

CHRIST CHURCH C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our aim is for all pupils to come to school on time each day and take an active part in school life. Unless they do so they cannot fully benefit from the educational opportunities offered by the school.

Vision

"As God loves us all, our vision at Christ Church is for everyone in our family to feel equal, valued and prepared for life in modern British society. While walking humbly with our God, our children will become wise, compassionate, independent and resilient learners in an inclusive and safe environment. We strive for success, spiritual fulfilment and a life lived 'in all its fullness'. Believe and Achieve!"

Book of Micah: Verse 6:8

What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Mission:

Serving God's Community

In developing a greater understanding of Christian and other faiths within the community, we seek to develop the personality and potential of all, and to understand that we are created equally by God.

We are committed to providing an outstanding education to prepare our children for adult life in modern Britain in our locality by living in harmony before God.

By developing the social, moral and cultural and spiritual dimensions of pupils the school seeks to equip them to make a positive contribution to the community.

In finding time to be still and reflect, we seek to foster spirituality and a deeper relationship with God.

Christ Church School is committed to ensuring that all our pupils attend regularly and achieve their full potential. We believe we offer a caring and stimulating environment in which everyone can feel happy, secure and valued.

Our school ethos is based on encouraging self esteem and praising wherever possible, children's social skills are enhanced by regular attendance and link into personal development. Our incentive and rewards schemes reflect this.

Our Attendance Policy depends on an active partnership between pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors who work together and share expectations. Each of these groups has certain rights and responsibilities to ensure that our policy is put into practice. To achieve this, the Governors and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 96% attendance throughout the school.

This policy supports the work on Behaviour Management and compliments our Behaviour Policy.

At all times we are conscious of the many differing cultures, traditions and religions of all concerned.

THE LEGAL POSITION

The Local Authority, (LA), has to offer educational provision for all school age children.

Schools must keep an attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions, noting any absence and indicating whether it is authorised or unauthorised.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future (Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2019) and Children Missing in Education Nov 2013, updated Sept 2016).

All Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

The Department of Education policy (May 1944), states that 'Parents should ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.' It similarly encourages parents to see themselves as partners with the school, in the education of their children. This includes making sure "pupils complete homework on time" and that their children "keep school rules about behaviour". Home School Agreements are completed with parents during home visits and parents sign to say they accept the school rules.

School Admissions and Pupil Placements role is to help parents and the LA meet statutory obligations on school attendance. They would help a parent find a place at school should there be any difficulty and would initiate court proceedings against parents whose children fail to attend regularly.

CHRIST CHURCH STAFF

All our staff know that it is important that our pupils come to school regularly and on time, so that they can enjoy continuity and progression in their learning and so that disruptions to the class are kept to a minimum. Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school and to establish positive life habits necessary for future success.

We are aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

The class teacher has to mark the register twice a day at the beginning of the morning and afternoon school. This is a legal requirement and so must be done as accurately and clearly as possible. Registration should be an important part of the day. Pupils should be actively involved by answering their name. It is important that there is a set routine and that pupils who are not present are commented on so that pupils know that when they are absent they are missed. When pupils are away the parent should provide a reason to the school office or class teacher this can be written, by telephone or a verbal message. The office will make first day absence calls to parents of any children for whom we do not have a valid reason for absence and if they are unable to contact parents or we have any concerns, a Safe and Wellbeing check will be carried out by the SLT. A computerised record is kept of absence and the reason given so that any patterns emerging can be discussed with parents and attendance problems resolved as quickly as possible. We will write to

parents every half term. It is important that any long term absence is noted in the pupil record as this might be helpful in explaining any gaps in learning at a future date.

THE HEAD TEACHER

The Head Teacher will work with the office staff to monitor pupils' attendance regularly and notify parents if attendance is a concern. The Head Teacher will invite parents into school to discuss any concerns and may sanction further action or involvement from outside agencies.

CHRIST CHURCH PUPILS

It is important that all our pupils develop good attendance and punctuality so that they can make the most of the opportunities offered to them. Our pupils are expected to be at school by 08.55 in the morning and at 1.00 in the afternoon. Any child arriving after 9:20am for any reason other than medical will be marked U (late after registers closed). If a pupil is going to be late they should try to get to school as quickly as possible. It is better to be late than to miss school. If they are absent from school they should remind their parents/carers to get in touch with the school to explain why they are away and when they will return. When pupils return to school they should bring evidence of any illness or doctor's appointments

CHRIST CHURCH PARENTS/CARERS

It is important that our parents/carers support both their child and the school by making sure that their children come to school on time every day. Parents/carers need to show that they think coming to school is important and they can do this by:

- ★ Talking positively with their child about school
- ★ Encouraging their child to be on time
- ★ Having a place at home where information from the school is kept so that important events are known e.g. school newsletters

Parent/carers should contact the school as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend school, giving the reason and if possible the date of return.

Pupils who have medical appointments at the doctors, dentist; opticians etc should try to go outside school hours whenever possible. However, if they have to go in school time they will be allowed out of lessons only if they are collected by a named adult, who should bring along the appointment card which the school will photocopy to keep on record. Otherwise for safety reasons the school cannot let the child go. A whole day should not be taken for appointments.

Parent/carers should contact the school if they plan to take their child away from school for any length of time no matter how short so that the school can authorise the absence where appropriate and possibly set the child some work to do whilst they are away.

Parents need to inform the school if they are leaving the country for any reason, school needs to know who the main carer will be in their absence and where the child is living along with emergency contact numbers for that carer. It is a major safeguarding issue for the school if we are not informed that the legal guardian/s are leaving the country and we will have no choice but to report it to the Local Authority

If for any reason parent/carers have any difficulty in getting their child to school on time every day they should contact the Head Teacher who will try to help.

LEAVE WITHIN TERM TIME

The Local Authority is very clear on the fact that Head Teachers may no longer authorise leave within term time except where the circumstances are exceptional. Parents should book leave during the school holidays and NOT during term time. This is also in accordance with Birmingham Local Authority's 'Leave in Term Time Guidance'. If your child takes leave that has not been

authorised by the Head Teacher, it will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. Please understand that this may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken or your child losing their school place. If parents decide to go on holiday without informing school, we will have no choice but to take legal action using the Spotlight procedure.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendship with peers and support from staff can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Guidance from NAHT on authorised term time pupil absences states “on matters relating to term-time pupil absences, the Education (pupil registration) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 September 2013, removed all references to ‘family holidays’ and ‘extended leave’ as well as the ‘notional threshold of ten school days”. The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional circumstances’ are that they are ‘rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

If you believe there is an exceptional and urgent reason for your child to take leave during term time, please complete the required form which you can obtain from the school. You still need to inform the school of any absence because we still require evidence of why children are not in school, this means flight tickets must still be brought into school. It is the Head Teacher who will then make a decision on whether or not the leave can be authorised. For example:

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)

The Local Authority has stated that schools should only authorise 1 days absence for celebrating each religious festival, which falls during school term time.

REWARDS AND INCENTIVES AT CHRIST CHURCH

Certificates for attendance are given each week to the class with the best performance during the previous full week. Classes are praised for improved performances.

Every half term we hold an attendance week where we celebrate children who are in school every day and on time.

At the end of each full term, pupils with 95% plus attendance receive certificates.

- ★ Gold – 100%
- ★ Silver – 98 –99%
- ★ Bronze – 96 – 98%

Parents are notified before hand and invited into the special assembly. At the end of the year pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year are given a special certificate and one child will receive a special prize by drawing a name “out of the hat”.

Reviewed D Westwood

Approved Governing Body December 2020