

**Christ Church CofE (VA)  
Primary School and Nursery**  
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## **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.

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

### **The following reasons will not be authorised**

- Shopping during school hours
- Birthdays
- Day Trips
- ‘Long weekend’ e.g. Friday to Monday (unless this is the only family holiday possible in the year)

- Holidays during SATS week

### **Term time holidays**

The Government states that up to 10 days absence **may** be authorised in any one academic year where there are exceptional circumstances which require **one annual family holiday** to be taken in term time.

- If holiday absence in excess of 10 days is requested in any one academic year, only 10 days will be authorised.
- Request for absence must be made at least three weeks in advance using the official school application form obtainable from our office. If no request has been made the absence will be unauthorised.
- If a child is kept away from school in excess of the period agreed, the extra days of absence will be unauthorised.
- Only one holiday period per academic year will be authorised.

### **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 is 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.