



# CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

## 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 Catholic High 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 pupil’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil’s absence additionally disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring pupil’s regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of parents. By law, all children of compulsory school age must attend

school. Poor attendance not only undermines a child's education and future life chances but it can also put children at risk, can compromise personal safety and encourage anti-social behaviour. Permitting absence from school without 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 Attendance:**

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school (not the parents) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.

Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks. Registers are legal documents therefore school staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Attendance marks are also recorded at every lesson to monitor pupil punctuality and guard against truancy. Information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers, preferably in writing.

#### **Authorised**

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical and dental appointments which unavoidably occur in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

#### **Unauthorised**

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 local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off 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 (registers close at 9.00am each day)
- A child arriving late after that time will be recorded as U (unauthorised)
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Oversleeping
- Absent to look after an unwell sibling
- Inadequate uniform
- Confusion over term dates

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) (as per Government guidance):**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will do considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. The school expects parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. All absence is monitored thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. Parents/carers will be informed of the concern immediately. PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system. This is combined with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Christ the King has a graduated response Attendance Support Programme and an intensive monitoring system in place.

Where attendance fails to improve this is considered a Serious Attendance Concern. The school will then use a range of strategies to support pupils and their carers to resolve the situation. These may include:

- Early Help Assessment referral
- Referral to Social Care, School Nurse, CAMHS or other appropriate available service
- Local Authority School Attendance Panel
- Educational Supervision Order (Family Court)
- Penalty Notice (fine)
- Prosecution of Parent/Carer (Local Authority, Magistrates Court)

If a pupil has been PA a letter will be sent at the end of this academic year to explain that attendance has been a cause for concern and in the new academic year (September onwards) all absences will need medical evidence or they will be classed as unauthorised.

### **Exceptional Leave in term time:**

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off during school term time to have exceptional leave. 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.

### **Holiday during 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.**

### **Exceptional Leave**

Students have a total of 13 weeks' holiday a year, therefore parents should only request that they be able to take their child out of school under **exceptional circumstances**. This is known as exceptional leave and must be applied for, in writing, to the Head teacher. In this

letter, parents/carers should make clear the reasons why it is necessary to take their child (ren) out of school. Taking holidays in term time will affect a student's education and is not acceptable. All application letters for exceptional leave must be made at least two weeks in advance of the event.

It is at the discretion of the Head teacher that a maximum of 5 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the Head teacher will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

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.

### **Absence Procedures:**

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

- Contact us by **8.45am** on 01704565121 every day 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.
- For absences that extend to a week (5 school days), some form of doctor's note/copy of a prescription/sight of medication/completed school form is required.
- For excessive and/or ongoing absence due to illness, written evidence from a consultant/G.P. 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 10.00 am.
- Ask the Attendance and Welfare Coordinator to make a home visit where there is an unexplained absence of two days or more.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance and Welfare Coordinator and/or Head of Year, Senior Teacher. 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.

**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. Persistent poor punctuality will result in sanctions being applied i.e. an attendance or punctuality contract or detention and/or penalty notice (fine) for late arrival after registration has closed.

**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.
- From 8.15am pupils can access the school building.
- The latest time a pupil should arrive is 8.35am.
- **All outside gates will be locked at 8.45 a.m.** Pupils can then only enter school at the front main gate and their name will be taken by the M.O.S on duty for the late detention at break 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.
- At 9.00am the registers are closed and they must then sign in at Student Services.

*We deal with punctuality in the following way:*

Punctuality Stage	Action
1 <b>Every late day will result in loss of break time</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. Name taken at the gate after 8.45am. Attend a detention in S3 with NOH.
2  No improvement in pupil punctuality (2 or more lates the following week)	<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  No improvement in pupil punctuality	<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  No improvement in pupil punctuality	<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. <b>A Head of Year detention will be issued to pupil.</b>
5  No improvement in pupil punctuality	<b>Referral to Senior Teacher</b>  The Senior Teacher responsible for Attendance 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. <b>A Head of Year detention will be issued to pupil.</b>
6  No improvement in pupil punctuality	<b>Penalty notice may be issued</b>

### **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 97% 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 Form of the Fortnight. Attendance and punctuality also feeds into our whole school rewards system. A good attendance will enable pupils to be rewarded with trips and cinema experiences.

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

Mrs A Ashton – Attendance and Welfare Coordinator

Mr M Dorr – Head of Year 7  
Miss C O’Kane– Head of Year 8  
Miss H Cunningham – Head of Year 9  
Mr P Wrathall– Head of Year 10  
Mr S Mitchell– Head of Year 11  
Miss N O’Hanlon – Senior Teacher i.c. Behaviour and Attendance  
Ms A Stead – Deputy Head teacher  
Mr J Lancaster – Head teacher  
Dennis Jones – School Chaplain

### **The role of the Attendance and Welfare Coordinator**

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. The Attendance and Welfare Coordinator will also try to resolve the situation by inviting Parents/Carers to a School Attendance Meeting where issues in relation to poor attendance and any difficulties with the pupil/family are discussed. The Attendance and Welfare Coordinator may, following assessment, complete an Early Help Assessment with the Parent/Carer/child and/or refer to appropriate ‘needs led’ support agencies/services.

The Attendance and Welfare Coordinator may refer to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel; Parents/Carers are formally advised of their responsibility to ensure regular school attendance. The child’s attendance will be subject to a short period of monitoring by the Local Authority and a significant improvement in attendance is expected. A Penalty Notice (fine) will be issued to those Parents/Carers whose child’s attendance fails to improve during this period of monitoring.

### **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.

### **Penalty Notice Proceedings**

Penalty Notices for absence from school can be issued by the Attendance and Welfare Service based on requests from schools.

A minimum evidential requirement of ten school sessions lost to unauthorised absence by any pupil in the current term and/or eighteen sessions lost to unauthorised absence over two consecutive terms will trigger the process.

The number of penalty notices for non-attendance which can be issued is restricted up to a maximum of two per pupil, per parent/carer, in any one school year. There is no restriction

on the number of times a formal warning may be given about the possible issue of a penalty notice.

The following circumstances are considered appropriate as reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Unauthorised parentally condoned absence
- Unauthorised leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Unwarranted delayed return from leave of absence (without school agreement)
- Persistent late arrival after the register has closed
- Truancy, including attendance and any child present in a public place during the school day where an exclusion is in place

Payment of a penalty within 28 days of receipt of the notice is £60. Payment after this time, but within 42 days of receipt of the notice is £120 (The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012).

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice a check is made by the Attendance and Welfare Service to ensure that the request meets the terms of the Code of Conduct.

### **Children Missing in Education**

No child will be removed from roll without consultation between the Head teacher and the Attendance and Welfare Coordinator. If a child is missing from education with prolonged absences that are unexplained or if a family moves away from the area but does not register with another school, the school will alert the Local Authority who will then take action according to the Child Missing in Education Policy and Procedures. Movement of children between Local Authorities and schools is tracked nationally. The Attendance and Welfare Coordinator completes the Child Missing in Education form and sends to the Child Missing in Education Co-ordinator.

### **Publication of Attendance Figures**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to Parents/Carers and to promote attendance. Equally, Parents/Carers have a duty to ensure that their children attend school. All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and students to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

### **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:

# **Appendices**

## **Attendance Procedures**

**Appendix 1**  
**Daily Procedure**  
**Whole School Target 97% +**

**Phone calls made daily for students absent from school with no reason, SH - Non PP, RW - PP, AA - vulnerable.**

**Day one**

Identify vulnerable students at risk not in school, daily visits by AA or EWO, SH to phone all absent students with no reason, RW to phone PP students with no reason absent. Text messages also sent.

**Day Two**

Further phone call to vulnerable students and follow up home visit by EWO or AA. SH to phone all absent students with no reason, RW to phone PP students with no reason absent. Text messages also sent.

**Day Three**

If no answer via phone or home for vulnerable students then send Police for welfare check. SH to phone all absent students with no reason, RW to phone PP students with no reason absent. Text messages also sent.

**Day Four and Five as Three**

Check for patterns of same days or odd day's absence, send letters home. (Check for EAL and if translation is required).

If poor attendance persists, call family in for meeting, include EWO and school health and mentor.

Put students on a monitoring period of attendance, either within school or from Sefton.

## Appendix 2

### Attendance Procedure for repeated periods of Absence:

Whole School Target **97% +**

#### Stage 1

Two periods of absence send letter home.

#### Stage 2

Further period of absence send a letter to advise no further absences will be authorised. Invite parents into school offer support via school health or external agencies if appropriate.

#### Stage 3

In house **attendance panel** with EWO, NOH and school Governor or **monitoring period** if 10 sessions in one term or 18 in two terms.

#### Stage 4

Progress to attendance panel at Town Hall to progress to Education Supervision Order.

#### Stage 5

If there is no improvement under the Education Supervision Order then a fine will be issued.