CHRIST CHURCH C E PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2024

Christ Church CE Primary School is a Christian community founded on the core values of Friendship, Thankfulness, Peace, Trust, Forgiveness, Compassion and Hope

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Christ Church Primary School is committed to providing excellence for students of all abilities. High attendance and good punctuality is essential for students to work to their potential, be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them at the School. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly.

Achieving high attendance is a necessity in preparing students for future working life as an adult. Students should be at the School, on time and every day that the School is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Displays, celebrations, rewards and sanctions will be based upon our HERO approach-

Here **E**very day **R**eady to learn **O**n time.

This was decided in consultation with the school council.

It is very important therefore that parents and carers recognise the responsibility and obligation to make sure that students attend regularly. This Policy sets out how the School, its partners and parents/carers can work together to achieve this.

1.1 The Importance of Regular Attendance:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring students' regular attendance at the School is the **legal responsibility of Parents. By law all children of compulsory school age must attend school.** Poor attendance not only undermines a child's education and future life chances, it sometimes puts children at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Permitting absence from the School without a good reason creates an offence in law and may

result in prosecution. All children who have a place in school are expected to attend school regularly.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Poor attendance will also have a negative impact on a child's relationships. Research shows that children with poor attendance often struggle to make and maintain friendships.

1.2 Promoting Regular Attendance:
Helping to create a habit of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of School staff.

To maintain a focus on this the School will:

- Celebrate good attendance in assemblies each week.
- Reward good or improving attendance through stamps, certificates, events and trips, both in and outside of the School.
- Report each classes attendance on the weekly newsletter.
- Contact parents regularly on how their child is performing at the School. This will include information about their attendance and punctuality.
- Closely monitor problematic attendance through a targeted and graduated response dependent upon the individual/family's need.
- Have daily contact during a period of absence- This may include home visits.
- Follow up any absences when the child returns to school.

2.0 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

The absence procedures are in place to promote regular attendance at school and also to ensure the school's safeguarding duties are fulfilled.

2.1 If a student is absent parents should:

- Report the absence using the school App giving as much detail as possible.

- Contact the School before 9.00 am on the first day of absence using the school's parent app or by telephoning the office. The dedicated telephone number is 0151-922-2136.
- Parent/carers may also call into the School and report to reception staff, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with them.
- For absences that extend to a week (5 school days) some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's note/copy prescription/sight of prescribed medication. This must be provided to a member of the office staff.

2.2 If a student is absent the School will:

- Telephone parents/carers on the first day of absence.
- We will follow our graduated response to attendance (Appendix 1).

- In cases where a family is under 'Social Care', the Social Worker will be informed regarding the absence if no contact is made.
- Invite parents in to discuss the situation with the Pastoral Team/ SLT if absences persist.

2.3 Telephone numbers:

- There are times when the School will need to contact parents on a range of issues, including absence, so it is essential that the School has up to date contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

3.0 LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons. Persistent poor punctuality will result in sanctions being applied e.g. an attendance or punctuality contract.

3.1 How we manage lateness:

• At **8.45am Junior** children can enter the school through the Junior Yard and be ready to start the day at 8.55am. At **8.50am** the **Infant** children should be on the **Infant Yard** ready to go into class.
In accordance with the Regulations, if children arrive after **9am,** they will receive a late mark. If any child arrives after 10.30am they will receive a 'U' on the register which is classed as 'unauthorised absence'. If for any reason children arrive late due to a medical appointment, staff will ask for proof of the medical appointment (i.e. appointment card or hospital appointment letter).
If a student has a persistent late record, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Pastoral Team to resolve the problem. Parents/carers can approach the School at any time if they experience problems getting their child to the School on time.

4.0 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCES
Every half-day absence from the School has to be classified by the School (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.
Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks for class. Registers are legal documents so the School staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers, preferably in writing.

4.1 Authorised
Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the School for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in School time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. If a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern, school may ask for medical evidence before authorising absences from school due to illness.

4.2 Unauthorised

Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the School day
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- A child arriving too late to school to receive a mark will be recorded as U (unauthorised).
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Oversleeping
- Absent to look after an unwell sibling
- Inadequate uniform
- Confusion over terms dates
- Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school.
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed.
- Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the School, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, parents/carers should not condone their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending as this gives the child the impression that attendance does not matter.

5.0 EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE IN TERM TIME

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off during school term time to have exceptional leave. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the School, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

5.1 Holiday during Term Time

It is the School’s policy not to allow holidays in term time. Head teachers are no longer allowed to authorise holidays in term time. Any holiday taken in term time may result in a fixed penalty being issued.

5.2 Exceptional Leave

Students have a total of 13 weeks holiday a year so parents should only request that they be able to take their child out of school under **exceptional circumstances**. This is known as **exceptional leave** and must be applied for in writing addressed to the Head teacher.

(The above circumstances relate to exceptional leave i.e. if a parent is in the Forces and only have limited time to take a family holiday or a family bereavement and family have to travel a distance)

6.0 PENALTY NOTICE PROCEEDINGS

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

Penalty Notices for absence from school can be issued by the Attendance and Welfare Service based on requests from schools.

The following circumstances are considered appropriate as reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences.
- Holidays in term time.
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays.
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed.

A pupil has to be absent from school in one of the above circumstances for at least a minimum evidential requirement of ten (10) school sessions (5 days) lost to unauthorised absence in the current term **and/or** eighteen (18) sessions (9 days) lost to unauthorised absence over two consecutive terms will be required to trigger the process.

Payment of a penalty within 28 days of receipt of the notice is £60. Payment after this time, but within 42 days of receipt of the notice is £120.

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice a check is made by the Attendance and Welfare Service to ensure that the request meets the terms of the Code of Conduct.

7.0 THE ROLE OF CHRIST CHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parents are expected to contact the School at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. School staff will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist the case will be referred to the local authority

8.0 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

No child will be removed from roll without consultation between the Head teacher, the Pastoral Team and the CMIE co-ordinator. Where a child is missing from education with prolonged absences that are unexplained or if a family move away from the area but do not register with another school, the School will alert the local authority who will then take action according to child missing in education policy and procedures. Movement of children between local authorities and schools is tracked nationally.

9.0 PUBLICATION OF ATTENDANCE FIGURES

The School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.
All School staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Steph Harvey

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