

St. Gabriel's R.C. Primary School



*As part of God's family, living,
loving and learning together
to be the best that we can be!*

Attendance Policy

St. Gabriel's R.C. Primary School – Attendance Policy

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Mission Statement



**As part of God's family,
living, loving and learning
together to be the best
that we can be!**

Our aim is to make our school a place where:

- Catholic values and beliefs are promoted and upheld
- the Christian message of love is communicated through our relationships with others
- children learn in a safe and happy environment
- parents are warmly welcomed and are treated as partners in their child's learning
- achievement is at the core of our school
- challenging but realistic targets are set for all to develop the full potential of every learner
- we celebrate our successes.

Our aim is that each child will develop:

- a loving relationship with God and share this through their relationships with others
- the confidence to express themselves clearly and grow in self-esteem
- a love for learning and a high standard of personal achievement
- courteous behaviour and consideration for others, learning to recognise and appreciate the achievements of others
- an appreciation of, and support for, our parish and the wider community to enable them to become responsible citizens.

Aims

- For all children to attend school as often as possible (95% or better).
- For the average attendance to be above 95%.
- Everyone in school has a responsibility to improve or maintain excellent attendance and adults in school should model these expectations as well as encouraging them (i.e. by not being late to class or to pick up the children from the playground).

Introduction

St. Gabriel's RC Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. It is therefore the responsibility of everyone at St. Gabriel's to monitor and support attendance and to investigate problems, which lead to non-attendance.

The school expects parental responsibility to extend beyond mere attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. Also, parents need to instil into their children a respect for education and for those who deliver it and also stress the need to observe the school rules and contribute to the positive ethos that is desired.

School's Roles and Responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at St. Gabriel's have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

At St. Gabriel's, the headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The headteacher will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with relevant personnel; pupils and parents are regularly reminded about the importance of good school attendance and data may be used to reinforce this. A report is prepared for the governing body, termly. The headteacher will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Daily Actions

- School starts at 8:55am (school doors open from 8:45am).
- Registration is done online on Sims as soon as possible after 8:50am.
- School doors close as soon as possible after 8:55am. Any child arriving late needs to be brought to the school office so that they can be signed into the late register and the reason for their late arrival recorded. They also need to let the office know what they are doing for lunch.
- Any child arriving in class after 9:00am should be given a late mark (L) in the register.

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- If a child is absent, school should be informed as soon as possible so that the reason for their absence is known and can be recorded in the register correctly.
- If we do not hear why a child is absent by 9:30am, the school office will begin to make calls or send text messages to find the reason for your child's absence.
- If the class teacher is told directly they must put the correct code in the online register.
- The class teacher is responsible for the correct administration of the register and must put the correct code in wherever possible.
- They should also check correct information has been entered when doing the next register and take steps to correct it if not. Failure to complete the register correctly may result in disciplinary action.
- During the phone conversation we may ask if there is any support or help we can provide to help your child attend school or any difficulties we should be aware of in the interests of your child's safety and attendance at school.
- If we feel it is appropriate, we have an obligation to suggest when a child should really be at school rather than keeping them off school.
- The school does not have to accept reasons given for absence and may ask for proof of doctors or other appointments. Even when provided with a reason or evidence we may record absence as unauthorised if we believe it to be the correct course of action.
- For the afternoon sessions all these actions are repeated at 1:10pm for Foundation Phase, 1:25pm KS2

At all times we will act in a fair and consistent manner, adhering to the principles within South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) area

Categorising Absence

A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked as having **unauthorised absence**, unless leave has been granted by the school in advance, or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the headteacher.

St. Gabriel's recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at St. Gabriel's will discuss with parents the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the Headteacher / Governing Body.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 1 week, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Absence **will be authorised** in the following circumstances:

1. where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –

- to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,

- a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence, the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered.
2. where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
 3. where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand);
 4. where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
 5. in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences **will be unauthorised**. Some reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- family holiday;
- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, eg a birthday;
- visiting relatives;
- looking after brothers or sisters.

The headteacher will contact parents of children whose absences are thought to be excessive for whatever reason. A child who has been temporarily excluded from school will be deemed to be an authorised absence.

Weekly actions

Every week attendance is totalled and the best class are given an extra 5 mins break and this is announced within Fridays Praise assembly. If a class has a child with very significantly poor attendance that child is excluded from the weekly totals so as not to discourage the rest of the class.

Half termly actions

At least monthly, pupils whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern are identified and the parents contacted and sent letters (see below).

Other actions

Children with attendance below 90% will be highlighted by staff at parent's evenings (from a list given by attendance co-ordinator). Staff are not meant to talk in detail about attendance but should point out the impact this will have on the child's progress. If the parent wishes to discuss attendance further at parent's evenings they should come and talk to the headteacher if available or make an appointment to meet with him as soon as practical.

Positive rewards

Each half term, there will be a reward session on the last afternoon for any child with 100% attendance that half term. This is done on a term-by-term basis so every child has an equal chance of gaining the award each half term.

The rewards are planned and decided by the School Development Ministry and are currently planned as follows (these may be subject to change during the year):

- Hot chocolate with the Headteacher
- Lucky Dip prizes chosen and wrapped by Ministry Leaders.
- Film with popcorn
- Sports afternoon

All the above rewards should not penalise children with regular medical appointments and, as such, any absences recorded as 'M' will not count against rewards. However this does not mean dentist appointments and other appointments that could have been made out of school hours will be encouraged and parents should make every effort to make those appointments at other times

Collection and analysis of data

The headteacher will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to relevant school personnel, parents and the governing body. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

Attendance is monitored for each pupil; where relevant, it is analysed and discussed with all appropriate parties, including the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) each half-term.

Systems and Strategies for Managing and Improving Attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at St. Gabriel's and is discussed at assemblies, SLT meetings, staff meetings, meetings for parents and in governing body meetings. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes and before 9:30am will receive a 'late' mark. After 9:30am it will be an authorised or unauthorised absence. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Where a pupil arrives late for school, but before the register closes parents / carers are asked to sign the late book, with reasons for the lateness. Persistent lateness will be followed up by a letter / meeting with those concerned and strategies suggested to improve the matter. The matter is referred to the Education Welfare Service if no improvement is seen.

For Health and Safety reasons, it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day, are collected from /returned to the Office area. Parents / Carers are asked to sign their children out in the Signing Out book and do not go to the classrooms.

Parent Letters

After a monthly meeting between the headteacher and the EWO, letters are sent home to parents whose child's attendance is below 90% to inform them of the actual attendance to date and ask for improvements to be made. The EWO will send letters to parents whose children's attendance is consistently below 90% and have not made any improvements after a school letter has been sent.

Letters are also sent home to parents whose children were previously below 90% but have made improvements. These letters inform parents of their child's attendance to date and that the school is still monitoring.

Extended Leave of Absence

Where parents request an extended trip overseas to visit family (where this is the country of their origin) an appointment must be made with the headteacher to complete the Extended Leave of Absence form. This form states that a pupil will kept on the school roll for up to 4 weeks, but after this period of a time a child can be taken off roll and their place taken by another child.

Parents' / Carers' Responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by St. Gabriel's.

St. Gabriel's RC Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents are also expected to:

- notify school on the first day of absence; a telephone call is sufficient. We ask that children are not asked to relay a message about another child's absence, or reasons for it.
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations and taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. St. Gabriel's will endeavour to support parents to address any concerns.

Pupils' Responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.

Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. Parents may wish to confirm the reasons for any absence by sending in a letter when the child returns to school. Providing a telephone call has been made at the start of the absence, a follow-up letter is not obligatory. In cases of prolonged absence, a letter may be requested, in addition to the initial telephone call. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

Governors' Responsibilities

The governing body of St. Gabriel's shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Following Welsh Government Legislation, Newport City Council has adopted a Code of Conduct which allows the Local Authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the parents of pupils who lose five school days or ten school sessions which are unauthorised.

Issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice:

- A Fixed Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence;
- Fixed Penalty Notices will be restricted to one notice per parent of a pupil in an academic year;
- In cases where there is more than one poorly-attending pupil in a family, notices may be issued for more than one child;
- There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent may receive a formal warning of a possible Fixed Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate when:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays; or
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival;
- Truancy, where the child has come to the attention of the Police or public during school hours for being absent from school, without an acceptable reason.

Fixed Penalty Notices are currently set at £60 and must be paid within 28 days. Non-payment within this timeframe results in a total penalty of £120. Non-payment of fines will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

An EWO is attached to the Catholic Cluster of schools in Newport and visits the school each month to inspect class registers and to discuss any problems regarding attendance or lateness. As well as acting on problems of lateness or absence, the EWO may be asked to act as a liaison

officer between school and home and Social Services. St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School regards the role of the EWO as being vital in terms of social liaison. The EWO also send letters home regarding lateness or absence and conducts monthly 'late sweeps'.

Truancy

All staff at St. Gabriel's are concerned with each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Action must be taken at once if there is any concern that a child might be truanting. If truancy is suspected the headteacher must be informed immediately. The headteacher will then contact the parents by telephone and also inform the EWO.

Parents will also be asked to bring their child to school for discussion to ascertain the reasons for truanting with a view to resolving the problem. If discussion with parents is not possible the class teacher and headteacher will talk to the child to ascertain whether or not school-related issues concern the child and are the source of the problem. If so, appropriate action will be taken.

Reporting

Individual pupil attendance will be recorded on end of term reports. Overall attendance information will also be recorded in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents and School Prospectus. The school identifies an annual target for attendance each year and endeavours to meet this

Appendix 1

Key to Attendance Codes

The recommended codes are grouped under the following 5 statistical categories:

- present; approved educational activity (treated as present); authorised absence; unauthorised absence; not required to attend.

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
A	Present at registration	present
L	Late but arrived before the register closed	present
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)	approved educational activity
D	Dual registered (ie present at another school or at a PRU)	approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	approved educational activity
J	Interview	approved educational activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered elsewhere)	authorised absence
F	Agreed extended family holiday	authorised absence
H	Agreed family holiday	authorised absence

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I	Illness	authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	authorised absence
S	Study leave	authorised absence
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	authorised absence
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	authorised absence
N	No reason for the absence provided yet	unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes)	unauthorised absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed or in excess of agreement)	unauthorised absence

Appendix 2



**As part of God's family, living, loving and learning together:
striving to be the best that we can be!**

ST GABRIEL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL *Ysgol Gynradd Gatholig Sant Gabriel*

Headteacher: Mrs M. Harris (BSc Hons, PGCE, NPQH)

**Ringland Circle,
Newport.
NP19 9PQ**

Tel: 01633 273937

Email: stgabriels.primary@newport.gov.uk

Web site: <https://stgabrielsreprimary.org.uk/>

REQUEST FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Name of child / children:			
Date from:	Date until:	Date until:	
Number of school days requested:			
Exceptional Reason / Special Circumstances			

Tick here ✓

	I understand that no holidays can be authorised by the school during term time and therefore absence for a holiday will be classed as 'unauthorised.'
	I am aware that I may receive a FIXED PENALTY NOTICE for taking my child out of school if the number of unauthorised absences is more than 5 days.
	I am aware that an extended period of absence is likely to adversely affect my child's academic achievement and progress.

Signature of Parent:	
Date:	

Absence will be recorded as (✓)

Authorised:	Unauthorised:
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Signature of Headteacher:	
Date:	

Appendix 3

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAY CHECKLIST

1. Who has parental responsibility over the pupil? Please name the person who has day to day care if different

Parental Responsibility.....

Day to Day care.....

2. Has the period of absence meant the pupil has missed at least 10 school sessions?

Yes/ No

3. Has the parent named in response to question 1 previously received a Fixed Penalty Notice?

Yes/No

If yes please give details:

.....
.....
.....

4. Was a request made to the school by the parent for holiday leave during the period you wish to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for?

If 'yes' what was the reason for refusal? Please attach copies of the correspondence exchanged.

If 'no' please explain why an unauthorised holiday is suspected.

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5. What is the pupil's attendance history?

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6. Does the pupil have any Special Educational Needs (SEN) and is s/he maintained on a Statement of SEN?

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7. Does the pupil have a Disability under the Equality Act 2010?

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8. What is known of the pupil's personal circumstances?

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9. Are there any exceptional circumstances that the Council should be aware of?

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10. Has the pupil had a previous holiday or long period of absence in the academic year the unauthorised holiday was taken in?

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11. Has parent been in contact with the school in relation to the absence?

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12. Has SEWC's Code of Conduct been considered?

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Appendix 4

**FIXED PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST
UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAY ABSENCE**

Registered pupil at:School

Pupil Details:

Name:MALE/FEMALE

D.O.B.

Address:

.....

.....

.....

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Mobile No:

Parent/Carer

Name:

Address (if different from above):

.....

.....

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Mobile No:

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Name:

.....

Address (if different from above):

.....

.....

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Mobile No:

Dates of Absence:

The above named pupil was absent from school on the following dates and are recorded in the school register as unauthorised. (Please attach a registration certificate showing the period)

Declaration

I am the Head teacher/Acting Head Teacher of the School named. I certify that this holiday request has been considered in line with the School Attendance Policy. To the best of my knowledge there are no exceptional circumstances to consider.

Did parents request authorisation prior to holiday: Yes / No.

School response in writing to decline authorisation of holiday: Yes / No.

PLEASE ATTACH COPIES OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

Name:

Signature:Date:

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE - Section 444, Education Act 1996

Information contained in the form will be used in legal action under the above Act relating to non-attendance at school in the event that an Education Penalty Notice is issued and remains unpaid. I request that the Local Authority consider issuing a Penalty Notice to the parent(s)* of the following pupil:

Pupil Details

Registered School.....

Name of Pupil DOB Year

Address.....

.....

Parent 1

Full name DOB.....

Address.....

Parent 2

Full name.....DOB.....

Address.....

The expression “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for him or her, or who has care of the child.

In making this request, I confirm that such action would not conflict with other intervention strategies already in place or other enforcement measures already being processed. I can also confirm that the governing body of this school has reviewed its attendance policy and agreed that this school will request the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notices in appropriate cases.

How has the parent been contacted regarding the unauthorised absences?

School Meeting ☐ Letter ☐ Telephone Call ☐

Is the family known to other Services, eg: Children’s Services, YOS, CAMHS?

Yes / No

Are there any notable circumstances to consider, eg: mental health, bereavement, family dynamics/domestic violence? Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

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Signed Designation Date:.....

Please enclose an up to date registration certificate.

FIXED Penalty Notice [S.444A EDUCATION ACT 1996]

Please read the notes below carefully.

Part 1

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, or fails to attend regularly at alternative provision, the child's parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996.

To: (Title)

(Forenames)

(Surname)

Of: (address)

(Postcode)

You are a parent/guardian of (name and address of child) (called in this notice "the pupil") who is a registered pupil at (name of school) and has been directed to attend alternative provision/ is not registered at a school but for whom the local authority has made arrangements to attend alternative educational provision.

On (date/dates)/ between (date) and (date) the pupil (name) failed to attend regularly at the (Name of) school. This notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted for the offence given above. The amount of the penalty is £60. If you pay this penalty within the time limits set out below, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence as set out in this notice.

Payment should be made within 28 days. If paid after 28 days but within 42 days the penalty is doubled to £120. Payment should be made to *insert office details* for payment and can be made in person during office opening hours, *insert opening hours* or by posting this notice with a cheque or postal order.

Late or part payments will not be accepted and no reminders will be sent. If payment is not received by (insert date 42 days from date of issue), you will be prosecuted for the offence and could be subject to a fine of up to £2,500.

This notice is issued by *name, official particulars of the post* within *insert name of LA*.

Date of issue:

Part 2

Please complete the following and return this notice with your payment to:

Insert Name & Address of LA

Name:

Address:

I attach payment in the sum of £.....

Signed:

Date:

NOTES

Contact details

If you have any queries about this notice, please contact ***insert contact details, job title and department of contact, telephone number, fax number and address***

Amount of penalty

The amount of the penalty is as follows:

If paid within 28 days £60 If paid within 42 days £120.

Code of conduct

This notice is issued in accordance with a local code of conduct (we should include the full title together with its date or Edition) drawn up by The South East Wales Consortium and ***insert L A***. Any questions or correspondence about the code should be addressed to ***name of contact, department within authority address and telephone phone number.***

Withdrawal

This notice may be withdrawn by ***inset LA name*** if it is shown that it should not have been issued to you or has not been issued to you in accordance with the SEWC code of conduct. If you believe that the notice was wrongly issued you must contact The issuing Local Authority as soon as possible to ask for it to be withdrawn, stating why you believe the notice to have been incorrectly issued.

The issuing Local Authority will consider your request and contact you to let you know whether the notice is withdrawn. If the notice is not withdrawn and you do not pay, you will be liable to prosecution for the offence.

Payment

You should complete the notice above and send or deliver it to the address given above.

Prosecution

If you do not pay the penalty, and the notice is not withdrawn, you will be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

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You will receive a separate summons for this which will give you notice of the time and date of the court hearing. You will be able to defend yourself and you would be advised to seek legal representation.

Appendix 7

Relevant legislation that relates to Fixed Penalty Notices includes:

The Children Act 1989

The definition of “parent” means all biological parents, whether they are married or not; and includes any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

The Education Act 1996

Section 7	Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age;
Section 8	Definition of compulsory school age;
Section 444(1)	Offence: Failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil;
Section 444A	Penalty notice in respect of failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil;
Section 444B	Penalty notices: supplemental;
Section 444ZA	Application of section 444 to alternative educational provision
Section 576	Meaning of “parent”

Education & Inspections Act 2006

Section 108	Duty of parent in relation to excluded pupil.
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