produce absence and late reports and meet half termly with the Education Welfare Officer. The Head of School will be made aware of any specific concerns that are raised as a result of these meetings.
- The appropriate action to be taken for each case will be decided on with support from EW.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

5.6 Persistent Absence, Severe Absence and the use of legal interventions

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level could cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 90 sessions (45 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies (such as EIS for subscribed schools) for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution via the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

5.7 Reduced timetables

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so. We will not use a reduced timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family

In line with Isle of Wight Council guidance, we will notify the Education & Inclusion Service of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

6. Deletions from the Register

At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** we will add and will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. At **Holy Cross Catholic Primary School** we will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Isle of Wight Council's Child Missing in Education procedures and will inform the Education & Inclusion Service of all removals from our school roll no later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Isle of Wight Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above.

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School will follow Isle of Wight Council's CME Policy (see link on page 13) when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Isle of Wight Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

7. Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion
- SEND
- Behaviour

8. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(September 2023\)](#)

- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2023\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2018\)](#)

Attendance Interventions Threshold Document

Attendance Interventions Threshold Document

Reminder percentages are a guide. Consideration should be given to number of absences from school and reasons given when identifying support for student/family.

<p>Attendance above 96% -</p> <p>Schools should promote good attendance in school. Ideas may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance displays. School-wide assemblies Regular attendance updates in newsletters Attendance displays in school. Communication with all stakeholders. <p>Schools should regularly analyse school and student attendance data, and identify any areas of concern. There should be clear systems in place to raise a concern about attendance. Parents should regularly be updated on their child's attendance in school linked to attainment.</p> <p>Schools should communicate the school attendance policy with all stakeholders, and parents and pupils should have an awareness of what is expected of them.</p>	<p>Attendance >95% Up to 10 days absent in an academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class teacher/tutor to discuss attendance with student where age-appropriate, and to discuss concerns with family. Regular contact with family to update on progress and achievements as well as academic attainment. Write to parents to explain concerns, linked to attainment, sharing attendance data so parents can see the absence patterns. 	<p>Attendance >92% Severe risk of underachievement, upwards of 22 days absent in an academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If absences continue calls to the family may require intervention from Year/House Manager at Secondary, Attendance Officer and in some cases Senior Leaders. As the child is at risk of becoming Persistently Absent the case (including all school actions to date) should be discussed in school attendance meetings. Regular contact with family to update on progress and achievements as well as academic attainment. Write to parents to explain concerns, linked to attainment, sharing attendance data so parents can see the absence patterns. School should consider an Early Help Plan support for the family.* School should be updating all parents on their child's attendance each half term. Each child who is Persistently Absent should have an individualised plan to support an improvement in attendance. * E&I may contact family at this point (for SLA Schools) which often identifies issues impacting on attendance. <p>Additional support offered by E&I for SLA Schools.*</p>	<p>Attendance >90% Student is recorded as Persistently Absent Extreme risk of underachievement. Upwards of 22 school days absent in the academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student should have an Education Support Plan. Review Actions from this meeting in due course. * Consider if additional SEN support is needed. Where a child already has an EHCP an interim review should be held. Consider a Supporting Families Referral for families on Early Help. (Cases open to E&I can be processed at this stage without an Early Help) Is there a role for support from the MHST/Wellbeing Service/Youth Trust/CAMHS due to Mental Health Issues? Consider if support from Education Psychology Team is required Is there a need for Speech and Language Support Regular contact with family to update on progress and achievements as well as academic attainment. Write to parents to explain concerns, linked to attainment, sharing attendance data so parents can see the absence patterns. School may wish to consider an Early Help Plan support for the family.* School should be updating all parents on their child's attendance each half term. Each child who is Persistently Absent should have an individualised plan to support an improvement in attendance. * E&I may contact family at this point (for SLA Schools) which often identifies issues impacting on attendance. <p>Additional support offered by E&I for SLA Schools.*</p>	<p>Attendance >85% Extreme risk of underachievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Care intervention if required. Schools should consider Early Help Assessment to identify need. (E&I will support SLA schools with this). * Family to be signposted to support by professionals considering Local Offer.* Consider behaviour plan to reduce suspensions and on-site truancy.* Is parenting support needed* Would the student benefit from AP to assist in reengaging with education. Consider Outreach support. E&I can access medical advice via school nursing team, or other services such as CAMHS and GP's* E&I to consider legal options, including Truancy Penalty Notice, Education Supervision Order, or parental prosecution. * Non-SLA Schools will need to request a place at the School Attendance Enforcement Panel to make a case for legal intervention. <p>Additional support offered by E&I for SLA Schools.*</p>
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Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

Appendix 1: Fixed penalty notice whole school warning letter

Dear Parent,

Date: xx/xx/2023

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The DfE policy document entitled, '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' states:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.
- As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have **at least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to**

unauthorised absence by the pupil during 10 school weeks. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued, the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from unauthorised absence. When penalty notices are issued each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than 1 child who has been absent. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. In some circumstances, the Education & Inclusion Service may choose not to issue a further penalty notice in the same academic year and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix 2: Example leave of absence request form

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME		
Important Information for Parents – please read before completing this form		
<p>We expect every pupil's attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time. It is the Headteacher who decides whether a period of leave during term time will be authorised or not in line with legislation. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amended in September 2013) make it clear that Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist. Every request for leave of absence during term time will reviewed on an individual basis with due consideration of the circumstances but the Headteacher can only grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply. If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Headteacher will determine the length of the absence to be authorised.</p> <p>All requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed. This form must be completed in full by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time. Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised.</p>		
I have read the above information and wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school for:		
Child's Full Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:
Parent/Carer Details (please list all parents)		
First Name:		Surname:
Date of Birth:		Relationship to the child:
Address and postcode:		
Telephone number:		
First Name:		Surname:
Date of Birth:		Relationship to the child:
Address and postcode:		
Telephone number:		
Siblings: Please provide the name of any siblings and the school that they attend		
Child's Full Name:	Date of Birth:	School:

Details of the absence			
Date of First day of absence:		Date of last day of absence:	
Total Number of days absent:		Expected date of return to school:	
Please provide the reason for this request including supporting evidence:			
Please read the following statement and sign to indicate you understand the this:			
<p>I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied and my child is absent during this period. I understand that a fine will be payable per child, per parent of £120 if paid within 28 days but reduced to £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days.</p>			
Signed:		Full name:	Date:
Signed:		Full name:	Date:

To be completed by the school:			
Date request received by the school:		Total number of days requested:	
Child's Name:	Current % Attendance	Application Authorised or Declined?	
Reason for school's decision:			
Headteacher:			
Signed:		Date:	

Appendix 3: Example reply to leave of absence request

Dear Parents name,

RE: Absence during term time – Child Name (Child DOB)

Thank you for your application for absence in term time for [Child Name]. Whilst we appreciate your circumstances, Holy Cross Catholic Primary School does not approve any absences during term time unless they are due to exceptional circumstances as per the guidance from the Department of Education.

The rationale behind this decision is that the Government has provided evidence that satisfactory progress at school is highly dependent on attendance.

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School works closely with the Education and Inclusion Service and if you choose to take your child out of school for the above unauthorised leave, we will notify the local authority and further action including legal action may be considered.

Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid after 28 days this may result in legal action be taken against you. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have noted that [Child Name] will be absent from Holy Cross Catholic Primary School from xx/xx/2023 – xx/xx/2023 and the registers will be marked with the G code (unauthorised family holiday) for this period.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact Mrs Kerrie Margetts, School Business Manager, on 01983 292885 or email admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 4: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

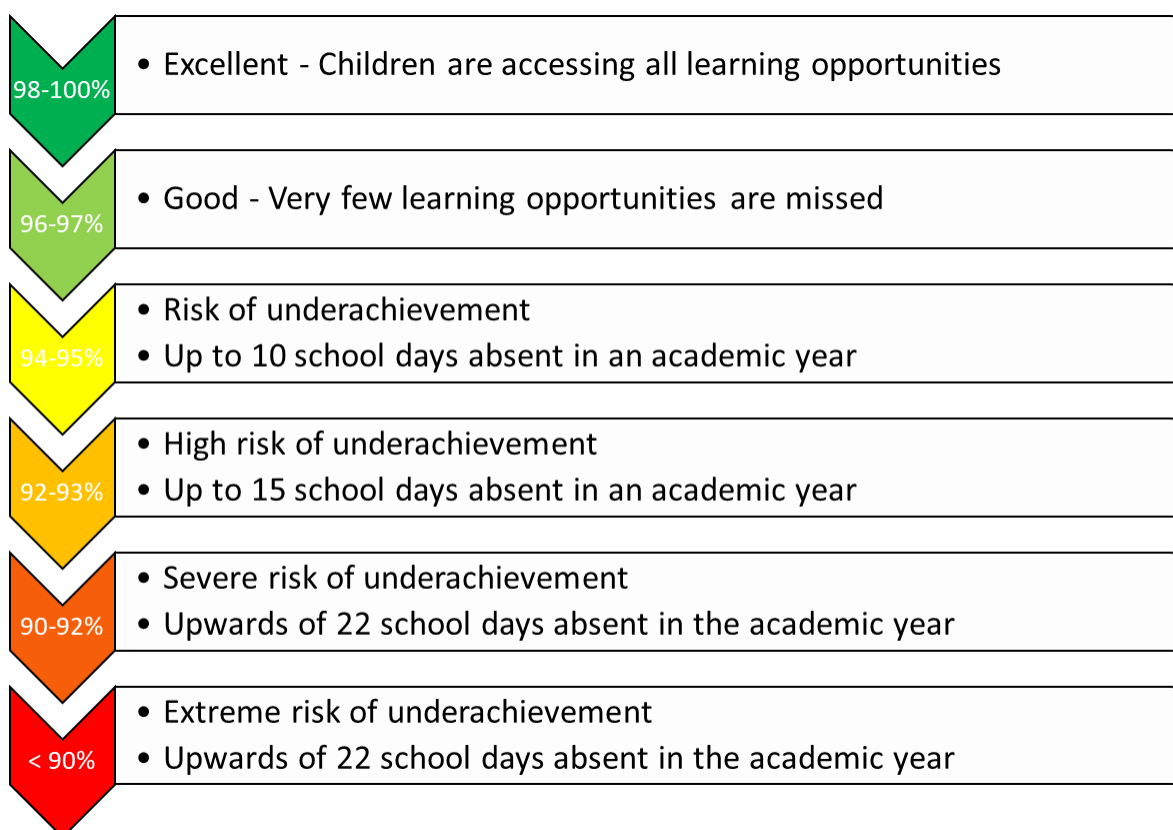
Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Pupils must be in school by **8.45 am**.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- If your child appears to be only slightly ill, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



‘On the day’ absences: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, please report this absence by calling the school by 8.30am, or as soon as practically possible on the morning of the absence, to let us know - **01983 292885**. To make the process of reporting unplanned absence, such as illness, easier for parents and carers, we have also set up an email account specifically for reporting absences, should you be unable to telephone - attendance@Holy Cross Catholicprimary.co.uk

Please ensure your message includes your child’s full name, year and class and give the specific reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register.

Leave of Absence

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our ‘Leave of absence request’ form to make these types of requests. The form should be submitted in advance of the leave of absence, via handing the form in to the school office or emailing to admin@holycrossrcpri.iow.sch.uk. You will receive an email in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they are not **through the school gates by 8.40am** so that they have sufficient time to hang their coat up and be **ready in the classroom for the register at 8.45am**.

The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children’s attainment. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Please contact **Kerrie Margetts, School Business Manager** if you require any support with ensuring your child’s regular school attendance.