



# Christ Church C.E. Primary School

## Attendance Policy

<b>Date reviewed:-</b>	<b>July 2019</b>
<b>Approved by:-</b>	<b>Mrs C Hill</b>
<b>Date of Governors meeting:-</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Title of meeting:-</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Next review date:-</b>	<b>July 2020</b>

## **Rationale**

At Christ Church C.E. Primary when school is in session, we expect all children on roll to attend everyday, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Our appropriate procedures encourage the children to attend. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

We will reward those children whose attendance is excellent. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

We will work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually by:

- Reminding parents of their legal responsibility in ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Working towards a goal of 96% -100% attendance for all children
- Making parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on academic progress and attainment
- The Pastoral Manager will work with children parents/guardians to support regular attendance at Christ Church

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **School Procedures**

If your child is unable to attend school, the parent/carer should contact the school office on 01942 673667 by 9.15am. By selecting to report an absence you will be transferred to the answering service. At this point, you should leave the child's name, year group and the reason for the absence. You may also select school office if you wish to speak directly to the office staff regarding the absence.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no reason for the absence at registration then the child must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

## **Definitions**

**Authorised Absence** – This is when there is a legitimate reason which the school has been notified of. For example:- If a child has been unwell and the parent/carer telephones the school office to explain reasons for the absence prior to 9.15am.

**Unauthorised Absence** – When is a child is away from school without approval, it is classified as unauthorised. For example:- A parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours.

## **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work along with vital information from their class teacher. Late arrivals disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing for the child. This in itself can encourage absence.

Children are expected by the school to be ready for the start of the day at 8.55am. Doors open at 8.45am. Any child arriving after 8.55 am will be marked late. Arrival after 9.30am will be recorded as unauthorised unless a valid reason is given.

If the child is attending a medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. All appointment cards for dentist/medical must be produced.

A pastoral conversation will take place with the parent and child to establish the reasons and offer guidance and support to arrive at school on time. If this continues and causes a problem with your child's learning, a plan of action to support regular attendance and punctuality will be advised. This may involve opening an early help, regular meetings or staying in at break or lunch to complete work missed due to late arrival at school. Arriving late affects progress and attainment in your child's educational journey and can affect their social, emotional and mental health journey. This can affect your child through their friendships and the feeling of trying to catch up all day.

Afternoon registration is at 1pm.

*NB:- If a child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Pastoral Manager to resolve the problem.*

## **Absenteeism**

If a child has not arrived in school by 9.30am, and school are not aware of the reason for this, a member of staff will telephone/text the parent/carer. If we are unable to make telephone contact with parent/carer a home visit may be undertaken in order to ensure the child's safety.

*NB:- We are not able to accept a verbal message from a sibling.*

A telephone call or note may be sent to school prior to the day of absence for medical appointments. You will be asked to provide an appointment card for all medical appointments.

If there is no explanation of absence is given by the parent/carer on the child's return, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

## **Holidays in Term Time**

Holidays taken in term time will not be authorised.

At Christ Church C.E. Primary, we take the safety of our children very seriously and we have various procedures we follow if your child is absent from school and you have not previously advised us. These procedures follow government guidelines and primarily are designed to ensure that your child is safe. They are as follows:-

- We will attempt to make contact with you via the telephone. Please be aware that the ring tone when you are abroad is different to when you are in the country.
- If your phone is switched off or we are unable to make contact, a member of our pastoral care team may make a home visit.
- If we are still unable to contact you or verify your child's whereabouts we will report your child to the relevant agencies as a child missing in education. This may also involve a referral to social care.
- A police welfare check may also be conducted.

It is therefore very important that at all times you are honest with us regarding why your child is absent from school. If you are taking a term time holiday, please let us know in writing, it will not be authorised but we still need to know.

Christ Church C.E. Primary are very concerned about the number of children being asked to lie about their holiday. Children love to talk about their holidays and asking them to pretend they were ill and not on holiday can cause children upset and worry which is unfair and unnecessary.

At Christ Church C.E. Primary we work in transparency with parents to provide the outstanding education that every child is entitled to.

The target set for whole school attendance is 96%. When attendance falls below this you may be contacted by the Pastoral Manager to offer support to improve attendance. A letter is issued at 93% to ensure that parents/carers are made aware. If the attendance then falls below 90%, the child would be classed as a persistent absence.

## **Repeated Unauthorised Absences**

If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parent/carer will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will make a referral to the Start Well Service who will provide support in addressing the issue.

The Start Well Service will ensure that the parents/carer understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parent/carer who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## **Persistent Absence**

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor or a Start Well worker, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

## **Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School Attendance**

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school. If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period -

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

*NB:- Please see appendix a to view the letter in full.*

### **Start Well Services**

In the promotion of regular attendance, the school works closely with the LA Start Well Service and the Local Authority Attendance Service.

In the first instance, if attendance falls below 96%, you may be contacted by the Pastoral Manager. If attendance then drops below 93%, you will receive a letter notifying you of this. This may result in a face to face meeting with the Pastoral Manager requesting an improvement and offering support. If the attendance rate falls below 90%, the Learning Mentor may refer to Start Well Services and open an early help.

### **Attendance Targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors during the Autumn Term within the School Improvement Plan. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

The target for 2018-2019 is 96%

The target for 2019-2020 is 97%

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance and they will request a termly report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The rates of attendance will be reported on the school newsletter and in the termly Headteachers' report to the governing body.

Parents will be sent termly RAG letters to inform them of their child's current attendance.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every year, or earlier if considered necessary.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The Governing Body will pay particular attention to matters of equality and diversity. It will be seen to ensure that the school abides by the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2006 and that no child is treated unfairly because of race or ethnic background, gender or disability.

### **Rewards**

Weekly 'ping pong' draw. At the end of each term, children with 100% attendance are given a certificate and a badge.

End of year rewards for the class with the best attendance/punctuality. Individual rewards for children with 100% attendance at the end of each year.

## **Appendix A**

Dear Parent,

### **Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance**

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- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Claire Hill

Headteacher

## **Appendix B**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>I</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration (9.30am)	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## **Appendix C**

### The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- a) To his age, ability and aptitude and
- b) To any special needs he may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping:

The legal requirements are found in: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

## **Appendix D**

Date

Dear (add parents name)

**Re:- Add child's name,**

**Punctuality is very important and it is vital that all children arrive in school on time.**

**The school day begins promptly at 8.55 am**, however we operate an "Open Door" policy and when possible, classroom doors are open to children from **8.45am**. The side gates to the playground are locked at 8.55am promptly and all children entering school through the front door after this time will be recorded as late. Children arriving late may disrupt the class, their peers and more importantly, they may miss vital parts of their learning. Therefore your child's lateness could heavily impact on their education.

We have concerns about your child's punctuality. Part of my role as Pastoral Manager is to monitor attendance and punctuality and I would like to discuss your child's punctuality issues with you in more detail.

Please contact me to arrange an appointment at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Southern  
Pastoral Manager

## **Appendix E**

### **Attendance Concern Notification**

Date

To the Parent/Carer of:- \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Re:- Attendance below 90%**

Please see the attached attendance report for your child. As your child's attendance has dropped below 90%, the Local Authority will identify your child as being a persistent absence pupil. This means that their attendance will be monitored and reviewed over the coming weeks and necessary strategies to improve attendance will be actioned.

In line with our school policy we will require you to provide proof of appointments or illnesses in order for your child's absences to be authorised. (This is at the discretion of the Headteacher) This can be in the form of an appointment card/letter or prescription. This requirement will be in place until your child reaches above 90% attendance.

We would also ask that if your child is unable to attend school, that school is contacted and a message is left stating the reason on the absence line by 9.30am. Please note that this answering service is available 24 hours a day. (School policy for sickness or diarrhoea is 48 hours from the last episode.)

Missing school for reasons that do not directly relate to your child or their health is not acceptable, i.e. Parents unwell, weather, birthdays etc. Whilst we do not want children in school who are too unwell to be here or risk passing on infections to other pupils and staff, there are many mornings that children and adults feel under the weather. We ask you to trust our judgement as carers for your child and rest assured that we will be in contact you should we feel that they are unable to continue in school.

If you have either taken or are looking to book a holiday during term time, please consider the effect it will have on your child's education, confidence and friendship groups.

We thank you for your continued support, however if you have any queries relating to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Southern

Pastoral Manager

# Parent Contract

## Attendance & Punctuality

## **Summary**

The Local Authority (LA) expectation for attendance at school is 90%. If a pupil's attendance falls below this, the LA class them as a 'Persistent Absence Pupil'.

As a school, we are required to monitor and support parents to ensure that you are given every opportunity for your child's attendance to reach the required standard. To assist us with this, we have devised a 'Parent Contract' which is an agreement between yourselves and school. This contract is implemented to support the improvement of attendance over a specific period of time following which, the attendance data will be reviewed and reassessed.

Although parents are not obliged to sign a parent contract, school will record and evidence the offer of additional support and will continue to monitor the situation.

Failure to make an improvement in your child's attendance and punctuality may lead to a referral for an Educational Penalty Notice (EPN) as well as a referral to the Startwell service.

## **Attendance Panel Meeting**

**Child's Name:-**

**Year Group:-**

**Meeting date and time:-**

**Attendees:-**

### **Signatures**

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of school \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

**Minutes of meeting**

1. Introduction and purpose of the meeting

**Notes:-**

2. Discussion about the current attendance certificate

Date range:- \_\_\_\_\_

Available sessions:- \_\_\_\_\_

Sessions attended:- \_\_\_\_\_

% attendance:- \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:-**

3. What steps are you taking to help your child's attendance improve?

**Notes:-**

4. Discuss any other reasons that may have affected the child's attendance?

**Notes:-**

5. Action Plan
- School input
  - Parental input
  - Outside agency involvement

**Notes:-**

6. Attendance Targets
- Percentage attendance target for the coming term
  - Penalties

**Notes:-**