

# St Richard's Catholic College

## Attendance Policy (for Parents)



**The Policy was approved by the Governing Body: September 2018**

**Chair of Governors:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Governing Body will review the policy in September 2019**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **ST RICHARD'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE**

This policy reflects the vision and aims of St Richard's Catholic College by

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents/carers and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ❖ Providing clear procedures for involving parents/carers relating to college attendance.

#### **Principles**

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at college, on time, every day the college is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from college without a good reason is a legal offence by a parent/carer.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend college. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the college, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the college, **not by the parents/carers**, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, and can be communicated via EduLink.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from college for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the college does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:**

- ❖ **parents/carers keeping children off college unnecessarily**
- ❖ **truancy before or during the college day**
- ❖ **absences which have never been properly explained**
- ❖ **children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**
- ❖ **holidays in term time**

Parents/carers are expected to contact the college at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the college may refer the child to the Education and Welfare Service. This service will try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, they can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

## **Procedures**

The college applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

### **Attendance**

Parents are requested to contact the Attendance Officer, Mrs Helena Jones, on the first day of a pupil's absence – this can be via Edulink. Pupils are required to bring a note explaining any absence. Telephone calls must be followed by a note when the child returns to college. When it is known that a pupil is likely to be away for more than a few days, parents should inform the college prior to the absence.

We monitor all pupils' attendance rates and, in cases of long term (absences of 3 days or more) or frequent absence, the college would need a note medical evidence to avoid the absence being unauthorised.

### **Leave of absence**

Please be aware that holiday requests will not be authorised in term time. Permission for pupils to go on holiday or to participate in extra-curricular activities during term time will only be given in exceptional cases, and not as a matter of course. If the request is not authorised then a Penalty Notice may be issued. The penalty is £120 per parent per child. If you pay within 21 days, it is reduced to £60. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid this will result in further legal intervention.

**The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children or day trips. Leave, however, may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which have to be in school time. However, as far as possible, all medical appointments should be made for the end of the school day.**

## **Information about individual college targets, projects and special initiatives**

The college has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

- Attendance target: 96% whole school
- We have a rewards system in place for good attendance. At the end of the winter, spring and summer terms, pupils who have achieved 100% attendance will receive a certificate. Pupils who achieve 100% attendance for the whole year will receive a voucher as well as a certificate. Pupils who significantly improve their attendance are also acknowledged.
- Attendance Games - termly competition designed to reward pupils for attendance without penalizing them for having unavoidable time off. By attending more often, pupils increase their chance of winning a cinema voucher.

### **Those staff responsible for attendance matters in this college are:**

Principal - Miss D Cronin

Vice-Principal - Mrs D Bligh

LMT link for Attendance - Mr J Campbell

Pastoral Leaders –

Mr J Bligh (Year 7)

Mr J Steele (Year 8)

Mr T Holloway (Year 9)

Mr J Campbell (Year 10)

Mr R Doherty (Year 11)

Attendance Officer - Mrs H Jones

Education Welfare Officer – Mr G Mayhew