

Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery

Christ Church (Church of England) Junior School

Grow and learn together in the presence of God.



Attendance and Truancy Policy

**Proverbs 22:6 Start children off on the way they should go: and even when they are old,
they will not turn from it.**

Amended and Approved: April 2025

Review: April 2028

Introduction

- This policy was developed through a process of consultation and discussion with staff and governors.

POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Introduction- Christ Church Philosophy

At Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery and Christ Church (Church of England) Junior School we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly, arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

The ethos of the Christ Church Schools is one of a happy, caring environment. We believe that children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. All staff show concern and care about each child's welfare and provide a supportive and nurturing environment.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences the school places great emphasis on this and asks parents for their support. We aim for all children to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance and 100% wherever possible.

Government Requirements

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education document states:

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

1. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
2. Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
3. Act early to address patterns of absence

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4. Ensure parents perform their legal duty to register their children of compulsory school age at school and for them to attend regularly.

How is this achieved at Christ Church?

Communication

At our parent induction meetings the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. These talks also address the need for punctuality so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being collected promptly at the end of the school day is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are collected late.

At this initial meeting parents are informed that consent to absence during term time is only granted in exceptional circumstances at the Executive Head Teacher's or Head of School's discretion.

Families who remove children for unauthorised holidays in term time may incur penalty notices and a fine.

On admission all parents are required to complete a Home – School – Child Agreement Form which states:

Parents

I/We shall:

Ensure that my child attends school on time, dressed tidily and properly equipped for learning (especially P.E.) An explanation will be offered if my child is absent.

The Pupil

I shall try to:

Attend school regularly, on time and dressed tidily.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

All parents are asked to contact school if their child is absent **on the first day of absence**.

This can be done by:

- telephoning. A written record is made of the date, child, class, and reason for absence.
- calling into the school office to see the Office Administrator to explain an absence.
- emailing the school office with your child's name and class and the reason for their absence.

All information is used to complete registers and attendance records. If no notification is received about a child's absence, Class Dojo or telephone call is made asking for verification of absence. An absence without notification will be recorded as unauthorised.

Authorised absence will be granted for attendance at medical appointments that are supported by an appointment letter or card.

Parents should keep in regular contact with the school if their child's absence continues for more than one day.

Absence Monitoring

If a child is regularly late for school or is often absent, then the class teacher or Office Administrator informs the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School. The parent/carer is informed of the concern.

In school, the attendance and punctuality of each child on roll will be monitored and tracked every 4 weeks (20 school days). Parents of children with attendance below 96% will receive a letter. (Attendance Letter 1).

Parents of children who have been late on more than one occasion in the four week period will also receive a Class Dojo and a link to a letter. The number of minutes lost learning will also be included. (Punctuality Letter 1).

These texts and letters will be sent out automatically to the parent of every child who meets that criteria unless it is clear that unavoidable absence has occurred due to illness such as vomiting, temperature or infectious disease i.e. Chicken Pox.

On the second occasion of such a letter being sent, parents will be invited to a meeting in school, to discuss their child's attendance or punctuality, and the Education Welfare Officer will also become involved in the case. (Attendance Letter 2 or Punctuality Letter 2).

If the attendance does not improve a second meeting will be called and a Notice to Improve Procedure will commence. This could lead to legal action at the end of the 10 week period.

Good attendance and punctuality is important to the education of every child.

The Education Welfare Officer meets with the Office Administrator every 4th week and offers advice and support.

Cases of persistent or unexplained absence will be followed up by the Executive Head Teacher, the Head of School and/or the Education Welfare Officer. This may include home visits, appointments at school, parenting contracts or legal action in addition to the messages and letters sent at each 4 week interval.

At Christ Church our target for attendance is a minimum of 96%. Ideally children should attend school every day. We appreciate that when a child is unwell and unfit for school, time off may be unavoidable. We do not advocate parents sending their children to school under such circumstances as this is not in the best interest of their child or their peers.

Sample letters are available on the school website:

www.christchurchfederation.co.uk/letters

Lateness

Lateness can have a detrimental effect on a child's progress and development.

The morning nursery sessions start at 8.30am with registration closing at 9.00am when lessons begin.

The afternoon nursery session starts at 12.15pm with registration closing at 12.45pm when lessons begin.

The Infant school day starts at 8.50am with registration closing at 9.00am when lessons begin.

The Junior school day starts at 8.45am with registration closing at 8.55am when lessons begin.

Children who are late miss the vital teaching at the start of the lesson and this results in a barrier to their learning. Parents and children should make every effort to arrive at school in good time.

Truancy

All staff at Christ Church are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although it is a very rare occurrence for a child to truant, if there is a concern that a child might be truanting then action is taken straight away.

If truancy is suspected, the Executive Head Teacher is notified. The Executive Head Teacher or Head of School will then contact the parent by phone and the Education Welfare Officer will be asked to complete an urgent home visit to try to establish the whereabouts of the child. If contact by telephone is not possible a letter will be sent outlining the school's concerns.

Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school so that the reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parent, then the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School will talk to the child concerned, to find out if there are any worries or problems that might make the child not want to attend school. If there are, then these concerns are discussed with the class teacher and parents and appropriate action is taken.

Where appropriate home visits take place.

Child Missing in Education and off Registering

Children who do not attend school for 20 school days without exceptional circumstances i.e. hospitalisation, can be off registered by the school. In such instances, the City Council will be notified that the child is missing in education. All efforts will be made to establish the

whereabouts of the child and the reason for their continued absence before this step is taken. Once off registered the school place becomes available for another applicant.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the SEND policy.

