

CHRIST CHURCH C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Rationale

It is important for children's continued educational and social development that they attend school regularly and punctually. Regular attendance sets a positive behaviour patterns. Ideally, school should be a place to which pupils wish to come. They should be interested in what is on offer and be able to contribute to the school as a community. It is essential that a school's effectiveness in terms of curriculum delivery be maximised through a high rate of attendance. Punctuality enables teachers and children to make a purposeful start to the school day.

At Christ Church, Church of England Primary School, we aim to provide a welcoming and caring environment in which each member of the school community feels happy and secure. We strive to support and challenge all children appropriately so as to help them achieve their true potential. All members of the school staff team work with pupils and their families to ensure children attend school regularly and punctually wherever possible.

We have established an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and challenges the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

We have also established an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. We work particularly closely with the Attendance and Placement Service.

We do everything in our power to promote good attendance and to dissuade parents from taking their children on term-time holidays. However, we recognise that some parents will nonetheless require their children to be absent during school hours and understand that there may be compelling reasons for their decisions. We hope to work in partnership with parents to minimise the disruption caused by such absences (as in the case of others arising due to illness or special circumstances) so as to ensure we can continue to work in partnership to secure the continued progress of our pupils.

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

AIMS

1. To improve the overall percentage of pupils attending school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.

5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To implement an effective system of rewards and sanctions relating to attendance & punctuality.
8. To promote effective partnerships with the Attendance and Placement Service and with other services and agencies.

To Improve the Overall Percentage Attendance of Pupils at School

AIM No 1

1. We will apply the school Attendance Policy consistently. (see Attendance Strategy)
2. We will establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
3. We will relate attendance issues directly to our school's values, ethos and curriculum.
4. We will monitor progress in attendance via measurable outcomes.

AIM No 2

To Make Attendance and Punctuality a Priority for All Those Associated with the School Including Pupils, Parents, Teachers and Governors

1. We will make use of the weekly newsletter to parents.
2. We will make termly reports available on request to parents and governors via the school website and by providing paper copies on demand.
3. We will discuss the importance of good attendance and punctuality at meetings for new Reception parents and with parents of pupils admitted at other times
5. We will discuss attendance issues as appropriate in relevant staff meetings and pupil progress meetings
6. We will continue to develop, evaluate and review award systems, including stickers/certificates and learn from the good practice in other schools.

AIM NO 3

To Develop a Framework Which Defines Agreed Roles and Responsibilities and Promotes Consistency in Carrying Out Designated Tasks

1. We will maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
2. We will make phone contact/text, using designated school staff, on the first day of absence..
3. We will ensure clearly defined late registration procedures and respond swiftly to lateness

4. We will define clearly the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
5. We will have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Welfare Officer (Patricia Ord).
7. We will review attendance regularly.
8. We will follow closely the Attendance and Placement Service referral and recording system.

AIMS NO 4

To Provide Support, Advice and Guidance to Parents and Pupils

1. We will highlight attendance in: PSHE lessons, Assemblies, Newsletters and at Parents evenings
2. We will seek improved communication with parents eg when parents ring school .
3. We will provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
4. We will involve parents from the earliest stage.

AIM NO 5

To Develop a Systematic Approach in Gathering and Analysing Attendance Related Data

1. We will maximise the potential of computerised registration and will be consistent in the collection and provision of information.
2. We will identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness. Children with less than 90% attendance will be monitored weekly.

AIM NO 6

To Further Develop Positive and Consistent Communication Between Home and School

1. We will continue first day absence contact (see above).
2. We will make full use of standard letters to parents issued by Attendance and Placement Service.
3. We will promote expectation of absence phone calls from parents.
4. We will provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).
5. We will encourage all parents to come into school to discuss any issues relating to attendance. .

AIM NO 7

To Implement a System of Rewards and Incentives

1. We will continue to promote attendance and associated rewards. These will include weekly rewards for the class with 100% attendance plus a gold star for best class attendance each week. Best class attendance each term is rewarded with a 'bigger prize' eg. bowling trip.
2. We will ensure fair and consistent implementation of the rewards and incentives scheme.
3. We will involve pupils and parents/carers in evaluation of the success of rewards and incentives on an annual basis. This will also be discussed by the school council.

AIM NO 8

To Promote Effective Partnerships with the Attendance and Placement Service and with Other Services and Agencies

1. Regular contact will take place with attendance and Placement Service..

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Application for Authorised Absence

There is a strong link between how successful children are at school and how good their attendance is. It is essential that school and parents/carers work together to make sure that all our children have the best possible chance of reaching their potential. Every lesson missed in school is a valuable moment lost. Pupils can fall behind very quickly and often feel lost when they go back to class.

The Department for Education (DfE) announced changes to the legislation about holidays in term time. From the 1st September 2013, the new law gave no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in **exceptional circumstances**. Each request for leave for a family holiday is likely to be considered by the headteacher on an individual basis. They can take into account the age of the pupil, the time of year proposed for the holiday, the overall attendance pattern of the child and their stage of education and progress. If a headteacher does not authorise the leave, it will go down as an unauthorised absence. A parent whose child has more than 10 days of unauthorised absence (over 5 weeks) may receive a Penalty notice from the Local Authority. Parents wishing to request leave of absence will need to complete an application form which is available from the school office.

Lateness

- School starts at 8.55am. Class teachers lead their class into school and take the register at 9.00 a.m.
- Children should be encouraged to be in class, ready to start the session, at these times.
- Children arriving between the end of registration and 9.15 a.m. should be marked late in the register (Admin. Officer will do this if latecomer reports to her). Lateness should be shown by L.
- The signed and dated registers will be kept in a dedicated place and will act as the legal record.

Improving Punctuality

Repeated absence at the beginning of a school session can amount to failure to attend regularly. The school seeks to improve general punctuality and to improve attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and offer ways of helping combat lateness.
- b) Parents of persistent offenders must be contacted, and reported to Attendance and Placement Service if there is no improvement.
- d) Praise and acknowledge latecomers who improve.
- e) All children and parents must understand that lateness is actively discouraged, although sensitivity may be appropriate in some cases.

ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

Specific Actions

1. Monitor types of absence.
2. Track pupil attendance weekly for PA children.
3. Review attendance 4 weekly and issue letters/ call in parents as appropriate.
4. Send letters to parents of pupils who have 95% or less attendance (Termly)
5. Daily phone calls and texts to parents when children are absent from school, particularly if no reason has been received.
6. Un –authorising absence for illness unless medical evidence is produced by the parent/carer for children with regular absences for unspecified medical conditions.
7. Continue to un-authorise requests for term time absences for family holidays/social events.
8. Continue to work closely with Rob Moffat (Attendance) and Placement Service) re issuing of warning notices and fixed penalty notices for children who have had more than 10 un authorised absences over 5 weeks.
9. Continue to use outside agencies to support eg **TYNE GATEWAY** and **Care and Connect**
10. Continue with whole school initiatives to reinforce the importance of full attendance.
 - Half termly 100% attendance rewards (prize draw) Consider weekly prizes.
 - Class teachers to praise full attenders – house points every Friday.
 - Prominent display to highlight weekly class attendance chart- best class has class treat
 - Focussed assemblies about attendance
 - Annual 100% attendance medals
 - Weekly attendance totals and information about the importance of full attendance on newsletters and website.
11. New initiatives. Liaise with local schools who have had successful initiatives to improve attendance. (eg Fordley Primary) Seek ideas from school council.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of all these issues will be the responsibility of the Headteacher, the class teachers and the EWO who will all work together with families to help improve attendance and punctuality.

June 2017

