



# Policy

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# Attendance

Published: October 2011  
For Review: 2012–13





# Our Purpose

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The work of the school is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of each pupil. It seeks to put Christ at the centre of every activity, worship, learning and service to others.

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**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body**

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Lavery', written over a horizontal line.

Mr R Lavery, Chair of Governing Body

Date:

5/10/2011

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### **APPENDICES:**

**Appendix 1:** North West Leeds Schools Application for Absence in Term Time

**Appendix 2:** Attendance Strategy Team Process for Managing Irregular School Attendance

## 1. Principles of the Policy

This policy has the school's mission statement central to its implementation. The mission statement is:-

*"The work of the school is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and development of each pupil. It seeks to put Christ at the centre of every activity: worship, learning and service to others."*

Attendance at lessons is central to raising pupil achievement. In 2011, of the students achieving 5 or more GCSE A\*-C passes, including English and Maths, 86% had an attendance above 90%. As a consequence of this direct correlation between attendance and achievement we have set a school attendance target of 95%.

## 2. Classification

Every half day absence from school is classified as either **Authorised** or **Unauthorised**.

**Authorised** absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason.

**Unauthorised** absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given.

## 3. Procedures for Absence

As a school, St. Mary's follows the guidelines agreed by the North West Area Inclusion Partnership. For absence requests in term time see Appendix 1.

Once school receives the completed application for absence in term time, a response is then sent to parents, authorising the leave of absence or an explanation as to why, on this particular occasion, it has not been permitted.

For unexpected absences parents are asked to inform school on the morning their child is absent, providing an explanation via telephone.

If a parent has not informed school of an absence they will be contacted via the 'Keep Kids Safe' text messaging service.

When a pupil returns to school, parents are asked to provide a written explanation via the message board in the pupil planner. When this information is received, registers are amended accordingly.

The Pastoral Team will liaise with the Headteacher to discuss any individual circumstances which they feel allow special consideration.

## 4. Procedures for Pupils who are late to school

Any pupil who is not in school by 8.35am will be marked absent.

On arrival at school, the pupil will register with Pupil Reception, providing a reason for the late arrival.

If a pupil is persistently late then they will be placed in a lunchtime detention (on that same day) for the appropriate length of time. Parents are informed of this reoccurring problem.

Any pupil who needs to leave the premises during the school day must have a signed note from parents. As the pupil leaves school, they complete the signing out book in Pupil Reception and are issued with 'Time Out: Authorised Absence Pass' (Pink Slip).

## **5. Monitoring Procedures**

Registers are regularly monitored by the Inclusion Manager and members of the Pastoral Team. Pupils identified as having patterns of absence or poor attendance, are then placed on a First Day Call Out list. Consequently, school will contact parents the first day of any unexplained absence.

As a school, we have identified attendance below 85% as an issue and will advise parents in writing of our concerns at this stage. If the situation does not improve, we may invite parents into school to discuss the matter.

If attendance falls below 80%, despite early intervention by the school, we will refer to the Attendance Strategy Team (AST).

Where there are significant family issues affecting attendance, the case may be referred to the Attendance Strategy Team for more in depth support. A referral is made via the Cluster Allocation Targeted Services Group. (see Appendix 2 for AST procedures. NB - In the process of being updated by Leeds City Council)

Where there have been long periods of absence for medical reasons, a reintegration programme is arranged for the pupil by the school, in discussion with the parent (school based).

Where pupils are unable to attend school, liaison takes place with the Home and Hospital Teaching Service to access their education provision on a short term basis.

Monitoring in all these cases continues by the Pastoral staff on a weekly basis.

Returns are made to Leeds City Council on a half termly basis.

Attendance data is included in our school prospectus and reported termly to the Governors.

## **6. Sixth Form Attendance**

By law we do not have to report on Sixth Form attendance. However, records need to be kept for funding arrangements, references and internal moderating procedures.

Sixth Form students who are assigned to a lower school form, will be registered in their form groups. Other Sixth Form students will be registered in their first subject lessons.

A register must be taken in all subject lessons as this will be the basis for monitoring pupils. If a pupil is absent, or the subject teacher is suspicious about an absence, then the Head of Department should be informed. Departments have a responsibility to encourage students to attend their lessons and must follow up absences where there is no known reason.

Student Progress Leaders and the Pastoral Manager will follow up poor attendance and punctuality.

For unexpected absences, parents are asked to inform school on the morning their child is absent, providing an explanation via telephone. Parents will be contacted via the 'Keep Kids Safe' messaging service if a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided for the absence.

Any pupil leaving school must inform the Sixth Form office and sign out at Pupil Reception.

Year 13 pupils may leave the premises for home study after their last contact lesson.

## **7. Rewarding Attendance**

Outstanding or improved attendance is rewarded annually in the school's Award Assembly at the end of each year.

## Appendix 1

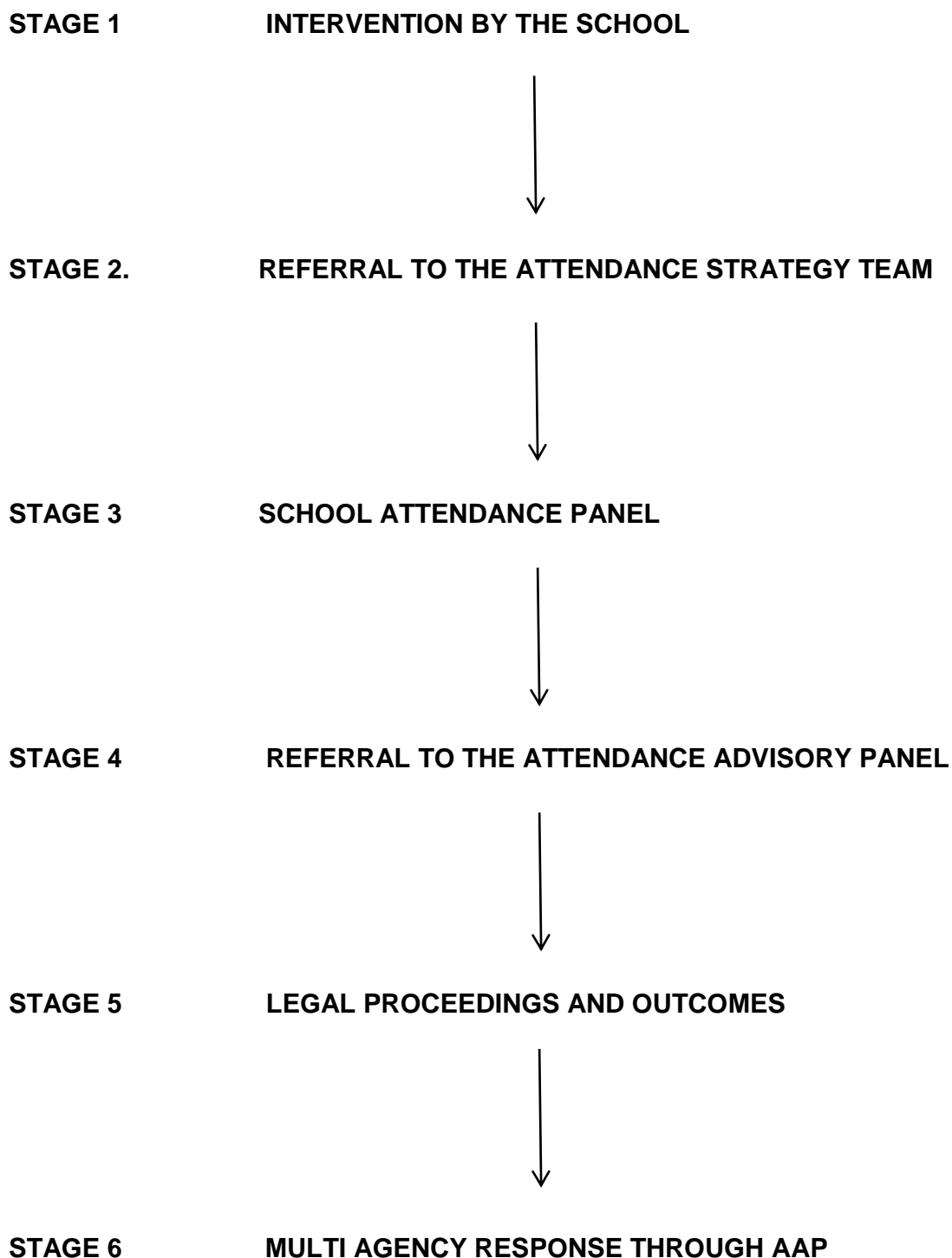


NORTH WEST LEEDS SCHOOLS  
APPLICATION FOR ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

|  |  |                                      |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Name of School:<br><b>St. Mary's Catholic High School, Menston</b>   |  | DfE Number:<br><b>383 4601</b>       |                                      |
| <p>Parents, you <b>do not</b> have the right to take your child out of school during term time. By law you must ask permission for your child to miss school. If you fail to gain the school's permission you risk receiving a fixed penalty fine. <b>The fine is £50 if paid within 28 days, doubling to £100 if paid after 28 days and applies to each child for which permission has been refused.</b> All schools in the north-west area of Leeds have agreed to follow a common policy on absence during term time. Good attendance leads to improved outcomes for your child.</p> <p>If you would like to apply for permission for your child to be absent from school you must complete this form and return it to the school for authorisation at least 10 school days in advance of the proposed leave.</p> |  |                                      |                                      |
| <b>PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)</b>   |  |                                      |                                      |
| Surname of child   |  | First name                           |                                      |
| Date of birth  |  | Year Group                           |                                      |
| Surname of parent/carer  |  | First name                           |                                      |
| Address of child   |  |                                      |                                      |
| Postcode   |  | Telephone number                     |                                      |
| <p>Parents must seek approval to withdraw their child from school in term-time. Please state the <b>exceptional circumstances</b> that require you to apply to take your child out of school during term time instead of making arrangements for the proposed activity to take place during the school holidays. <b>The cost, convenience or availability of a particular holiday will not be taken into consideration.</b></p>  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Would (s)he miss any national tests or examinations?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Is her/his attendance already below 90% or a previously agreed individual target?  |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Is the requested absence during the month of September?  |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Would (s)he be absent for more than ten school days?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Has (s)he already had leave during term time this year?  |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| If your child has had absence during term time approved during this school year please state the number of days previously agreed.   |  |                                      | Days                                 |
| Does your child have any siblings for which you are requesting absence in term time in other schools?  |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| If you have answered yes to the previous question please state which schools your other child(ren) attend.   |  |                                      |                                      |
| Length of absence (school days)  |  | From (date) To (date)                |                                      |
| Emergency telephone contact in the Leeds district  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Parent/Carer signature   |  |                                      |                                      |
| <b>For school use only – The cost, convenience or availability of a holiday must not be taken into consideration</b>   |  |                                      |                                      |
| Does the absence requested occur in September?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Does the absence occur during a period of national tests or exams?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Is the child's attendance below 90% or an individually agreed target?  |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| If this request is approved will the child's absence exceed 10 days in this school year?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Has the child had 2 days absence this year for religious observance?   |  |                                      | Yes    No                            |
| Has the child got siblings in another school for which an absence has been requested?  |  | Yes    No                            | Other school contacted?    Yes    No |
| <b>Signed:</b>   |  | <b>ABSENCE APPROVED    No    Yes</b> |                                      |

## Appendix 2

### ATTENDANCE STRATEGY TEAM PROCESS FOR MANAGING IRREGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DOCUMENT FOR SCHOOLS AND ATTENDANCE STRATEGY TEAM OFFICERS

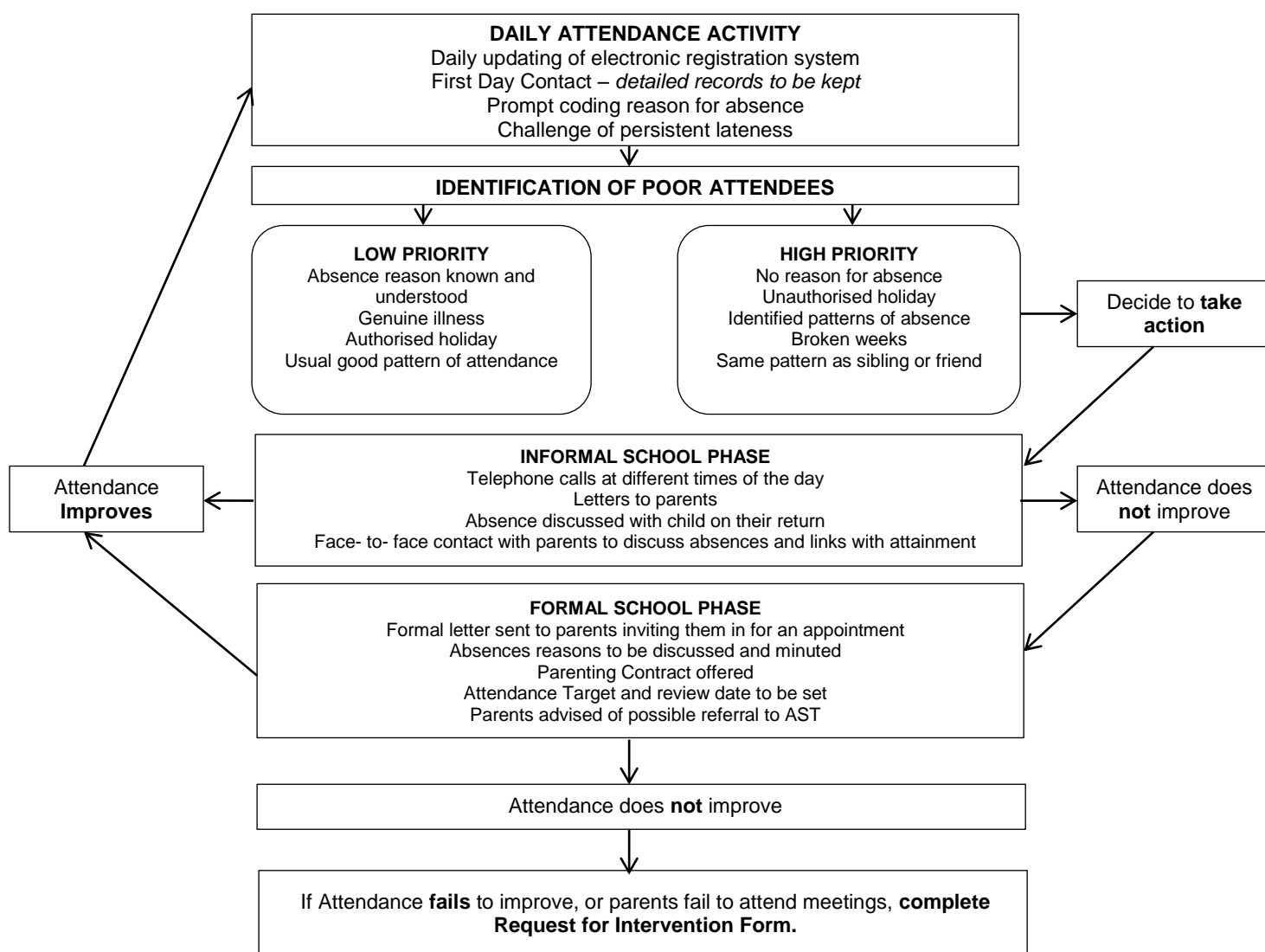


## STAGE 1 ADVICE / GUIDANCE (Attendance Issues Dealt With by School)

All schools are responsible for their own attendance. Every school should have a current effective Attendance Policy detailing the procedures and systems for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes for poor school attendance. There should be a clear escalation of intervention within the school which is understood by all teaching and non-teaching staff.

The minimum intervention that must be carried out and evidenced before making a referral to Attendance Strategy Team includes:

- First day contact procedures
- Letters to parents informing them of their child's absences
- Telephone calls at other times of the day (if no response to morning calls)
- Face-to-face contact with parents
- Formal letter to invite parents to attend a meeting to discuss the reasons for their child's absences (**essential evidence**)
- Parenting Contract to be offered, if appropriate



## Stage 2 flowchart

