

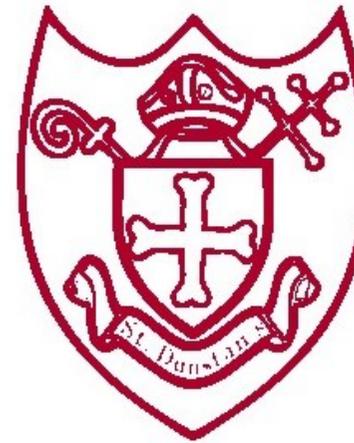
of body fluids whose functions include digestion, absorption, circulation, creation of saliva, transportation of nutrients, and maintenance of body temperature.

- Drinking water is vital to the kidneys, helping dissolve minerals and nutrients so that they are more accessible to the body.
- Regular daily water consumption aids cardiovascular health, helping reduce blood pressure and cholesterol.
- It also boosts immune systems, helping with allergies and asthma.
- And of course good hydration is nature's best headache remedy and helps muscles and joints work better by lubricating them allowing us to stay healthier and younger, longer.

School Water Bottles

School provide each child with a St Dunstan's clear plastic drinks bottle for their water which can be refilled in their classroom, during the school day. The bottles have a non-spill lid, are certified BPA free and EN71 approved for safety with young children. They can be brought home each evening to be washed; bottles and caps are dishwasher safe. This will allow children to have access to fresh drinking water throughout each day.

To clarify the situation, water bottles that come to school with fruit juice/squash or flavoured water in, will be returned to families, or the children will have the option to empty these and fill these with water. We do hope this clarifies the situation. If you have any questions, please contact the Headteacher.



St Dunstan's Catholic School

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This booklet contains the following school policies which we expect all our families to support.

School Uniform Policy

Attendance Policy & Procedure

No Nuts Policy

Drinks In School Policy

By seeking admission or by sending your child to St Dunstan's Catholic School you are also agreeing to support the policies of the school .

Dear Parents and Carers

From September we will be making some changes so I am informing you well in advance so you can plan accordingly. Key school policies are enclosed, some of which have been updated.

Changes to the school day

The Department for Education require all schools to be open for longer from September 2023. For this reason there are changes to the timings of the school day from September, for all children.

After consultation with Governors, The school day will now finish at the later time of 3.30pm. All children must be collected promptly at 3.30pm

Uniform changes

There will be a small change to our uniform policy in the new school year to ensure that our uniform is as inclusive and smart as the other schools in the Tolkien Cluster, that we are part of with our Parish secondary school, Bishop Challoner. From September, we expect all children from Year One to Year Six to wear a shirt and school tie.

In making changes, we are mindful not to push extra costs on to our families, therefore when you receive your child's school report, your child will be provided with a school tie for September so you don't have to buy one. Years 1 and 2 will wear an elastic collar tie, children in years 3 – 6 will wear a traditional tie. Polo shirts will remain for Early years all year round and may be worn as part of the optional summer term uniform.

Our uniform policy ensures that every child can attend school in an equal and fair way. By enforcing our uniform policy we ensure that appearance doesn't advantage or disadvantage any of our pupils. Our uniform policy is not negotiable.

If there is a medical reason why school shoes can't be worn, then a note from a health care professional must be given in to the office and the issue resolved as soon as possible.

We will always try to work closely with parents to resolve any uniform related issues but our uniform policy is clear and transparent and we won't be engaging in negotiations or discussions based on personal views.

Promotion

The policy will be promoted by:

- A copy of this policy being made available to all parents and carers.
- A letter issued to all parents and carers and regular reminders in the newsletter.
- Staff being informed and provided with regular training.
- Children being informed via teachers and support staff.
- Publication of this policy on the school website.
- Issue of this policy & the Lunchboxes & Drinks Policy in new admission packs.

Ratified March 2022

Review March 2024

Packed Lunch and Drinks Policy

Aim of Policy

Our aim is to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.

Packed lunches may only contain cold food. Only hot food prepared by the school caterer may be eaten at lunchtime.

On a daily basis, staff in school see what children have in their lunchboxes, whilst supervising in the dining hall. This is an opportunity for them to talk with the children about their lunchboxes and to encourage healthy eating and drinking. Healthy lunch boxes will be rewarded with a sticker.

We may send parents a reminder of this policy if lunchbox contents fall short of the expectations in this policy. If this happens repeatedly, parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss this.

It is not our intention to tell parents what and how they should be feeding their children and we will

not do so, we want to work with parents to educate our children about healthy dietary choices, so that they can make their own informed choices independently when they are older.

If your child has not eaten enough of their lunch, it will be sent home in their lunch box in order for you to see.

Schools have a key role in making sure the whole school has a healthy eating culture. Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework includes a judgment on personal development, behaviour and welfare. As part of reaching this judgment, inspectors will look at the extent to which schools are successfully supporting pupils to gain "knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy" and "make informed choices about healthy eating, [and] fitness" throughout their inspection.

[NHS Healthier Lunchboxes, tips and swaps](#)

[NHS Eatwell Guide](#)

The school food standards are there to support schools in helping children to learn and make healthier food choices in school. If you want to give your child an item that's not allowed under the school's packed lunch policy, then perhaps it can wait until after school? The school is responsible for your child's learning whilst at school and they need children to be well-fuelled and on-task for their afternoon lessons - please try and be supportive where you can!

Drinks in School

Only water is permitted in school. Fruit juice, squash, flavoured water is not permitted. It has been recognised that children's concentration and behaviour improves when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired.

- Water is the simplest and best sugar-free alternative in helping counter obesity and its associated NHS and dental care cost.
- Drinking water helps maintain the balance

Elective home education

Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities

Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

Promoting and supporting mental health and well-being in schools and colleges

Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying

No Nuts Policy

Context

People who suffer from nut allergies can develop a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. If someone has a nut allergy it is not just eating nuts that can cause a severe reaction, just being touched on the skin or smelling the breath of someone who has eaten nuts or a product containing nuts can trigger anaphylactic shock (which can cause breathing and swallowing difficulties).

This policy has not been introduced lightly but after serious consideration, in order for us to raise awareness and do our utmost to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children who attend St Dunstan's Catholic School.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Raise awareness about allergies to all our school community
- Ensure we provide a safe learning environment for all
- Give assurance to those children/families with severe allergies that we take the management of these seriously.

Aim

We are not a nut-free school but we aim to be as nut-free as we can. It is impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that no nuts will be brought onto the premises but we will strive to minimise this as much as we can with the support of our school community.

Management

We ask that all members of the school community work together to manage the day to day application of this policy in the following ways:

- -Parents and carers are requested NOT to send food to school that contains nuts or sesame.
- This includes all types of nuts, peanut butter, Nutella, cereal/chocolate bars and any other food containing nuts.
- We ask parents to check packaging closely
- for the safety of all our children.
- If we do see children with food that does contain nuts or nut products, they will be asked to swap that food for a non-nut product and take the nut product home unopened.
- Children will be encouraged to wash hands before and after eating.
- The school dinner providers will ensure all cooked food is nut-free.
- The Orchard Club before and after school club will also ensure that the snacks and food it provides are nut and sesame free.

Examples of foods this policy applies to:

Nuts can come in many forms; some examples of foods we do not wish children to bring to school are:

Packs of nuts / loose nuts
Peanut (or other nut) butter sandwiches
Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
Most chocolate bars contain nut elements
Sesame seed products including rolls
Nutella spread sandwiches or dips
Muesli bars
Cookies and biscuits that contain nuts
Cakes that contain nuts including coconut
Nut sauces or flavourings such as Satay

Attendance Policy & Procedure

Our school Attendance policy has been updated to include the '5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework'. The emphasis is on developing a school culture and climate which builds a sense of connectedness and belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive. The approach ensures we prioritise building solid working relationships with children and parents prior to any escalation. The staged approach we use ensures we identify triggers early that can lead to poor attendance issues such as mental health issues, lack of trust, communication and relationship breakdowns and the possible lack of networking opportunities both internal (in-school) and external (external agencies).

The Foundations framework has most recently been reviewed by the Department for Education, and received an excellent report following the four-day review.

School attendance

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government expects: • schools and local authorities to: • promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence • ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled • act early to address patterns of absence • parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly • all pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

[School_attendance_guidance_May-2022.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

By seeking admission or by sending your child to St Dunstan's Catholic School you are also agreeing to support the policies of the school including adherence to the prescribed uniform code.

School Uniform Policy & Expectations 2023 - 2025

The Governing Body of St Dunstan's School requires that all pupils wear the prescribed uniform (as detailed below) because smart uniform teaches children to dress smartly, create a sense of belonging and a calm working atmosphere. Uniform is an equaliser and as such all pupils are expected to wear the uniform. A smart school uniform also promotes a positive image that shows our school community.

The Governors have items of uniform with our school logo. Some of these are compulsory and some are optional. We have minimised the number of compulsory logo items to allow parents a greater range of options when sourcing clothing.

This list is the uniform of the school and if an item of clothing is not listed then it is not uniform and should not be worn.

Boys Years 1 to 6

Winter

Grey trousers
Hard collar white shirt (short or long sleeves) with school tie
Maroon V-neck sweatshirt with embroidered logo
Maroon and white school tie (Years 1 and 2: elastic; Years 3 – 6 normal tie)

Summer Optional (Easter to July)

Grey trousers or tailored shorts
White polo shirt (with school logo)
Maroon V-neck sweatshirt with embroidered logo

Girls: Years 1 – 6

Winter

Grey skirt or tailored trousers
Or (Year 1 and 2 only) grey pinafore dress
Hard collar white shirt (short or long sleeves) with school tie
Maroon V-neck sweatshirt or cardigan with embroidered logo
Maroon school tie (Years 1 and 2: elastic; Years 3 – 6 normal tie)
Black or grey tights optional (no colours or patterns)

Summer Optional (Easter to July)

Grey skirt or tailored trousers
White polo shirt (with school logo)
Gingham dress (colour range pink to maroon)
Maroon V-neck sweatshirt or cardigan with embroidered logo
White socks

Reception: Boys and Girls (Uniform is optional for Nursery children)

Grey skirt or tailored trousers with elasticated waist
Or grey pinafore dress
Maroon V-neck sweatshirt or cardigan with embroidered logo
Black shoes (must be slip on or Velcro fastening)

PE Kit

PE is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum and all pupils are expected to take part).

White round neck t-shirt (with school logo)
Plain maroon PE shorts
Black pumps slip-on or Velcro strap
Plain black tracksuit bottoms (for winter) optional

Shoes

All shoes must be plain black with a covered toe (for health and safety reasons)>
No boots, trainers, sports shoes or heels allowed.
Velcro fastening or slip on for Nursery and Reception.

- monitor the attendance of class groups, following up with irregular patterns of absenteeism that are not being effectively addressed;
- liaise effectively with the Attendance Leader and work together on ensuring that appropriate action is taken in the management of absenteeism and poor punctuality;
- have attendance as a regular item during safeguarding meetings;
- ensure contact is made with parents of poor attendees – always placing support before sanction.

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations - Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for regularly checking attendance data and ensuring data is accurate and up to date. The Attendance Officer will:

- ensure that data is input daily into the attendance management system;
- ensure that parents of absent children are contacted where notification of absence has not been received;
- respond to any parent seeking support on attendance concerns;
- provide regular attendance and punctuality data for relevant staff and external agencies in line with the agreed procedures and timescales;
- be responsible for disseminating important attendance information including informing the Attendance Leader of which children are of concern; in-line with the agreed procedures and timescales;
- be responsible for keeping a record of the interventions in place to encourage attendance and for generating all documentation including letters to parents;
- be responsible for liaising closely with the Local Authority's Legal Intervention Team

- to ensure appropriate levels of intervention take place; referrals are made, and attendance meetings are set up;
- be responsible for managing and maintaining attendance records and systems.

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations – Attendance Leader

The Senior Leader responsible for Attendance will promote good attendance and punctuality. They will:

- implement the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework;
- ensure the Foundations action plan is monitored and actioned throughout the school year;
- provide training and support to staff;
- participate in pre-legal meetings;
- use attendance data to make links with attendance and academic performance;
- lead attendance reward assemblies;
- ensure that reference to attendance is included in all school documentation e.g. newsletters, letters to parents, school prospectus, school website.

Relevant legislation

The Education Act 1996
The Children Act 1989
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
The Education and Inspections Act 2006
The Sentencing Act 2020
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Relevant government guidance

Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour
Children missing education
Keeping children safe in education 2022
Working together to safeguard children

have the automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday during term time.

- It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day of absence and in line with the school's procedures for informing of absence.
- All unexplained attendances will be monitored and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns relating to their own child. Parents are expected to attend meetings when requested and support the school in responding to ongoing attendance concerns.

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations – Children:

All children should aim to have an excellent attendance and punctuality record for which there will be appropriate rewards.

- All children are expected to be on the school site on time and ready to learn. Children are expected to be punctual to all lessons and registration.
- Children who arrive at school late must follow the correct procedures for recording their lateness and entering their lesson.
- Children must not leave the school without permission, 'truant'; this will be seen by the school as a Safeguarding concern as well as a Health and Safety concern.

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations – Phase Leaders and Class Teacher

The Phase Leader and Class Teacher are the key staff members in promoting regular punctual attendance. The Phase Leader or Class Teacher will:

- provide a good example by always being punctual to registration and meeting children at the door – providing a welcoming environment;
- keep an accurate and up-to-date register of attendance;
- follow the Attendance Policy procedures when dealing with absences and punctuality;
- maintain swift action and effective communication with phase leaders, Senior Staff and/or School Attendance Leaders on all attendance matters concerning the class group;
- ensure that children and young people are aware of the importance of the school attendance target and their own individual attendance targets - where appropriate assist them in monitoring their own attendance rates;
- ensure children receive rewards in relation to attendance and punctuality success – aligned to the Attendance Policy;
- build a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and provide support as necessary when children return after an absence.

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations - Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding Team take responsibility for monitoring the attendance of children and regularly promote the importance of attendance and punctuality. They will:

- ensure that their team is aware of their responsibilities with respect to promoting attendance and punctuality and adherence to the attendance policy and procedures;
- ensure that rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality follow agreed procedures and align to the school's Behaviour and Attendance Policy;
- monitor and track the attendance of vulnerable groups;

Additional Equipment and Information

Maroon School Reading Book Bag required for all children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 Pupils do not need another bag. Rucksacks are not allowed in these classes – they are too large to store safely and your child will be asked to keep them at home. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 may have either a School Reading Book Bag or a Rucksack

Every child should have a bag suitable for holding his/her PE kit in school at all times.

Maroon, black or white plain cap/sun hat to be worn on school visits and during the school day in hot weather (we do not allow fashion caps or football team caps).

Hair Style Rules

No extreme/fashion haircuts are allowed for boys or girls

During term time, fashion hairstyles which include shaved, dyed, tramlines, undercut or Mohawks are not permitted. If the Headteacher deems the haircut to be extreme you will be asked to rectify it at the hairdresser/barber – please note that this is not a matter for debate, appropriate hairstyles are part of the agreed uniform policy and as such parents are required to support the school in applying that policy.

Long hair must be worn in a plait, bun or pony tails **at all times** to minimise exposure to head lice (hair ties and bows in **maroon, black or white** – no fashion hair bows except on theme days or non-uniform days) – please note that hair rules apply equally to boys and girls

Pupils are not allowed to colour their hair during term time and any colours added for fun etc. must be gone before pupils return to school

Jewellery Rules

No jewellery allowed including earrings (no studs and no earring hole retainers)

KS2 children may wear a watch (but not a 'smart' watch with internet connectivity), teachers cannot be responsible for minding them.

Please ensure that ears are pierced in the summer holidays to allow enough time for the hole to remain open without retainers

Pupils that wear earrings to school will be asked to remove them or you will be telephoned and asked to come and remove them

Make Up Rules

No nail polish or make up is allowed

Pupils arriving in make up or nail polish will be asked to remove it and will be provided with materials to do so.

Where to buy St Dunstan's uniform with embroidered logo?

Clive Mark in Kings Heath, Poplar road, Birmingham, B14 7AD

www.clivemark.co.uk

My Clothing, part of Tesco Direct. Search for our school by postcode **B14 7LP** <https://myclothing.com/school-uniform/11690.school>

[School Uniform Direct www.sud.co.uk](http://www.sud.co.uk) Flier enclosed, multibuy offers available

Most uniform staples, as mentioned above, can be purchased at George at Asda, Tesco's, Next and Sainsbury's etc.

Pre-Loved Uniform

Each year we have opportunities throughout the year for donated and second hand uniform to be shared with parents (we will advise you of this in school newsletters). At the end of each term, we send pre-loved uniform looking for a new home to the **Rubery Uniform Swop Shop** (<https://www.ruberyswopshop.co.uk/schools>) if parents want to be more sustainable and get some perfectly good, second hand logo uniform items.

Families do not have to take an item to swop - you can just request items you need for free, that includes wellies, trainers, coats etc... See [Uniform Swap Shop Flyer](#)

Attendance Policy & Procedure

Introduction

The Governors and staff at St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School are united in their belief that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Helping them to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School values all children. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the barriers to achieving and maintaining excellent attendance and offer the right service at the right time to try to resolve any difficulties.

The Attendance Leader (Mr Tehan - Headteacher) and Attendance Officer (Mrs Finnegan) will monitor attendance and use attendance data to identify any patterns of concern, whilst also celebrating success! Attendance concerns will be raised with parents if reasons are not known by the school, e.g. a long period of illness, this information may be shared with the Local Authority following concerns. Where we have concerns, or lack of engagement from families to improve attendance, we will follow the schools escalated approach to improving attendance. The schools escalated approach is child-centred and prioritises support and developing strong working relationships with families. We will use the early help process to provide support prior to escalation and consider how we can work with families to enable your child to access their right to education.

Our aim is to always to work in partnership with parents and any referral for consideration of a penalty notice is deemed to be a last resort at St Dunstan's Catholic. Attendance figures for each child will be reported to parents as part of the annual report, we will also share a child's attendance profile if we have concerns regarding a child's attendance. Throughout the school year the Attendance Team will report on the overall attendance figures for children groups, this will be closely monitored for support and reported to the Governing Body.

To support good attendance, and safe-guarding, at St Dunstan's Catholic School we:

- Ensure the school is welcoming and every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Ensure the school site is open at the stated times.
- Ensure the regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance is complete by every class teacher each day. This further supports our approach to safe-guarding within the school.
- Take safeguarding seriously and we will always contact you on the first day that your child is absent from school, this includes before and after-school clubs. If your child arrives late after the close of registration, we will record their arrival at reception and transition the child to class.
- Consider any requests for leave in term time individually. This will be aligned to the Local Authority code of conduct.
- Notify the Local Authority within 5 days if a new child is joining the school roll.
- Inform the Local Authority of children whose parents have notified the school in writing and have opted for Elective Home Education.
- Work closely with the School Attendance Support Team.
- Notify the Local Authority of Children Missing in Education – aligned to the DfE 2022 Attendance paper.

Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family.

These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

Please refer to section 6 of the DfE Working together to improve school attendance 2022 for more information.

Children at risk of Missing in Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) are a vulnerable group of children. All agencies who work with children have a duty to support the Local Authority in ensuring all children are safe and looked after appropriately.

CME includes those children who are **missing** (family whereabouts unknown), and are children who are registered on a school roll / alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address **and either**

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
- has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

It is our responsibility as a school to work with the LA Education and Inclusion team, by making referrals.

Celebrating Success

At St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School we feel it is important to reward children who have achieved good or improved attendance. Attendance is monitored every four weeks and parents informed of the outcome. We notify parents of our whole school attendance percentage in our newsletter and advise you when we have school attendance focus weeks. The weekly 96% Attendance challenge allows classes to celebrate their collective attendance successes. When a class achieves 96% or above, they will receive a token, when they collect 6 tokens, they can enjoy a movie afternoon! St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School will always challenge falling attendance and reward improvements. We are committed to the future of all children that attend St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School, and by working in partnership with the school community we believe that together we can achieve more!

We can only achieve this by working in partnership with you, if you have any concerns or anything that prevents your child from attending St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School please contact Mr Tehan, Headteacher and Attendance Leader.

Roles and Responsibilities

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School expectations – Parents:

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend the Academy regularly and may risk prosecution if they fail in this responsibility.
- Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, with the correct equipment and in full school uniform.
- Parents should support the school by avoiding, if possible, non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.
- Parents should be aware that they do not

We will use a 19-day tracking system to make you aware of the number of days your child has missed in education. This will allow us to work together to reduce the number of days and attempt to prevent your child from reaching this number.

Once a child has reached 38 sessions, or 19 days absence, they will be classified as Persistently Absent from school and we will report this to the Local Authority and follow external legal proceedings.

Statutory Duty

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and ability and 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.

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. St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School recognises Birmingham City Council's 'FastTrack on Attendance' and will implement prosecution where it is fair and equitable to do so.

In accordance with the regulations regarding pupils' attendance at school, St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School keeps an attendance register on which at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session children are marked present or absent. The marks are electronically processed and stored on the school's central administrative system, SIMS. This information is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

Legal Sanctions

There are several sanctions that school can take to address the issue of non-attendance. To try and identify the reason for absence we will always talk to you St Dunstan's Catholic to identify the reason for absence. St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School will always ensure the escalated process map is followed, focusing on the support a child needs at each stage (please access on the school website). However, for lack of engagement in

attendance support there are sanctions that will be followed:

Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A child is absent from school for the purpose of a Leave of Absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A child has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further absence has occurred following written warning to improve

Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

Prosecution

Where intervention through the school's process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the local authority will be notified and legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444/4441 (a) of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child's attendance at school.

Section 4441(a) of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A whole school approach to supporting attendance at St Dunstan's Catholic School

Securing good attendance at St Dunstan's Catholic School cannot be achieved in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve working closely with other Leaders within the school. The Attendance Leader will work alongside teachers, Phase Leaders, SENDCo and Pupil Premium Leader to facilitate a whole school approach.

The Strategic Approach

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School adopts the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework, this is modelled on the work of Professor Katherine Weare. The emphasis is on developing a school culture and climate which builds a sense of connectedness and belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive. The approach ensures we prioritise building solid working relationships with children, and parents, prior to escalation. The staged approach we follow ensures we identify triggers early that can lead to poor attendance issues such as mental health issues, lack of trust, communication and relationship breakdowns and the possible lack of networking opportunities both internal (in-school) and external (external agencies).

Aims of the 5 Foundations Strategy

- Increase school Attendance and reduce Persistent Absence to meet set targets.
- Ensure Attendance is well managed within the school, with the appropriate level of resources allocated.
- Enable the school to make informed use of attendance data to target interventions appropriately,
- focusing on the key demographic groups highlighted in the 2022 DFE attendance paper.

Objectives

- create an ethos within the school in which good attendance is recognised as the norm and every child aims for excellent attend-

ance.

- make attendance and punctuality a priority.
- set focused targets to improve individual attendance and whole school attendance levels.
- embed the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks with respect to promoting attendance and punctuality.
- record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
- develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing relevant attendance data.
- provide support, advice and guidance to; parents, children and develop mutual cooperation between home and the school in encouraging good attendance and in addressing identified attendance issues.
- Demonstrate, using rewards, that the school recognises good attendance and punctuality are achievements in themselves.

5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice

The main aim of the framework is to ensure the school promotes a culture of good attendance and celebrates success. Ultimately, the framework will ensure there is a culture of feeling safe and school being a place where children want to be.

Positive health and emotional well-being are key factors in improving social development, school attendance and educational achievement. The 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice model promotes, and supports, a whole school approach to mental health and emotional well-being; ensuring SEMH support remains a key driver in improving attendance for all children.

Each Foundation is supported by 5 Key Performance Indicators, these are used to ensure the school can

embed the Foundations framework and understand the strategic direction regarding attendance improvement. Each year the school will use the 5 Foundations self-assessment tool to understand what works well and identify what we need to do even better. We then follow the 5 Foundations School Improvement Process to implement the attendance plan and ultimately improve the lives of children and families we work with.



The school has a fully embedded ethos in which excellent school attendance is expected, developed and nurtured. The escalated

approach to supporting attendance is built on foundations of belonging and connectedness.



The approach to improving attendance is built on clear policies, systems and processes. This ensures continuous and sustainable improvement drives attendance

practice. The attendance policy is understood by all stakeholders and allows the school to set, and maintain, high expectations to improve the culture of attendance.



The school prioritises developing a team of attendance experts, with a shared vision and core purpose. The Attendance Leader delivers bespoke

training to support all staff to fully understand their role in improving attendance. External partnerships support attendance improvements through a multi-disciplinary approach for identified children and families.



Data information and analysis direct resources proactively towards key demographic groups and identified individuals. The expert use of data analysis informs decision making at

all levels. The attendance process ensures the Attendance Leader understands the reason for attendance concerns, these barriers can then be successfully supported and removed.



Connecting and belonging drives the school approach to supporting attendance. All staff are supported to understand 'deeper roots'

regarding poor attendance concerns. The school has developed, and embedded, an effective rewards system to further drive attendance improvements and celebrate success.

Transition following long term absence or illness

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of children's learning.

During any long-term absence, St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School will:

- Maintain contact with the child.
- Carefully plan the transition back to school, ensuring your child feels welcome and gains a sense of belonging.
- Ensure the child once again feels safe in school and if they experience any concerns, they will have an appointed member of staff to work with.
- The Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant will support a child when returning to class and help them with any work they may have missed.

Leave during Term Time

From 1st September 2013, the Government amended the England (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Head teachers may only grant leave in 'exceptional circumstances' only. St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School observes Birmingham City Councils 'Leave in Term Time Guidance for Schools and Academies'. Parents wishing to apply for leave during term time must send a written request (Request Form) for the attention of the Headteacher before making any arrangements. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each leave during term time request will be considered on an individual basis.

If a child fails to return and contact with the parent has not been made or received, school may take the child off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil registration, England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child may lose their school place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the child is still absent from school, the absence will be **unauthorised**. In such cases the school may consider legal action.

Only in **exceptional circumstances** will absence be agreed. In such cases, consideration will be given to the cultural needs and the family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases, granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the leave needs to be taken during term time.

Using attendance data

Children's attendance will be monitored and shared with other agencies and the DfE. Weekly attendance meetings will be held between the Attendance Leader and the Attendance Team. Meetings will focus on agreed actions for those children of concern. The purpose of each meeting will be to understand the progress the school is making when supporting identified individuals or groups of children. Attendance data will be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment. It is the responsibility of school Governors to challenge and support the school regarding overall attendance, regular reports will be presented to this body. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided for them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as can be.

Persistent Absence

At St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School we aim to communicate the importance of attendance with parents and children. We have a particular focus on reducing Persistent Absenteeism at the school. The Persistent Absence threshold for children is currently 10% and Ofsted will use this threshold in its inspection of schools. The threshold means that any child will be classed as Persistently Absent when they have missed 38 or more sessions. This equates to 19, or more, missed days during the academic year - which is as little as 6 days over each of the three Terms. This also equates to the equivalent of 1 day of absence, or more, a fortnight across a full school year

Parents are responsible for securing full-time education

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children receive a full-time education. Each situation will be dealt with on an individual basis, fairly and equitably always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The term ‘parent’ includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children’s Act 1989 or have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1996.

- Absence can only be authorised by the school; parents do not have this authority. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless satisfactory evidence for the child’s absence has been received. In the first instance contact from the parent will be accepted as evidence. However, if a child’s attendance continues to cause concern, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where absences occur repeatedly due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescriptions etc. Absence may be coded as unauthorised without evidence.
- Parents should make all medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible because of emergency treatment, children should attend school for part of the day. Appointment cards should always be provided as evidence of medical/dental appointments.
- Unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it has been accepted by the school, absence will not be authorised.

Please view the list of responsibilities and expectations regarding parents.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A child’s/family member’s birthday.
- Shopping for uniform.

- Having their hair cut.
- Closure of a sibling’s school for INSET or other purposes.
- “Couldn’t get up”.
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school without medical authority and in the absence of a communicable disease.
- Leave during term time taken without authorisation of the school
- Head lice – let the school know and letters will then be sent to all parents in a confidential manner.

Punctuality

Doors open for children at 08:35am, the class register is taken between 8.35 and 8.50am. Arrivals after 8.50am will be marked **late** in the Official Register, the Register will close at 09:15 am. Late marks will not be authorised and will count as an absence for the school morning session. Punctuality is recorded and this will be added to your child’s official record of attendance, a letter will be sent to parents every half term regarding attendance concerns of a child.

If a child arrives at school from 09:15am they will be recorded as **late after the register closed (U code)**, which is classed as a statistical absence by the Department of Education. This absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, evidence of attendance at an urgent medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if a child has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

DFE Summary of Expectations	Foundation 1 Whole School Thinking Culture & Climate	Foundation 2 Supervise, Protect, Support and Progress	Foundation 3 Professional Learning Staff Development	Foundation 4 Implement Targeted Programmes And Intervention	Foundation 5 Converge Responsively With Behaviour Management
Develop a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.					
Have a school attendance policy					
Have day-to-day processes to follow up absence					
Monitor and analyse data to identify those that need support					
Engage with families, understand barriers to attendance and work together to remove them					
Provide additional support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND					
Share information and work collaboratively with others					
A new focus on persistent and severe absence					
Find out what the DfE expects from other stakeholders					

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School will always work in partnership with our parents

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life and their lived experience. This may be related to problems at home or in school. Parents should inform the 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, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional early help that may be required. Safeguarding is a priority, concerns for any child at any time will be reported to the Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection Mr Tehan. We will always follow the most current edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education and our Child Protection Policy.

Some children are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, children who are vulnerable, have a medical need or EHCP plan will be monitored and supported in school. At St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School we will proactively identify and follow up on a child's non-attendance and gather information about the child. This will result in taking early action to prevent non-attendance developing and monitoring the impact of targeted support.

The Attendance Officer will initially:

- Check records, including any from other schools which the child has attended previously.
- Discuss with staff how the child is coping with the curriculum
- Speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to establish whether the child is on the Special Educational needs register.
- Take into account the voice of the child and understand any difficulties, e.g. curriculum or bullying and their views on the issue could be addressed.

- Children whose attendance falls below 90% are Persistently Absent from school, where a child falls under 50% attendance the child will be classified as a Severely Absent child. Ultimately this will indicate that all intervention, and support, offered by St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School has not made the expected impact to improve overall attendance. Where attendance remains a concern and all other interventions and support have not made a significant impact, we will escalate with external partners.

Attendance Support Map. (overleaf)

We will always support children during each stage of our Attendance Support Map. If there is lack of engagement, or concerns regarding the reason for absence, we will follow the Attendance Map to ensure we prioritise a child's learning and their right to education.

First Day Contact

At St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School we expect our parents to make contact at the earliest opportunity on the first day of any absence. We will always contact you via text message first, then by calling you. Where we have on-going concerns regarding your child's attendance, we will visit your home address and write to you. We may even invite you to meet with a member of staff to discuss any on-going concerns regarding attendance. It is important that you talk to us first; you are legally responsible under Education Act 1996 for ensuring that your child is in school every day and on time.

If we cannot make contact with you, we will continue to make announced and unannounced home visits, regarding any concerns we may have surrounding attendance at St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School.

Attendance Support Map

