

Christ Church CE School Attendance Policy



September 2021

**Christ Church CE School
Redhill Street
Regent's Park
NW1 4BD**

Vision and Values



**The Christian faith is at the heart of our school community.
At Christ Church we all care, learn and work together for God and others.**

'For we are all God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'. Ephesians 2:10

**Our Christian Values are
Creation, Community, Endurance, Thankfulness, Reconciliation, Wisdom**

The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in our explicit Christian values, our collective worship, our grounded Christian ethos, our carefully crafted curriculum and in our Religious Education.

We aim to provide ambitious learning opportunities, promoting achievement in every area and nurturing social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

We actively promote the children's cultural capital (defined as the acquisition of skills and knowledge, which an individual can draw on to give them an advantage in life). We will introduce them to strong role models who will impart their knowledge and wisdom to help the children engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement and to become responsible local and global citizens.

Character and resilience are the qualities we promote within our children, developing the inner resources that we call on to help us in life. We instil these qualities in our children to make sure that they are ready to make their way in the world as robust, confident and inquisitive individuals.

We know that confidence, knowledge and skills will help them to become compassionate and well-balanced young people. We want them to take their place in society as active citizens, economically independent, exemplifying the British values of equality, mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty and rule of law.

We use our six Christian values, Creation, Wisdom, Thankfulness, Community Endurance and Reconciliation, to reinforce and enrich our teaching wherever applicable.

- **Creation**
For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Hebrews 3:4
- **Wisdom**
For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6
- **Thankfulness**
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. 1 Chronicles 16:34
- **Community**
My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12
- **Endurance**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
Galatians 6:9

- **Reconciliation**

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13

Our vision is inclusive and seeks to promote the whole child thrive within our Christ Church family.

Each member of our Christ church family; children, parents and staff are valued as God's creation. We believe in full inclusion and acceptance of all and that this allows every individual to flourish.

Christ Church CE School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date: Autumn Term 2021
Agreed by Governing body: Autumn Term 2021
To be reviewed: Autumn Term 2023

WHY WE HAVE AN ATTENDANCE POLICY

We want to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education to maximise opportunities for everybody to realise their potential. Experience and research both locally and nationally demonstrate a clear link between good attainment and good attendance. The school believes that setting a clear policy for attendance and punctuality is an excellent preparation for later school years and future employment.

The school strives to be welcoming and caring, so that everybody in the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff work with pupils and their families to ensure everybody attends school punctually on every day of each term.

The school intends to build on a system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who do not.

To meet these objectives Christ Church Primary School will continue to foster good communication with pupils, parents, carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

OUR TARGET

Christ Church Primary School intends to maintain its high levels of attendance each year. Our **current target for attendance is 97%**.

OUR STATUTORY DUTIES

This policy is written in relation to the following acts of Parliament and guidance relating to attendance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- LB Camden Attendance Strategy 2011
- Children Missing in Education 2016
- We will also take account of new legislation and initiatives.

THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Leave should not be taken during term time except in exceptional circumstances, when authority should be requested from the Headteacher. If parents request exceptional leave, they should use the green 'Exceptional Leave' form (this can be obtained from the school office). There is no automatic right to a request being agreed. All additional holiday time taken during term time, including extending holidays at the beginnings and ends of terms, will be unauthorised.

Where unauthorised absence is taken, the school will take relevant action and this usually will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service. A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents if a child is taken out of school during term time without written permission from the Governors. Penalty Notices are used as an alternative to taking legal action through the courts, but court action may also be used. Payment is £60, each child, to be paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, the amount will increase to £120. **The fine will apply to each parent for each child.** We will adopt a focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

1. Parents and carers are asked to sign up to this policy in the signing of the home school agreement. This makes clear to them that unauthorised absences do not only damage their own child's education, but also others. This is because teachers need to help those children who have been absent catch up with work they have missed, which reduces the time available to give to the remaining children in the class. This is one of the crucial reasons for a firm attendance policy, because when parents withdraw their children from school, it is not only their children who are affected.
2. This policy also seeks to encourage punctuality. Children can arrive at school from 8.40 am in KS2 and attend the Daily Mile activities. All children should be in school and should be ready to learn in class by 9.00am. Children arriving after 9.00 am are recorded as being late and where children repeatedly arrive late the school tries to put this right. If a pupil arrives at school after 9.15am they will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a pupil has ten or more unauthorised lates within a ten week period a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service to issue a Penalty Notice. Payment is £60, each child, to be paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, the amount will increase to £120. **The fine will apply to each parent for each child.**
3. The same applies to punctual collection of children after school. The school day ends at 3.25 for EYFS and KS1 pupils and at 3.30 pm for KS2 pupils (unless arrangements have been made for extended services or if a child is in a club). Where parents continually fail to make arrangements to pick up their children at the end of the school day on time, the school may have to consider making a referral to Family Support and/or Social Care.

Communicating with parents and carers

The school gives high priority to conveying to parents, carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems, not least because these are very helpful when there is a problem about attendance.

Measures we take include:

- Holding induction sessions for all new parents and pupils
- Including attendance and punctuality performance in the weekly school newsletter
- Producing statistics of whole school attendance performance to be displayed weekly on the parent information board. Termly attendance performance is also discussed in a meeting with the attendance governor and presented to the Full Governing Board.
- All staff are made aware of the values and standards expected for school attendance and punctuality, and are taught how to encourage a high standard in both.
- A reward system for pupils is in place to reinforce good attendance and make those who are punctual proud of their punctuality. At St Alban's this is done through an attendance bear and an early bird, which are presented to the classes with best attendance and punctuality each week in Friday celebration assembly.
- Term dates are published in advance and are communicated in the weekly newsletter and are on the school website. Any changes in the term date schedule are communicated more than one month in advance and communicated in a letter to the parent of every child.

Telling the children about the importance of attendance and punctuality

Children receive guidance from teachers on an individual, class and school level about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. If a child has concerns about their attendance or punctuality they are encouraged to speak to their class teacher.

Children are encouraged to walk and cycle to school and to get to school on time before the bell goes.

Children are encouraged to go to bed at an appropriate time so that they are not tired the next day. They are encouraged to prepare for the school day on the night before as much as possible so they are not rushed in the mornings.

There are incentive schemes in place to promote good attendance and punctuality amongst the children. At Christ Church this is done through an attendance bear and an early bird, which are presented to the classes with best attendance and punctuality each week in Friday celebration assembly.

The School Council is consulted with to help develop initiatives to improve school attendance and punctuality.

Children who are regularly collected late at the end of the school day may be referred to Social Care after discussion with the PAS.

What Parents/Carers can do to help

The school works with parents and carers to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality and recognises that parents have a crucial role.

If a pupil does miss school, parents/carers should inform the school of their child's absence and provide an explanation as soon as possible on the day of absence. The nature of the explanation determines whether the school will authorise the absence or not. The school office will call parents to ask why their child is not in school, or to ask the reason for lateness, if this has not been provided.

Parents must ensure that the school has the most up to date contact details and must inform the school if another adult is collecting their child (SEE COLLECTION OF PUPILS PARAGRAPH).

Exceptional Leave

Holidays during term-time and long weekends are not acceptable reasons for absence. We know that this can present difficulties with more expensive air fares, but in choosing to send a child to St Alban's, parents must accept attendance during term time. As mentioned above, one of the key reasons for this is not just the education of the child taking the holiday, but the effect the absence has on other children in the class. This is often compounded by parents taking children on holiday in term time who then ask the teacher for extra homework, taking up more of their time and therefore cutting the time available for the rest of the class.

Parents are expected to adhere to the procedure for authorised school leave. All requests for school Exceptional Leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher, using the school form, and prior to the leave being arranged. A form is available to request Exceptional Leave and can be obtained from the school office.

Those reasons for which authorisation for absence (Exceptional Leave) may be granted include:

- The death or funeral of a close relative. In these circumstances, we may ask for proof.
- Emergency medical and dental appointments (although routine check-ups should be scheduled in the holidays), and other exceptional circumstances may be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion.
- We will consider ethnic or religious requirements or requests
- We will consider whether the leave is important for the well-being and cohesion of the family following serious or terminal illness or other traumatic events.

Exceptional leave is not authorised because of availability of flights or accommodation.

Where a child returns back late then we will expect to see the date they had planned to return to the UK before the start of school and the revised date. If this proof cannot be supplied then a referral to the PAS will follow, which may result in a penalty notice being issued.

If the school is not notified of absence then the school will initiate contact with the parent on first day of absence. The school will make contact by correspondence if phone contact is not made.

If parents have any comments, concerns or complaints regarding the school attendance policy these can be addressed in writing to the Headteacher or an appointment can be arranged for discussion with the Headteacher. If any parents wish to work with the school in partnership to promote and implement good school attendance practice this is encouraged.

The Headteacher's/Governor's Role

The Headteacher/Governors will consider every request for leave. The parents will need to give the proposed dates of absence and return and cogent reasons for the absence. If the child fails to return on the agreed dates it is an unauthorised absence and the child may then lose their school place (be taken off role) and will have to apply to Camden Admission's Service for a new school place. Due to waiting lists this may not be at Christ church Primary School.

The Headteacher oversees the collection and reporting of attendance data and the publication of statistics and reports on attendance to parents, pupils, governors and the Camden Children Schools and Families Directorate (CCSF).

An attendance audit is carried out and reported on in June of each year.

The role of teachers

All class teachers have a responsibility in keeping an attendance register. This is a legal document and must be completed accurately. The attendance register must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Absences are coded according to the information received from the parent of the child. The class teacher monitors the register daily and is sensitive to emerging patterns of absence and lateness.

Class teachers encourage patterns of punctuality and good attendance by praising those children who came to school each day and arrive on time.

The class teacher reports any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality to the School Administration Officer.

The role of the administrative/office staff

The administrative staff record late arrivals each day and take telephone calls from parents or carers concerning pupil absence. They will also be in charge of calling parents if the school has not been notified of a child's absence.

Each week the administrative officer will print weekly registers for each class and enter the attendance data on the database.

Individual pupil attendance reports are compiled on the request of the Headteacher or the Pupil Attendance Service (PAS). The administrative staff will also prepare termly and annual returns to the local authority.

The role of the Pupil Attendance Service

The PAS is responsible for enforcing school attendance in all Camden schools. The PAS monitors school

attendance registers and holds consultation meetings with the Headteacher and obtains referrals from the school. The PAS may meet a parent/carer and child in school, write to parents/carers, arrange a home visit and refer to other professional agencies. The results of these interventions are reported to the school. Failure to comply with the interventions of the PAS can lead to a fine or magistrate court proceedings. This policy brings your attention to the right of the school to refer a child to PAS for persistent unauthorised leave who can issue a Penalty Notice which is charged at £60 if paid within 28 days and £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If payment is not paid within 42 days the PAS is required to start proceedings against the parent in the Magistrates Court. If the case is proven in Court this can attract a fine up to £2500 and or up to three months in prison and a criminal record.

In what circumstances would the school bring in the Pupil Attendance Service (PAS)?

Before contacting the PAS the school will make every attempt to make contact with the parent or carer by telephone and in writing. In the first instance we would invite them to discuss the problem (SEE PUNCTUALITY LETTER AND ATTENDANCE LETTER at the end of this policy). If this is unsuccessful the school gives warning of referral to a PAS (SEE PAS WARNING LETTER at the end of this policy). A referral may be made to the PAS under the following circumstances:

- 10 days of continuous unauthorised absence
- More than 10 days of authorised leave
- A holiday taken without permission (this includes additional days at the beginnings or ends of official school holidays)
- A pupil who has been more than 15 minutes late on ten or more occasions within a ten-week period
- If a pupil has ten or more unauthorised lates within a ten-week period
- 90% or less attendance

What happens after a long absence?

The school is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of pupils returning after significant periods of absence and will support the smooth reintegration of pupils both academically and socially. In such circumstances the school works with parents, carers and pupil towards an agreed reintegration plan which may include opportunities for counselling and feedback, peer support and mentoring and an agreed review period.

Collection of pupils

It is expected that pupils are collected by parents on time every day. If a parent wishes for a different adult to collect their child, they must inform the school office, stating the name and a description of the adult. School may well call a parent for authorisation if this information is not provided and, in some cases, may refuse to let a child go if the adult has not been verified.

Children in Year 5/6 are permitted to arrive and leave school unsupervised on the condition that the school has a permission letter from the parent.

A child cannot be picked up or brought to school by anyone under the age of 14. Children over the age of 14 who are themselves attending school which finishes at 3.30pm should not be in charge of picking up children from Christ Church School if their school is further than 5 minutes travel time away.

If a parent wants their child to be collected by an older sibling, the parent must discuss this with the Headteacher in order to see if this is authorised. If so, then the parent must sign a form stating that they take full responsibility for the wellbeing and safeguarding of the child once they have left school premises.

Term dates

School term dates are published in advance and can be found on the school website.

Staff training days (inset days) are included in the term dates schedule. Parents or carers will receive written notice of any changes in term dates. Those changes would also be published in the calendar on the school website and in the weekly school newsletter.

Children Missing in Education

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority. Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance. Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.

INFORMATION ON ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION – for parents Sept 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791528/HE_guidance_for_parentsafterconsultationv2.2.pdf

<https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/10/20/all-you-need-to-know-about-home-schooling-and-elective-home-education-ehe/>

Christ Church CE Primary and Nursery School



Punctuality letter 1

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my concerns that your child has been late on _____ occasions this term (04.09.21 - 08.12.21). It is important to stress that every time your child is late they are missing out on their learning.

I understand that there may be specific circumstances relating to the lateness, however, we will be monitoring this closely over the coming half term to see that this improves. If you would like to discuss this matter with me, then please do contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

It is my role to inform you that if there is evidence of the following and/or no evidence of improvement in your child's punctuality, then the school can refer this matter to the PAS (Education Welfare Officer) and a fine may be issued:

- A pupil who has been more than 15 minutes late on ten or more occasions within a ten-week period
- A pupil has ten or more unauthorised lates within a ten-week period

I look forward to seeing an improvement.

Yours sincerely

Paula Walker
Headteacher

Christ Church CE Primary and Nursery School



Attendance letter

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my concerns about your child's attendance.

From _____ until now, your child's attendance stands at

Your child's attendance needs to be at 96% or above

I am aware that there may be reasons such as sickness or exceptional circumstances, but it is absolutely essential that you make every effort to bring your child to school every day and that you only keep them at home when absolutely necessary. It is my role to inform you that poor attendance may result in a referral to the PAS (Education Welfare Officer) and a fine be imposed.

We understand that there may be specific circumstances relating to the absence, so therefore **invite you in for a meeting** on

to discuss this issue with me and to find a way forwards in order to see improvement. **If you are not able to attend, please contact the school office to arrange an alternative date and time.**

I look forward to meeting with you and working together.

Yours sincerely

Paula Walker
Headteacher

Christ Church CE Primary and Nursery School



PAS referral letter

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my continued concerns about your child's attendance/punctuality.

From _____ until now, your child's attendance/punctuality stands at

_____ which shows there has been no improvement since our meeting on

_____ when the attendance/ punctuality was _____

It is my role to now inform you that this matter has now been referred to the PAS (Education Welfare Officer), who may issue you with a Penalty Notice which is charged at **£60 per child, per parent**.

If you would like to discuss this, please arrange an appointment through the school office.

Yours sincerely

Paula Walker
Headteacher