

## Attendance Policy

Christ Church Primary School believes in the fundamental right of all children to have access to a good education. Pupils need to attend school for the maximum time that they are able in order to progress not just academically but also in social, emotional, spiritual, moral and cultural terms.

Parents have a duty to make sure that their child attends. The school is committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure a high level of attendance.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Parents will receive information in their child's report detailing their attendance record. Good attendance is rewarded by verbal praise, certificates for individuals presented in front of the whole school and rewards during celebrations culminating in a large end of year treat for those children with 100% attendance across the whole year (exceptions made for proven medical appointments and religious days).

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason; illness (often accompanied by medical evidence) or other unavoidable causes.

### Unauthorised absence

This includes keeping children off school for trivial reasons; absences which have never been properly explained, and children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (recorded as late after register). Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not 'unavoidable.' Children should never be kept off school for reasons such as shopping or as a treat.

If a child does not attend regularly the school may refer the child to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer from the Local Education Authority. They will try to resolve difficulties by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance failed, these officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an education supervision order on the child.

Parents may wish to contact the Attendance and Prosecution Officer themselves for advice. They are independent of the school. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

### Monitoring

It is important that the class teacher, secretarial staff and Head Teacher monitor attendance and, where necessary, involve the school's Attendance and Prosecution Officer. At present the school's Attendance and Prosecution Officer contacts the school every half term. The following monitoring arrangements will be used to ensure attendance is 96% or more.

- Any member of staff concerned about a pupil's attendance should report their concerns to the Head Teacher/SLT who will take appropriate action.
- Every half term reports will be produced for pupils who have failed to reach the required level of attendance and passed to the Head Teacher who may refer the matter to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer if absence is due to holiday leave or unauthorised absence. Trigger letters as outlined below will be sent.
- Parents of children whose attendance falls below 95% will be sent a trigger letter 1 pointing out their child's attendance (Appendix 1).
- Parents of children whose attendance falls below 90%, or whose attendance has not improved since previous monitoring, will be required to provide medical evidence for all future absences and trigger letter 2 sent (Appendix 2).
- If attendance has improved since last monitoring then a 'well done' letter will be sent (Appendix 3)
- Parents of children whose attendance continues to fall below 90% and has still not improved since previous monitoring, will be required to provide medical evidence for all future absences and trigger letter 3 sent (Appendix 4). This may be accompanied by a request to meet with SLT to determine what additional support can be put in place to support with improved attendance.

#### Illness and legitimate reasons

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school as soon as possible by:-

- Telephone - either on mobile or main landline. Messages can be left.
- Letter or note

If the school is unaware of why a child is absent first day calling will be done to try to determine reason for absence. If after a few days the absence remains unexplained and no contact has been made then this may result in a home visit. If concerns remain then the issue may be passed to the local police to do a 'safe and well check' or referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer. Missing in Education forms will be completed if concerns regarding long term absence occur.

Medical evidence will be requested for children with a poor attendance record (below 96%). This may be in the form of prescription, medical card/appointment/letter or doctor's note.

#### Lateness

We actively encourage punctuality and the school's first step is to speak to the parent or guardian of the child bringing them to school. Children must attend on time to be given a mark for a session. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Late arrivals must be signed on the electronic signing in system to ensure their child receives a mark. Registers will close after 10 minutes resulting in a late after register mark. In exceptional circumstances, such as heavy traffic, adverse weather conditions the Head may keep the registers open for a longer period. If lateness persists then the school will send punctuality letters out termly to alert parents (Appendix 5). Persistent lateness will result in parents being invited to discuss reasons with the Head Teacher.

We also monitor those who are regularly collected late at the end of the school day. The school's legal duty of care and supervision ends at 3.05 and any child who is regularly left behind may be referred to the social services. Parents are able to use After School Club facilities at a cost but it is expected that parents who are running late will call the school so that arrangements for childcare can be made.

Records are kept of children who are taken out of school during the day with a note as to the reasons why. This may also be used for monitoring of absence purposes. Evidence of medical appointments needs to be brought to the office on collection of the child.

#### Holidays

All holiday leave in term time is at the discretion of the Head Teacher however it would be in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances that this discretion is used and therefore all other requests will be refused. Requests for leave must be made in writing using leave of absence form. The school will respond to all requests in writing (Appendix 6).

If children are absent longer than requested or more than 2 weeks they may be removed from the school register and need to reapply for a school place. Where extended holiday is taken a 'contract' may need to be signed to determine a date when the child is expected back in school. All holidays of 4 days or more will be referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer. Requests will be made to see flight information to confirm the date the child is due back.

Any child who has an absence of more than 3 days must either bring medical evidence of absence or the child been seen to ensure the child is not taking term time holiday.

Parents must be aware that children who miss out on education are at an immediate disadvantage relative to their peers and at great cost to themselves. Therefore they must consider very carefully before removing their child from school for long periods.

#### Nursery and Little Angels

Where a child's nursery/Little Angels attendance falls below 80%, and after receiving Trigger Letters 1 and 2 attendance has still not improved, a letter will be sent to arrange a meeting to discuss further with parents. If there is no improvement the place will be withdrawn. However if there are safeguarding concerns then further support may be given in the form of Parent Support Worker visits.

#### Parents

Parents should feel supported and not threatened by the school's attendance policy. Parents should be aware that the attendance monitoring procedures are there to keep them informed so that appropriate action can be taken. Parents are welcome to discuss attendance concerns with the class teacher, Head Teacher or Attendance and Prosecution Officer. The school's policy will be conveyed to parents through the school prospectus, newsletters, school website and by talking to them as and when appropriate.

From Sept 17 any parent with a child starting the school will be required to sign an attendance contract (Appendix 7&8); this will include nursery children. As part of the demand for nursery places it will be expected that if a nursery child's attendance continues to cause concern the offer of a place will be withdrawn (Appendix 9); - parents will be notified a half term in advance and offered the opportunity to discuss with SLT if this is an option likely to be taken by the school.

March 17

**Appendix 1**

**Trigger Point 1**

Dear Parents/Guardian,

**Initial Attendance Concern Letter (Below 95% attendance)**

As a result of regular monitoring your child's attendance has been highlighted as a cause for concern. **(CHILDS NAME)** attendance is currently (%) for this academic year to date. You will be aware that our school is working very hard to improve school attendance and that your child's attendance needs to be least **95%+** attendance to meet government targets - **this does allow for genuine illnesses.**

Your child's attendance will now be monitored on a weekly basis **for a period of six weeks** (in accordance with the school Attendance Policy). May I also stress that research does prove that full and regular attendance does improve attainment and ultimately your child's progress - thus improving life chances and enabling your child to achieve their full potential.

If you have any concerns that you feel may have an impact on your child's attendance please do not hesitate to contact the school on 0121 552 3625.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M Long  
Head Teacher

Appendix 2

**Trigger Point 2**  
**Important Information Regarding Your Child's Attendance**  
**(Concern Letter -Below 93%)**

Dear Parent(s) of

As you are aware we continue to work hard to improve our pupil attendance levels, thus improving the life chances of your child and enabling them to achieve their full potential. Unfortunately **(child's name)** attendance has now declined to (%) and in accordance with School Policy we are now asking for you to provide us with **medical evidence for all future absences (prescribed medicines, prescriptions and doctors notes only)** The school's, and current Government targets, specify that your child's attendance should be **95%+** for the academic year **and does allow for genuine illnesses.**

Medical evidence must be in the form of a prescription or medicine bottles from the doctor or hospital letters and appointment cards. **Unfortunately, we will not be able to authorise any absences without this evidence from this point onwards regardless of reasons provided.** We hope that with this measure in place, and your on-going support, that your child's attendance level will raise quickly to nationally accepted levels.

**Parents are legally responsible for ensuring your child's regular and punctual attendance at school. I must advise you to make certain that your child resumes a regular attendance pattern as soon as possible, and that failure to do so may result in the / Local Authority Academy giving consideration to taking legal action against you - a course of action that can sensibly be avoided with your co-operation.**

If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school on 0121 552 3625.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

**Appendix 3**

Dear

I am writing to inform you that following the Notification of Unacceptable School Attendance date ....., regarding .....’s poor attendance, I am pleased to note that there has been an improvement.

Congratulations to both of you in making this improvement and I do encourage you to continue to support ..... in maintaining this improvement, as, despite the improvement, his/her attendance does not yet reach national averages although I am sure you can achieve this if the improvement is maintained.

**The school will continue to monitor attendance and I do have to explain that any further unauthorised absence may lead to legal action being taken.** Should there be any problems which cause ..... to not want to go to school please contact the school immediately and arrange to discuss the matter with the appropriate member of staff.

If there are any absences due to illness, it would be to your advantage to supply some form of evidence if possible if the absence is for more than a couple of days.

Your child’s education is important and by making sure they attend every day you will significantly improve their chances of success in their future life.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Long  
Head Teacher

Appendix 4

**Trigger Point 3**

Dear Parents of

I write to you concerning the continuing problem of your child's irregular attendance and punctuality at school **(child's name)** current attendance is only (..%) this includes **(xx)** sessions of unauthorised lateness.

The Head Teacher and the Attendance Officer have sought your co-operation in addressing this but; unfortunately, your child's irregular attendance has now reached a stage where the Local Authority/ school may consider taking legal action against you for failing to carry out your statutory responsibility of ensuring that your child receives an efficient full-time education at school. The action taken will be to prosecute you in Magistrates Court.

I am postponing a decision on legal action to enable you to make an improvement in **(child's name)** attendance at school. **If there are any further unauthorised absences in the next two school weeks an immediate referral will be made to the Local Authority and legal action will be initiated.**

If you wish to discuss your child's poor attendance and punctuality please do not hesitate to contact me on 0121 552 3625.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

Appendix 5

RE: PUNCTUALITY Letter 1

Dear Parent(s) of

As you may be aware school, is working very hard to improve both attendance and punctuality. Unfortunately X has been identified as having been late on X occasions since X resulting in X minutes lost learning alone this term.

It is understandable and acceptable that any child can be late on an odd occasion for any number of reasons, all of which should be verified by the parent/carer. However, I am sure you will agree that excessive lateness is unacceptable.

Lateness in school causes immense disruption and inconvenience, plus actively disadvantages the progress of pupils whose lessons are constantly interrupted by the arrival of latecomers. It is also often very embarrassing for the pupil to be constantly arriving late.

**Your child's punctuality levels will now be closely monitored over a period of four weeks in order that the school can see improvements. I must advise you to make certain that your child resumes a punctual attendance pattern as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority giving consideration to taking legal action against you – this course of action can sensibly be avoided with your co-operation.**

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M Long  
Head Teacher

Appendix 6

RE: PUNCTUALITY – letter 2

Dear Parent(s) of

As you may be aware school, is working very hard to improve both attendance and punctuality. Unfortunately X punctuality has continued to decline and he/she has been late on X occasions since X resulting in X minutes lost learning alone this term.

This excessive lateness is unacceptable and the lateness is now causing immense disruption and inconvenience, as well as disadvantaging the progress of your child and others. It is also often very embarrassing for the pupil to be constantly arriving late.

You are invited to discuss this further decline and the reasons for lateness as a meeting on ...Should you not be able to attend for any reason please contact the school as soon as possible to rearrange.

**I must advise you to make certain that your child resumes a punctual attendance pattern as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority giving consideration to taking legal action against you – this course of action can sensibly be avoided with your co-operation.**

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M Long  
Head Teacher



**Appendix 7**  
**Example Parent Contract - 5 lates or more**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>
<u>Attendance Previous Academic Year (if applicable)</u>	<u>Unauthorised</u>	<u>Current Attendance</u>
<u>Class</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	
<u>Reasons For Poor Punctuality/Issues Raised</u>		
<u>Agreed Actions/Targets (and by whom)</u>		
<u>Agreed Review Date:</u>		
<u>Signed:</u>		
<u>Parent (s)</u> _____	<u>Date</u> _____	
<u>Teacher:</u> _____	<u>Date</u> _____	
<u>Attendance Lead:</u> _____	<u>Date</u> _____	
<u>Head Teacher:</u> _____	<u>Date</u> _____	

## Appendix 8

### Application for leave in term-time

Dear Parent(s) of

Thank you for your recent leave of absence/holiday request form and for attending to discuss it with Mrs Bruce.

Your application for leave in term-time from X to X has been considered and declined. Should you decide to take your child/ren out of school during term-time the absence will be recorded as "unauthorised".

Christ Church Primary School does not authorise any holidays/leave taken during term time. We are working hard to improve attendance levels and we encourage families to take holidays/leave only during school holiday periods to avoid any impact on their child's education.

You have agreed to a return date of ..... As discussed, if your child does not return to school on this date their place at Christ Church Primary School may be withdrawn.

*In line with legislation and our attendance policy we may refer unauthorised leave of absence to the Attendance and Prosecution Service. Such a referral may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.*

Please be advised that parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance can be fined £60 (**per parent, per child**). If payment to the local authority is not made within 21 days (of a penalty notice being issued) the penalty will rise to £120 (**per parent, per child**).

**Should the fixed penalty not be paid, parent(s) will then be prosecuted under S444(1) of the Education Act 1996.**

We encourage all parents to support us to achieve high levels of attendance and attainment for their child or children. Therefore, we ask you to give this matter serious consideration before deciding to remove you child or children for any unauthorised term-time holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

Appendix 9

**EYFS Parent Attendance Agreement**

**Attendance Agreement**

Although not statutory, to get the best from their education your child needs to attend regularly. If you have accepted a place at Christ Church Primary School you should ensure that your child attends regularly and punctually. Christ Church Primary School therefore asks that you sign this agreement to show you are willing to work with us to achieve good attendance level, thus improving life chances and enabling your child to reach their full potential.

- I/We will ensure.....attends **every** session unless my child has a **genuine illness**.
- I/We will contact school with a reason for my child's absence on the day of absence (and each day thereafter) – **if no reason is provided, I understand this absence will be unauthorised**.
- I/We will complete a leave of absence form if requesting a family holiday during term time. I will attend a Holiday Meeting if this is requested.
- I understand if my child's attendance falls below an acceptable level, I will be contacted by the **Attendance Officer** to discuss the reasons for absence and possible support required.
- I understand that I will be asked to provide **medical evidence for all absences where my child's attendance is below 93%** in order for absences to be authorised.
- I understand that my child's place is **at risk** if attendance is consistently poor, following interventions, **and that this may result in my child losing their Little Angels/ Nursery place at Christ Church Primary School**.

Parent Signature.....Date.....

Foundation Manager.....

Head Teacher.....

**Appendix 10**

**Parent Attendance Agreement**

**Attendance Agreement**

To get the best from their education your child needs to attend regularly. We ask that you sign this agreement to show you are willing to work with us to achieve good attendance, thus improving life chances and enabling your child to reach their full potential.

- I/We will ensure.....attends **every** session unless my child has **a genuine illness**.
- I/We will contact school with a reason for my child's absence on the day of absence (and each day thereafter) – **if no reason is provided, I understand this absence will be unauthorised**.
- I/We will complete a leave of absence form if requesting a family holiday during term time (refer to Holiday Policy for exceptional circumstances that may be authorised)
- I understand if my child's attendance falls below an acceptable level, I will be contacted to discuss the reasons for absence and possible support required.
- I understand that I will be asked to provide **medical evidence for all absences where my child's attendance is below 90%** in order for absences to be authorised.
- I understand that where my child must arrive at school on time (no later than 8.55am).

Parent Signature.....Date.....

Chair of Governors.....

Head Teacher.....

## Appendix 11

Dear Parent

As you are aware we continue to work hard to improve our pupil attendance levels, thus improving the life chances of your child and enabling them to achieve their full potential. Unfortunately **(child's name)** attendance has now declined to (%) and in accordance with School Policy we are now asking for you to provide us with **medical evidence for all future absences (prescribed medicines, prescriptions and doctors notes only)** The school's, and current Government targets, specify that your child's attendance should be **95%+** for the academic year **and does allow for genuine illnesses.**

Medical evidence must be in the form of a prescription or medicine bottles from the doctor or hospital letters and appointment cards. **Unfortunately, we will not be able to authorise any absences without this evidence from this point onwards regardless of reasons provided.** We hope that with this measure in place, and your on-going support, that your child's attendance level will rise quickly to nationally accepted levels.

**Parents are legally responsible for ensuring your child's regular and punctual attendance at school if they have a registered place. I must advise you to make certain that your child resumes a regular attendance pattern as soon as possible, and that failure to do so may result in the Governing Body giving consideration to removing your child from the school roll.**

If you need to discuss further please speak to Mrs Bennington, Early Years Leader.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

**Appendix 12**

**Nursery Place at Risk – Trigger Point 3**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

**Nursery Place at Risk**

At Christ Church Primary School we continue to monitor the attendance of all of our pupils including Nursery children. In response to initial letters we have issued to you and discussions regarding **(CHILD'S NAME)** attendance levels still remain well below what we would expect and attendance is currently at (%).

I would like to request a meeting to address the non-improvement of current attendance trends and next steps as **(CHILD'S NAME)** is obviously missing out on a good foundation for his/her compulsory age schooling. A meeting has been therefore arranged to provide an opportunity for us to discuss the situation.

The meeting will be on:

.....**at school with the XXXX staff in attendance.**

If this appointment is not convenient, it is important that you contact the school on the following number as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements – 0121 552 3625.

**If you fail to attend this meeting and your child's attendance does not improve, we will have no choice but remove your child from roll.**

We are working hard to improve attendance levels and your cooperation as a responsible parent in the community would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

**Christ Church Primary School – Parent Contract Meeting**

As you are aware we continue to work hard to improve our pupil's attendance levels thus improving the life chances of your child and enabling them to achieve their full potential. As part of the school's Attendance Policy we are arranging meetings for all those pupils **who have had attendance levels of 90% or below and are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee.**

The aim of this meeting is to discuss the reasons for the previous absences and offer advice and support to enable your child to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for the rest of the academic year.

**The meeting will be held at:**

**On:**

**At:**

It is very important that you attend this meeting however if you are unable to make the above time or date please inform the school as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements, if you do not attend or request an alternative date a home visit will be made by the Attendance Officer to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Long  
Head Teacher

**Appendix 14**

**Parent Contract**

Christ Church Primary School has developed a set of procedures that are designed to improve pupil attendance. School attendance is vital if a pupil is to realise his or her full potential. This contract is designed to formalise support and action plan to address school attendance problems.

<b>SURNAME</b>	<b>FORNAME</b>	<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE PREVIOUS YEAR/TERM</b>	<b>UNAUTHORISED</b>	<b>CURRENT ATTENDANCE</b>
<b>REASON FOR PREVIOUS ATTENDANCE/ ISSUES RAISED</b>		
<b>AGREED ACTIONS/TARGETS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breakfast Club offered</li><li>• Medical evidence to be received for all future absences – this must be in the form of: doctors note/prescription for the illness/appointment evidence</li><li>• Where medical evidence is not provided a home visit may be conducted</li><li>• All absences without evidence will be recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to Attendance &amp; Prosecution Officer</li><li>• Support offered via SinglePoint</li><li>•</li></ul>		

Parent signed .....

Senior School Leaders signed .....

Date .....

Review meeting date .....



## Appendix 15

Dear Parent,

The school has developed a set of procedures that are designed to improve pupil attendance. School attendance is vital if a pupil is to realise his or her full potential.

Below is the attendance process all the schools will be following to improve pupil attendance.

<b>96% and above</b> This is the school's attendance target and your child will be on course to reach his/her full potential
<b>95%</b> Initial concern letter will be sent to all parents as attendance begins to fall. Attendance will be monitored closely.
<b>90%</b> Second concern letter to be sent <b>and a request for medical evidence before any future absences will be authorised.</b> <b>Parents will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss the reasons for the falling attendance.</b>
<b>Continued Decline</b> If attendance continues to fall a referral will be made to the Local Authority which could result in parents being taken to court.

There is a clear relationship between attendance and achievement. The school is committed to creating the very best climate for your child to achieve their full potential and attendance is a major part of this. However the best results are achieved when parents, pupils and staff work together.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support with this initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions about attendance.

### **School Attendance - What parents can do to help!**

Good attendance at school is crucial if children are to achieve their full potential. The school is committed to supporting all families in maximizing attendance. Parents can also play their part by working with the school and their children to promote good attendance.

The following points will help parents to improve their child's attendance.

- Phone school on your child's first day of absence and only allow days off for genuine illness;
- Ensure your child attends on time every day;
- Where possible, try to arrange medical appointments out of school time. Always ensure your child attend immediately before and after medical appointments if appointments are in school time;
- Avoid holidays in term time;
- Know your child's attendance figure and talk to them about it;
- Praise and reward your child's good attendance.

### **Let School Help**

Children and young people can get worried about going to school. They may say they feel unwell. You may notice a pattern or find they are worried about a particular lesson, homework, and friends or bullying. Children need to know that school staff will always help to resolve any problems they encounter. It is better to inform the school early so this can be done quickly.

#### **Parents can help by:**

- Listen to your child's concerns and speak to the school about the problem;
- Reassure them that together we can sort the problem out;
- Be firm about attendance. If they are not in school it is harder to resolve a problem;
- Talk regularly to your child about school and how they feel about it;
- Look at your child's work and praise their efforts.