

**Christ Church CofE (VA)
Primary School and Nursery
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Chair of Governors – Marcia Walkerdine**

CHRIST CHURCH SCHOOL **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Children can only make the most of the educational opportunities available to them at Christ Church if they attend school regularly. The programme of study for every child is planned carefully across the three terms and absence will result in essential lessons or assessment being missed.

It is therefore essential that absence from school is kept to the absolute minimum.

Statutory Framework

- Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act -
"If a child of compulsory age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence"
- The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Communication from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the Head teacher is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered will the absence be authorised.

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the school community; parents, pupils, staff and governors.

Children have the right to attend school.

Absence from school

Most absences, such as the following, are for good reasons and will be authorised. Please, remember that every absence must be communicated to school, by writing a letter or email to school office.

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (ideally these should be made after school or during holidays)
- Days of religious observance (maximum two days)
- Exceptional family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, wedding)

- Examinations
- Visits to other schools (e.g. secondary schools)

The following reasons will not be authorised

- Term times holidays
- Birthdays
- Day Trips
- 'Long weekend' e.g. Friday to Monday

The school office will: -

- Ensure that registers are kept accurately and that appropriate absence returns are made to the **Department for Education (DfE)**.
- Chase any absences that have not been reported to the school office.
- Monitor pupil's attendance / punctuality and report to the head teacher.

The Head teacher will:

- Send appropriate letters to parents/carers where there is cause for concern and arrange meetings to discuss any issues.
- Consult the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern.

The Class Teacher will:-

- Complete an accurate record of attendance twice a day.

The Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) will: -

- Assist the school in identifying poor pattern of attendance.
- Advise the school on appropriate strategies with pupils and parents where school attendance is poor.
- Assist those families who are experiencing difficulties with school attendance.

Parents will: -

- Be aware of the importance of regular, punctual attendance at school.
- Inform the office, firstly by telephone on the first day of absence and by sending in a letter on their child's return.
- Talk to a member of staff if there is anything which causes their child to feel unhappy at school or unwilling to attend.

Many children at Christ Church have excellent attendance. This achievement will be rewarded with a special certificate each year.

Punctuality

Everyone experiences unexpected difficulties on occasions which may result in lateness. Persistent lateness is inconvenient for the teachers, disrupting for the class and embarrassing for the individual concerned. Lateness after the close of the register (9am) is regarded as an unauthorised absence.

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