



Rationale

Christ Church CEVC Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach his or her full potential. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance is important so that children can adapt better to routines, school-work and friendship groups.

Therefore, those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and more successful transition between year groups and into the next stage of education.

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard (DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance September 2022)

This document sets out the rights, roles and responsibilities for Parents and Carers, Pupils, School Staff and Governors; and the systems and procedures in place to identify how the school will deliver its aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance. It will be reviewed annually.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

Christ Church CE VC Primary School believes that it is important that Parents and Carers, Pupils, School Staff and Governors all work in partnership to encourage good attendance for all pupils. The following is a summary of the rights, roles and responsibilities for individual groups of stakeholders.

Parents and Carers

- Ensure the child(ren) in their care attend school regularly and punctually.
- If the child(ren) is/are absent to inform the school office on the first day of absence and provide a reason for the absence.
- If the child(ren) is/are absent for more than 1 day, to inform the school office of the continued absence and update as to the reason for the absence regularly.
- To avoid leave of absence in term time wherever possible. Where this is not thought possible, to write to the school as soon as possible prior to the first requested day of absence to request authorisation.
- To advise the school, by contacting the school office, immediately if they become aware of problems with attendance.

Pupils

- Attend school regularly and punctually.

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School Staff

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate and efficient systems in place to promote and support the school attendance policy, that these are adhered to and training is given where appropriate. The Headteacher is responsible for liaison with individual families and the Local Authority Attendance Service to ensure appropriate support is given where attendance concerns are identified and for liaison with the Local Authority and DFE to ensure that the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance.

However, Christ Church CE Primary School believes that all staff have responsibilities and a role to play in promoting good attendance by:

- Providing a welcoming atmosphere for children.
- Providing a safe learning environment.
- Ensuring an appropriate and responsive curriculum.
- Providing a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns.
- Being aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance.
- Being aware of the role all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils.
- Adherence to the systems and procedures in place within school to promote good attendance and highlighting any concerns to the Headteacher.
- Participation in training regarding school systems and procedures.
- Willingness to communicate with children and parents about attendance.

Governors

- Adopt an Attendance Policy and review it annually.
- Agree statutory targets for attendance at Christ Church CE Primary School.
- Ensure that they receive reports from the Headteacher regarding school attendance.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance target, or when the Governors believe there is cause for concern, to require a review of the systems and procedures in place to promote good attendance.
- To promote the strong link between attendance and educational attainment to parents and pupils where appropriate and ensure that the school attendance policy and procedures are communicated effectively.

Registration Procedures

Morning Registration is between 08.55am and 9.00am

Afternoon Registration is between 1.00pm and 1.05pm

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Each class teacher or HLTA in charge (PPA time) is responsible for marking children present in the register at morning and afternoon registration. The registers must be completed by 9.00am and 1.05pm to avoid discrepancies between classes. The class teacher must ensure that the marked register, plus any notes received regarding absence sent to the office immediately after registration.

Late Registration

Pupils entering school after registration has closed (9am) will be given a late mark in the register. This code is classed as a present mark, but displays that the pupil arrived late for school. Any pupil who arrives after 9:30 but before the end of the morning session will be given a "late after registers closed" mark (U) in the register. This code is classed as an unauthorised absence but displays that the pupil was physically present in school for part of the session. The fact that the U code is classed as an unauthorised absence means that when it is used pupils are likely to be missing significant amounts of schooling; putting their educational progress at risk.

The school monitors late arrivals and, where appropriate, will work together with parents and other agencies.

Absence

If a child is absent and the school has not been provided with a reason by 9:30am, the school will contact parents to establish the reason for the absence. If parents cannot be contacted, a visit to the home may be carried out or the local police may be informed so that a welfare check can be carried out.

Where the absence is for several days, the Parent/Carer is responsible for informing the school office of the continued absence and updating them as to the reason for the absence on a regular basis.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

In every instance it is the Headteacher who determines whether an absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. This decision is made based on information provided by parents/carers. However, because the register is a legal document, the Headteacher has responsibility to ensure that it is completed accurately and in accordance with current guidance. For this reason, it is not sufficient for an absence to be recorded as authorised based entirely on information provided by parents/carers.

Examples of authorised absence:

- Medical or Dental appointments

Notification of appointments needs to be given in advance where possible. Copies of appointment cards / letters need to be shown to office staff to confirm the appointment and for authorisation to be given.



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- Illness
- Religious Festival (up to 3 days per academic year)

Parents / Carers must request the absence required in advance in writing. Failure to do so will result in a religious festival absence not being authorised.

Examples of unauthorised absence:

- Hair appointment
- Birthday celebrations
- absences which have not been properly explained

Medical Appointments

The school office is responsible for overseeing the procedure for releasing children where parents/carers have requested and been granted authorised absence for an appointment in school time. Please note that parents should provide a copy of the appointment letter / email to the office.

Holidays in Term Time

Beneath is advice to parents regarding holidays in term time. Please note that "Exceptional special circumstances" will be: **rare, significant, unavoidable and short.**

Regulations and Guidance

The law says that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as a right.

The Headteacher may agree holiday leave in exceptional circumstances such as:

- *for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have a minimal disruption to the pupil's education.*
- *when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.*
- *where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangements is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced.*

Holidays which are taken for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- *availability of cheap holidays;*
- *availability of the desired accommodation.*
- *poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;*
- *overlap with beginning or end of term.*

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*The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 clearly make the point that the Headteacher has the final decision as to whether to authorise a holiday or not. Any request for leave should be made at least **six weeks** in advance. Holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. If a school does not agree an absence and the pupil goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised.*

Use of Penalty Notices

The school takes unauthorised absence seriously and, particularly in the case of repeated unauthorised absences, will undertake further liaison with the family, pupil and the Education Social Welfare Officer as appropriate. Furthermore, Christ Church CE Primary School may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This includes leave of absence (holidays) which are taken without a prior request being made; and those taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the holiday has been taken regardless of this advice. Christ Church CE Primary School may also request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice.

Persistent and severe absence

It is important to take a pragmatic approach when considering data and communicate accordingly. As a school in addition to termly data we do also take into consideration historical attendance information to help inform how the school responds. Our response plan is based on the guidance from Working Together to Improve attendance and DFE's responsibilities for school attendance guidance (see Appendix A)

Children missing in education

We recognise that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where we identify, or receive a report that a child is missing from education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority.

Elective home education

If a parent of a child wishes to home educate their child, they must inform the head teacher in writing. This is required to de-register the pupil, otherwise the pupil will remain on roll and the parent may be liable to prosecution for non-attendance.

When notified of a parent's wish to home educate, the school will forward the parent's communication and inform the local authority as soon as possible (where ever possible on the same day of the parent notification).

Further guidance on elective home education can be accessed through the following link:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2020/10/20/all-you-need-to-know-about-home-schooling-and-elective-home-education-ehe/>



Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Attendance Policy has a direct link to the school's Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, and the Health and Safety Policy.

The school also has policies for Children Missing from Education and follows the Local Authority Guidance with regards situations when parents deregister pupils for Elective Home Education.

Reintegrating pupils who have had long term absence

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, Headteacher, SENCO (if appropriate), class teacher and other support services will liaise with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

Appendix A DFE Parent responsibilities for school attendance

The Department for Education have produced a summary of responsibilities (September 2022) that outlines what parents are expected to do with regards their child's attendance. These expectations are:

	Parents are expected to:
All Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. notify the school by 9.30am (email admin@christchurch.n-yorks.sch.uk Call: 01756 793030) of a child's absence only request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
Persistently absent pupils (attendance below 90%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with the school and local authority to help understand their children's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with any formal support offered including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.
Severely absent pupils (attendance below 85%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barrier to attendance Proactively engage with the formal support offered including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.
Support for pupils with medical conditions or poor attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.

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Appendix B Further Information

Working together to improve school attendance (DFE 2022) and Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DFE 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

North Yorkshire Guidance on School Attendance

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/school-attendance>

North Yorkshire – Attending school

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/attending-school>

Every school day counts

<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/attendancedata/chapter1a.asp>

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One minute guide

School Attendance



Why is attendance at school important?

All parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children receive an efficient full time education, suitable to their age, aptitude and ability and any Special Educational Needs they may have. This can be achieved by regular attendance at a school where they are a registered student (or alternative provision) or otherwise e.g. by Elective Home Education. Where parents and carers are not fulfilling this responsibility, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to uphold the rights of children and young people and, where necessary, take legal action against their parents or carers. The Local Authority has a School Attendance Support Pathway in place, to assist with this duty, which includes guidance and documentation regarding early intervention strategies and the School/LA Formal Attendance Procedure; Fast track. ([see CYPInfo – School Attendance](#))

School attendance is mandatory during term times with the expectation that a child of compulsory school age, registered at a school, has an attendance of 100% unless there is a statutory reason for absence. Attendance of 90% or lower is of concern and defined by the DfE as Persistent Absence. Schools are encouraged to have clear processes to communicate with parents/carers where there is irregular attendance to seek a return to school. Evidence shows that excellent attendance is key for ensuring positive outcomes for children and young people. Missing school leaves children vulnerable to falling behind, achieving poorer outcomes at both primary and secondary level as well as post 16 choices and outcomes. Where there are unmet needs leading to a barrier to a child accessing their education all agencies need to work together to support the family.

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What can we do in North Yorkshire to support improved attendance?

Poor school attendance can be both a cause and a symptom of more complex problems in the lives of children and young people. Where this is the case, schools should initially work with the family to understand the barriers to accessing education and offer support to overcome them. This can be by home visits or meetings in school to formulate a support plan or following the Ladder of Intervention and/or consulting with the locality [SEND Hub](#). The child and family may need support from a number of different agencies to meet their needs. This support can be determined, by the completion of an Early Help Assessment/Plan (with the consent of the family), (T)eam (A)round the (F)amily meeting or referral to the Children and Families Service if unmet needs remain ongoing and become more complex (see [CYPInfo - Early Help](#))

What are the possible legal consequences for parents whose children miss school?

If support offered to the family has not brought about the required improvement in the child's attendance, the school is required to implement Stage 1 (Initial Warning Letter) & Stage 2 (Attendance Panel Meeting) of the School/LA Formal Attendance Procedure (Fast track) and the Local Authority Stage 3 (Pace Formal Caution Interview/LA Panel Meeting). The following statutory options can be used by the Local Authority as an outcome of that meeting • **Penalty Notice (PN)** - a fine of £60, offered as an alternative to a Prosecution • **Education Supervision Order (ESO)** – applied for through the Family Proceedings Court under the Children Act 1989 • **Prosecution** – pursued through the Magistrates' Courts under s444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of the most serious offence, parents can be fined up to £2,500 and/or a community rehabilitation order, or a custodial sentence of up to 3 months.

A **Penalty Notice** can also be issued, outside the Fast track Procedure, but only when an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken. In this instance, if the fine is not paid, the parent/carer can be prosecuted under s444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 and receive up to a £1,000 fine.

An **Education Supervision Order**, applied for through the Family Proceedings Court, has to be considered by law prior to legal action being taken against a parent in a Magistrates' Court. ESOs are used where there are significant welfare as well as attendance concerns. An initial consultation must be undertaken with Children's Social Care before proceeding with the application. The Order is usually granted for one year and, if breached by the parent, can lead to a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court and, by the child, an assessment of need by the Children and Families Service.

Where can I find further information?

[CYPInfo - School Attendance](#); [Elective Home Education](#); [Children Missing Education](#); [SEND Hubs](#); [Early Help](#)



Christ Church CEVC Primary School

Attendance Policy

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