

# Attendance Policy

Our distinctiveness as a school is expressed through our

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Grow, learn, serve and pray in a Catholic community inspired by the Gospel message, enabling all to realise their unique hopes and potential.*

### **We do this by:**

Celebrating achievement and effort

Helping others through our charity work

Respecting each other, being polite, thoughtful and forgiving when necessary

Including and welcoming all, especially when praying and worshipping together

Safeguarding our school community so all feel valued and cared for

Teaching knowledge, skills and values which develop the whole person

### **Statutory Duty of Schools**

DFE guidance states “all schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance, which should be set out in an Attendance Policy. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstances of the school.” The policy must be communicated to all parties and implemented consistently.

### **Statutory Duty of Parent/Carers**

The Education Act 1996 Section 7 requires parents or carers to ensure their child receives efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

### **Introduction:**

Christ the King School is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### **Why Regular Attendance is so important:**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child’s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody’s responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

### **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Give you details on attendance on request;
- Report to you three times per year on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions.
- Run assemblies, workshops and parent's information evening on raising attendance levels across the school.

### **Understanding types of absence:**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- truancy, whole day, part of the day or lessons (including pupils found during truancy sweeps).

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA):**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Attendance Panels are convened for pupils causing most concern and individual improvement targets are monitored by the Education Welfare Officer. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Education Welfare Officer.

## **Absence Procedures:**

### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us by **8.45am** on everyday of absence; (except in a circumstance where you have informed us of a fixed period of absence).
- if this has been a medical appointment documentation from the medical professional is required.
- If you know at the outset that your child will be absent for a number of days (e.g hospital admission), we may authorise their absence for a longer period of time, but request regular updates. If appropriate, work may be provided during such absence(s).

### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Telephone or text you by 8.45am.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Welfare and Attendance Officer and/or Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if attendance falls below 90%.
- Discuss with you a possible referral to the school nurse if your child has regular or repeat absence due to illness.
- Request medical information if your child has regular or persistent absences due to illness before we are able to continue authorising the absences. If no medical documentation is provided, the absences will remain unauthorised until it is received. If no medical documentation is provided, our formal monitoring process will begin.

## **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

## **The Education Welfare Officer:**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as: Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

Parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

## **Lateness:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your son/daughter misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.40 a.m. and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by 8.45 a.m. and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

*We deal with punctuality in the following way:*

Punctuality Stage	Action
1	<b>Pupil warning</b>  Pupils are informed that being late to school is unacceptable and that they need to ensure that they get to school on time in the future.
2	<b>Red comment in journal.</b>  This stage of the process will happen if a pupil has a continued issue with being late to school.  The Pupil journal must be signed by the parent/carer by the next school day and checked by their Form Tutor. If the journal is not signed parents will be contacted to address the situation.
3	<b>Referral to HoY.</b>  If there is a continued issue with a pupil being late to school the pupil's Head of Year will be involved in discussing the situation with parents. The Head of Year will make contact via phone and will try to establish if there is a reason for being late to school and if school can do anything to further support. <b>A Head of Year detention will be issued to pupil.</b>
4	<b>HOY Interview</b>  Parents of the pupil concerned will be invited in to school to discuss the situation. At this stage the pupil will be arriving to school late on a consistent basis. This will be affecting lesson progress and attainment and will also be affecting pupil attendance. The purpose of this meeting will be for the Head of Year to fully explain that the pupil is facing a significant sanction from school and that there is a possibility that this could lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued from Sefton Council.
5	<b>Referral to Assistant Headteacher</b>  The Assistant Headteacher responsible for Pupil Wellbeing will invite parents in to a meeting to stress the seriousness of the issue. This meeting will be formal and actions agreed will be recorded on the pupil's file. The meeting will outline the next steps that will involve the Local Authority intervening and the possibility of a fixed penalty notice being issued to parents.
6	<b>Penalty notice may be issued</b>

### **Holidays in Term Time:**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. **The school will not authorise term time holidays.**

All applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the school a maximum of 10 days in any academic year **may** be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of absence/leave in term time. Special leave forms are available from our welfare and attendance coordinator.

Full details of our procedures are available from the school, but it is important that you understand the circumstances when leave in term time will not be agreed by us:

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods, GCSE or any other public examinations.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below (90%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.
- When the request for leave is for the pupil to go on a family holiday

When you have submitted an application for special leave you will be contacted directly with the decision within two school days. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

### **School targets, projects and special initiatives:**

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Pupils with good, most improved and in particular 100% attendance, are recognised and rewarded in assemblies, via letters/certificates home and through our attendance breakfasts. Attendance and punctuality also feeds into our whole school rewards system. A good attendance will enable pupils to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold award, which sees pupils rewarded with trips and cinema experiences.

### **Who can you contact?**

Mrs A Ashton – Welfare and Attendance Coordinator

Mr M Dorr – Head of Year 7

Miss H Cunningham – Head of Year 8

Mr J Wilson – Head of Year 9

Mr S Mitchell – Head of Year 10

Miss C O'Kane – Head of Year 11

Mr D Morgan – Assistant Headteacher – Pupil Wellbeing

Ms A Stead – Deputy Headteacher  
Mr J Lancaster – Headteacher  
Maria Parker – School Chaplain

**Summary:**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

**Date of Policy /Review:**

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**I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at Christ the King Catholic High School.**

Signed:

Child's Name:

Form: