



Attendance Policy

POLICY TYPE	STATUTORY
OWNER	P&S
APPROVING COMMITTEE	P&S
REVIEW EVERY	5 Years
APPROVED BY	
POSITION	
DATE	22 nd May 2018

VISION STATEMENT

A school where:

- *The uniqueness of individuals is respected and valued.*
- *The staff provide a safe and nurturing environment which supports children to approach their learning with an enquiring mind, courage and perseverance.*
- *Children's continually evolving needs are identified and they are equipped with the skills and motivation to succeed.*
- *All achievements are recognised and children learn to value their own successes.*

All within the loving support of our Lord Jesus Christ

St Christopher's CE Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from all members of the community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school.

Aims

To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance. This will ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, and strive to attain them.

Objectives

1. to achieve a 95% + attendance rate
2. to restrict the number of absence days taken during term time.
3. to promote partnership between parents/carers and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
4. to support other agencies involvement when all possible school based measures have been put in place.

The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for:

- Pupils
- Parents/Carers
- Staff
- Governors

Procedures for implementation

Expectations of pupils:

- that they will attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate above 95%
- that they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.

Expectations of parents/carers:

- That they will ensure their child/ren attend school, aiming for a 95 – 100% attendance rate
- That they will contact school by 9.00 am at the latest, whenever their child is unable to attend
- That the reason for any absence is reported to the school either by letter, email or telephone. If the absence is reported via the telephone a written note will be made noting the date and reason for absence. It is important that school is informed each day a child is absent unless a time frame has been agreed in advance.
- To ensure that their child arrives in school on time and is well prepared for the school day
- To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- To refrain from taking the child out of school unless there are **significant exceptional** circumstances

Expectations of school:

- To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence/absence
- To make early contact with parents when a child fails to attend
- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required
- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted

Expectations of governors:

- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Headteacher reports
- To support the school in encouraging good attendance
- To communicate effectively with parents about the benefits of regular and punctual attendance.
- To work with other agencies as appropriate

School Procedures related to attendance:

Our school day begins with a registration period and an Early Morning Learning Activity. The bell is rung and class doors opened at 8.40am allowing children the opportunity to enter their classrooms in a calm and orderly manner ready to start the Early Morning Learning Activity. Children must then enter school via their classroom door in a calm and orderly manner. The member of staff on duty will oversee entry to school, ensure the bus children have arrived on site and then lock the pedestrian gates once all adults have left the site. Children arriving after this time will need to access school through the main entrance and report to the school office.

Registration

- Registers are taken once children are settled into their classrooms and sent to the office for 9.00 am. Afternoon attendance registers are taken at 1.00 pm.
- Registers are completed daily and returned to the office after each registration. At the end of each week to be recorded electronically
- Registers will be completed using the codes identified in Appendix A
- If no information, regarding the absence of a child, has been received by 9.00 am, the secretary will telephone the parent/carer as soon as possible to check the reason for absence
- If there is no initial reason given for the absence this will be recorded as unauthorised absence
- If a child arrives late for registration i.e. after 9.00 am, the parent will need to take their child to the office and sign the signing in/out sheet giving the time of arrival and the reason for arriving late.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Headteacher, following statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance.

Authorised absence:

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parent/carer that the child is ill.
- If the child has a medical appointment with the doctor or dentist that cannot be made outside school hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/Carers must inform the school in advance.
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures, then this will be an authorised absence. Requests will normally be approved for the following reasons:
 - Days of religious observance
 - Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
 - External examinations
 - Where it is company/organisational policy for parent to take leave at specified time and no opportunity in school holidays (documentary evidence required)
 - Where holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional issue (evidence required)
 - Other factors which the Head Teacher considers exceptional (Local Authority may be referred to for advice)

An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents/carers give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Unauthorised absence:

Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence
- A trip or holiday, other than under exceptional circumstance and agreed in advance
- Any absence that is not considered by the Headteacher to be as the result of extenuating circumstances, this will include, but not limited to:
 - Any type of shopping
 - Looking after siblings or unwell parents
 - Minding the house
 - Birthdays
 - Resting after a late night
 - Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Arriving at school after 9.00 am

Persistent lateness

If the lateness is persistent and parents/carers fail to work with school to address the issues, the matter can be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker), who will offer support.

Response to non attendance:

- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents/carers, the parents/carers will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by parents/carers.

- Where there has been no response, or explanation, the school will post a letter to the parents/carers requesting information regarding the absence.
- Where there continues to be no response to the school intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the school will refer the issue to the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker).
- If a child's attendance slips below 85%, the school will initially approach the parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the head will invite the parents/carers in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker), if appropriate.
- If a child is repeatedly late (on time less than 80% of the time), the Headteacher will initially write to parents expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the head will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker), if appropriate.
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between school and parents, with the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker), the school will refer the matter formally to the Attendance and Engagement Service and, where necessary, legal proceedings will be instigated.

Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness

- Attendance data, and any issues relating to attendance, will be reported in the Headteacher's report at each full governing body meeting.
- Attendance will be discussed at regular staff meetings where staff have the opportunity to express any concerns.
- Reasons for regular attendance and arriving on time, well prepared for school will be raised in acts of worship and PSHCE sessions.
- Children's termly and annual reports will report to parents/carers their child's levels of attendance
- The Governing Body will analyse attendance data three times a year to identify issues and trends
- The school will work closely with the Attendance and Engagement Officer (Educational Social Worker) in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school
- The school will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the annual attendance % against national and local figures.

Summary

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- a 95% + attendance rate
- a positive partnership between parents and school, working together to improve attendance for the benefit of the children's learning
- clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by all stakeholders