



School Attendance Policy

St Christopher's Church of England High School

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St Christopher's CE High School Mission Statement

St Christopher's is a Church of England Academy where pupils and staff work together, in the knowledge and love of God. We try to act out our faith in daily life, with Christ as our example.

Within our strong Christian, Anglican context, we seek to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of our pupils, growing together as a caring and supportive community whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of their adult lives.

We aim to achieve our mission by providing an environment which

- recognises that each member of the school community is an individual with specific needs and strengths
- fosters mutual respect and concern for others
- values the contribution made by each member of the school community
- encourages and celebrates positive achievement
- actively supports those in need.

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1. Introduction

This is a successful school and every child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all pupils to achieve their potential and aspire to excellence.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless they have an unavoidable reason to be absent. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attenders also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to secondary school and, eventually, higher education, training and employment.

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.

Our attendance target this year is 96%, but all pupils should strive to achieve 100% attendance if they can.

2. Responsibilities and expectations

2.1 Families

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually, if they are of compulsory school age and registered at a school (see appendix for details of how the law applies to school attendance and how "parent" is defined in law).

Parents and pupils should know the times the school day starts and finishes and when the register closes (see section 4, below); the processes for requesting leave (see section 3.4, below); and the process for informing school of the reason for unexpected absence (as follows).

If your child is going to be absent, parents must inform school as soon as possible and at the latest by 9.15 am on the first day of absence by calling school on 01254 232 992 or via the school's Synergy system. This message must give the reason for the absence. Parents should make early contact with school when they become aware of problems with attendance and attend meetings if concerns are identified. Parents should support the school in any agreed interventions and action plans.

Parents must also ensure that school has up-to-date contact information for themselves and emergency contacts.

Pupils' responsibilities depend upon their age, maturity and capability but they too must do their best to attend school regularly and punctually. In particular, pupils are expected to:

- acknowledge behaviour needed out of school (e.g. early bedtimes) to allow punctual attendance
- adhere to appropriate systems for registration and for late registration
- adhere to appropriate systems for signing out at Reception if leaving school during the school day.

School contact information for other attendance-related matters is given in section 2.2.

2.2 School

School attendance contacts:

- Main School: Mrs C Connor - contact for parents to notify school of a pupil's absence and day-to-day enquiries about attendance
- Sixth Form: Mrs J Braithwaite - contact for parents to notify school of a student's absence
- Mrs L Williamson, Assistant Headteacher / DSL: senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

Parents can also contact a pupil's Head of Year or Form Teacher to discuss specific attendance concerns.

The staff named above can be contacted on school phone number or via the school Synergy system.

Head Teacher:

- Lead on giving attendance a high profile.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school confirms to statutory requirements regarding attendance.
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision.
- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Facilitate regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups.

Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral and Wellbeing / DSL) - Mrs L Williamson:

- Takes the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school and in monitoring whole school attendance trends
- Makes parents aware of expectations regarding attendance matters
- Promotes high attendance at Intake Evening and in written communications (e.g. website, parents' newsletter)
- Communicates information on school systems to staff
- Delivers training for all staff re. attendance matters
- Liaises with Heads of Year and Attendance Officers on a regular basis.

Attendance lead (Mrs C Connor) and other staff with designated responsibilities for attendance:

- Retrieve voice and Synergy messages. Pass on any important information to relevant Heads of Year
- Check on absentees by visiting classrooms
- Make first day contact (by telephone or Synergy) with parents of all pupils who are absent without explanation
- Amend absence codes
- Record and monitor attendance of pupils who are receiving education elsewhere
- Follow up any unexplained absences
- Collates main school attendance data and analyses this information to identify pupil and whole school attendance concerns and to target attendance improvement support for those who need it the most, particularly vulnerable groups
- Produce reports to identify pupils with attendance concerns.
- Generates letters to send to the parents of pupils when there are attendance concerns
- Registers pupils arriving late for school and updates school system

- Keep Heads of Year informed of persistent late comers
- Liaise with the Pastoral and Well Being Teams and the Senior Leadership Team, as appropriate on all issues regarding registration, attendance and punctuality.
- Keeps a record of lates to inform Late Detentions and further interventions
- Record persistent latecomers in Synergy who are given detentions
- Work with the Local Authority Attendance Support Worker as appropriate

Deputy Headteacher/Senior Assistant Headteacher - Mrs A Spence/ Mr R O'Doherty:

- Ensures arrangements for registration are in place when staff are absent
- Provides a safe learning environment
- Ensures an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Provides a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- Is aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- Is aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils
- Sees pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff

Heads of Year:

- Make pupils aware of expectations regarding attendance matters
- Identify trends of absence
- Share information on attendance data with pupils and form teachers
- Promote high attendance in Year assemblies and by rewarding pupils who achieve high attendance (eg. certificates, badges, form awards, attendance prize draws)
- Liaise with form teachers re. concerns
- Contact parents re. concerns.
- Arrange meetings
- Liaise with Attendance Officers and Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing)
- Liaise with outside agencies (e.g. ELCAS)
- Re-integrate pupils who have had long term absence
- Promote good punctuality by monitoring lates and imposing sanctions when necessary

Form Teachers:

- Mark attendance registers on Synergy within the first five minutes of assembly.
- Monitor individuals in their form and pass on concerns to Heads of Year
- Liaise with the Attendance Officers with regard to registration and punctuality issues.

Class Teachers:

- Must take a register within the first five minutes allocated to this after lunch and update the list for late arrivals.

All school staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and a safe learning environment.
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and punctuality.
- Adhere to the procedures in place within school to promote good attendance.

- Promote the link between attendance and educational attainment to pupils and parents.
- Complete attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the head teacher.
- Discuss attendance concerns at an early stage with children and parents.
- Raise any concerns about attendance with the attendance lead and/or head teacher.

Governors:

- Ensure compliance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended.
- Designate a committee (Governors' Well Being Committee) to take responsibility for attendance issues
- Consider attendance issues and pupil data as an agenda item at all meetings of this committee (once each term) and make recommendations to staff where necessary.
- Agree an attendance policy and review it as necessary.
- Agree targets for attendance at St Christopher's CE High School.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, instigate a review of school's attendance procedures.
- Authorise the head teacher (or other designated person) to make decisions regarding leave of absence requests.
- Work with the head teacher in establishing equitable and consistent criteria against which leave requests will be considered.

Schools are bound by a range of attendance legislation and guidance; please see the appendix for further details.

2.3 Lancashire County Council (the local authority)

School Attendance Support Team

Each school has a named contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can advise schools on attendance related matters, and with whom termly Targeting Support Meetings will be held. For mainstream nursery, primary and secondary schools this will be a School Attendance Support Worker (SASW); for special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) this will be a School Attendance Consultant (SAC).

School Attendance Legal Team (SALT)

Following requests from schools for legal interventions in the event of failure to attend school regularly, the SALT undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

3. Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

3.1 Authorised absences

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 causes.

3.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. If school has followed its attendance procedures and a pupil continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may seek advice from the local authority School Attendance Support Team or request legal interventions from the School Attendance Legal Team. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy during the school day.
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily.
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed.
- Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the head teacher.
- Days that exceed the amount of leave agreed by the head teacher.

It is the head teacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar. Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend school it is better to speak to school as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

3.3 Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent absence is when a child misses 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason, authorised and unauthorised (including illness, exclusion, holiday, etc). Absence at this level will damage any child's educational prospects and we expect parents' fullest support and co-operation to address this.

At St Christopher's, we monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly. Pupils who are persistent absentees are tracked and monitored carefully and the attendance procedures below (section 5) will be followed.

3.4 Leave during term time

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested for a holiday or extended leave abroad, approval should be obtained from the head teacher before making any bookings.

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made at least two weeks in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides (using the form available on the school website or from the school office), **and**
- the head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional.

In considering the request school will also consider other factors such as:

- The timing of the requested leave, eg when a pupil is just starting at school or during assessment periods.
- A pupil's attendance record already includes unauthorised absence.
- Attendance is already a concern, or could become a concern, as a result of taking leave.
- Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year.

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 legal sanctions such as a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances, as outlined in regulation, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if leave is taken and the criteria governing removal from roll are met (see appendix).

3.5 Religious absence

School will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, eg Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.

Parents must request any additional leave at least two weeks in advance and this can only be authorised if the head teacher agrees that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as code C.

3.6 Participation in sporting events

Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the head teacher's discretion and she/he will need to discuss with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, eg the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor.

Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the head teacher and is unlikely to be approved if it would occur regularly.

3.7 Participation in performances (eg theatre, television, modelling)

Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance. A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and head teachers must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education.

Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the head teacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave request.

Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C.

Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go the [Lancashire County Council Child performance licences webpage](#).

4. Registration

4.1 Attendance registration

Morning registration is between 8.45am and 9.10am.

Afternoon registration is between 2.10pm and 2:15pm Monday – Thursday, and 1:10pm and 1:15pm on a Friday.

The school day starts at 8.45am. Pupils are expected to be on the premises at that time and that is when the registration period starts (ie when the register is taken and remains open).

When the attendance register has been taken it remains open until 10:30am in the morning and 2.30pm in the afternoon Monday to Thursday (1:30pm on a Friday).

School finishes at 3.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 2:15pm on a Friday.

4.2 Late arrival

Pupils who arrive after 8.50am must go straight to the school office at the main entrance to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. For afternoon sessions, late marks will be recorded by the class teacher.

Pupils who arrive after the register has been taken but before it is closed will be marked as code L. This is classed as late but present for the session (ie the morning or afternoon).

Pupils who arrive after the register has closed and without a valid reason for being late (such as attending a dental or medical appointment) will be marked as code U, which is classed as an unauthorised absence but indicates that the pupil was physically present in school for part of the session.

4.3 Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work, do not spend time with their form teacher getting important news and information for the day and may miss worship activities which are an integral part of our school day. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

If your child is often late you will be asked to meet with a member of the pastoral and wellbeing team and / or the Senior Management Team to discuss ways to improve punctuality, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Persistent lateness after the register has closed may result in further action, as outlined below, under section 5.

5. School attendance procedures

5.1 First day of absence

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will contact you on the first day of absence to find out what the reason is and when your child is expected to return. If we are unable to contact you, we will approach your emergency contacts and, if necessary, make a home visit. Please note that such home visits may be unannounced.

5.2 Attendance concerns

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.

- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with our attendance lead and/or head teacher.
- Parenting contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement.
- Incentive and reward schemes for individual pupils, if appropriate.
- The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including School Nurses and Primary Mental Health Workers, if appropriate.
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

At any stage, we may seek advice from advice from the local authority School Attendance Support Team.

5.3 Pupils with medical needs who have difficulty attending school

Government guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (see appendix) emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils, whether their condition is short or long term.

School will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of specific support or resources used within school or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction (please see section 6, below).

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, the head teacher, the class teacher and other support services will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

5.4 Pupils refusing to attend school

At St Christopher's, we believe that every child has a right to a full-time education, and we would not accept "school refusal" as a reason for non-attendance. In such cases, we will work with parents to identify the reasons why a child may be reluctant to attend school. We may request advice from the School Attendance Support Team and, with consent, make referrals to other external partners such as the Children and Family Wellbeing Service or Primary Mental Health Workers, as appropriate, to try to ensure the correct support is secured for the child and their family.

5.5 Promotion of good attendance

School will promote and incentivise attendance by acknowledging and rewarding good attendance by all pupils and efforts to improve attendance by individual pupils who have additional needs or challenging circumstances.

5.6 Use of penalty notices

In accordance with the Lancashire code of conduct, we may request that the local authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence. This includes:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made.
- Leave taken after a request has been declined.
- Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason.
- Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U).

The code of conduct for penalty notices and information and FAQs for parents can be found on the [Lancashire County Council education penalty notice webpage](#).

6. Alternative provision and use of directions

There are a range of circumstances when pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Pupils who have been excluded, either for a fixed period of more than 5 days or permanently.
- Pupils unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.
- Pupils required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

7. Notifications school must submit to the local authority

7.1 Admissions

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (currently Lancashire does not).

7.2 Leavers

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not).

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the required information as laid out in regulation.

In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact the School Attendance Support Team for advice on removing children from roll.

7.3 Pupils who fail to attend

All schools (including academies) must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. In Lancashire schools, this can be done via a variety of means and school can contact the School Attendance Support Team for further advice.

7.4 Children missing education (CME)

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education.

If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

Appendix 1: School attendance and the law

There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive.

Parents and carers

Duty to ensure children receive education

[Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#) covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Offence if a child does not attend regularly

[Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#), if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, ie:

- the child was absent with leave granted by the school;
- the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;
- that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the pupil to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

Compulsory school age

[Section 8 of the Education Act 1996](#) establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

Legal definition of “parent” in relation to attendance

The law requires that all “parents” are held responsible for their child’s attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. [Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) states:

Meaning of “parent”.

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or*
- (b) who has care of him.*

Thus, the definition of “parent” means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

Schools

Attendance and absence registration codes

[Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, 2022](#), explains which codes schools should use to record attendance in their registers, and specifies the DfE's expectations of schools and local authorities with respect to school attendance.

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#).

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

[The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school

[Regulation 12 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Duty for maintained schools to publish attendance data

[What maintained schools must publish online, DfE guidance](#)

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

[Regulation 12 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Duty for schools to report attendance data to Government

[Section 537A of the Education Act 1996](#) and

[Complete the school census](#), DfE guidance for schools and local authorities on what data government requires

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

[Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DfE, regularly updated](#)

Leave in term time

[September 2013 amendment to The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

This regulation does not apply to academies, though many adopt it as good practice.

Legal interventions

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.

Legal interventions are available under the following Acts, Guidance and Regulations:

- [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Section 36 of the Children Act 1989](#)
- [Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures 2015](#)

Pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools, DfE, 2023](#)

Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions: Statutory guidance, DfE, 2015](#)

Pupils with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

When considering the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). [The Technical Guidance for Schools in England](#), published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.

Regulations regarding participation in performances

[The Children \(Performances and Activities\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)

Regulations regarding removal from roll

[Regulation 8 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions

[The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)

Requirement for mainstream, state-funded schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours

[Length of the school week: non-statutory guidance, DfE, 2023](#)

Specialist and alternative provision settings are also encouraged to consider extending their core week where appropriate.

Appendix 2:

Attendance Policy Procedural Framework

This document forms part of St Christopher's Attendance Policy and will be reviewed every two years.

Linked Policies

This Attendance Policy and Procedural Framework should be considered alongside other related school policies:

- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Equal Opportunities
- Special Educational Needs
- PSHEE Policy

Procedures

Registration:

- Pupil attendance/absence is recorded using on-line registers within Synergy.
- The attendance register is taken twice daily by form teachers (am) and by class teachers (pm), within the first 5 minutes.
- Form teachers and class teachers should ensure that a formal registration takes place at each session, i.e. that the class is quiet and seated and that pupils' names are read out. (A quick head count or simply 'copying over' of a previous register is not sufficient).
- The register should be returned electronically immediately after the register has been taken.
- When the register is taken, EVERY PUPIL must be marked either PRESENT or ABSENT.
- Any pupil who arrives after the register has been taken, should be recorded as being late.
- The school office should be informed of any changes of address or telephone contact numbers.

Systems for dealing with lateness:

- Registration is at 8.45am
- Pupils arriving after 8.50am will receive a late mark.
- Pupils arriving late must report to Reception.
- Pupils educated off-site will be registered by the attendance officers. These pupils should be marked as absent by the person taking the register.
- When a pupil has been late four times in one half term, the pupil completes a 15-minute lunch time detention.
- Penalty notices may be used.
- Heads of Year are encouraged to issue "Goal" or monitoring cards to persistent late comers to encourage good punctuality.

Systems for dealing with absence

- All absences are covered by a parental phone call or email/Synergy message on the first day of absence, giving a reason for the absence
- Once a satisfactory reason has been received, the correct code on Synergy is logged.

- Any pupil who fails to provide an absence reason from parents should be referred to the Head of Year. Please note that an absence for which no record has been received will be counted as unauthorised (truancy) and will affect the school's attendance figures
- Any pupil who requests permission to leave school during the school day must bring in a note, take this note to pupil reception and receive a permit card. The pupil should show this permit card at Reception and sign out. If the pupil returns to school, he/she should sign back in at Reception.
- Should a pupil's attendance become a cause for concern, we may ask for medical evidence in order to validate the absences as authorised.
- Home visits may be carried out where we have had no communication from home, are unable to contact parents, for prolonged absence and where attendance is a concern.

Leavers / Removal from Roll

- Senior staff receive information about pupils who intend to leave the school and pass on this information to other members of staff, so that school property and equipment can be returned.
- If a pupil fails to attend or "goes missing", the Attendance Officer, Heads of Year and Well Being Officer will make enquiries and outside agencies including the police and the "Children Missing Education" team at LCC will be informed.
- A member of SMT will decide when a pupil can be removed from roll.
- The Headmaster's PA, who is responsible for admissions and the school roll will oversee completion of the Common Transfer Form, liaise with other establishments and remove the pupil from roll. Student roll changes are handled by the Sixth Form admin team.
- The Attendance Officers will inform LCC when a pupil has been removed from roll.

Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance

- The Pastoral and Well Being Team promote the need for good attendance in a variety of ways e.g. the prospectus, Parents' Newsletters, school noticeboards, year assemblies, annual Awards Assemblies, Open Evening, Intake Evening.
- Pupils with 100% attendance are rewarded in the following ways:
 - Gold Certificate
 - Attendance Badge
 - Speech Night Prize for 5 years full attendance
 - Students may receive the Senior Speech Night Prize for 7 years full attendance
- Pupils with high attendance (over 96%) are recognised by being entered into a prize draw each term
- Main School attendance figures are displayed and are shared with pupils in Year Assemblies. These figures show comparisons between year groups and form groups. They are used by Heads of Year to encourage good attendance and to set targets.
- Year 7 pupils complete work on the importance of good attendance in PSHEE lessons.
- The SENDCO and Pupil Support Department help to ensure that learning is differentiated and that the curriculum offered is flexible so that pupils' individual needs are met.
- The Attendance Officers makes contact with the parents of any pupil who is absent without notification on the first day of absence.
- When a pupil has had a long term absence and/or is struggling with the return to school, Heads of Year work with the SENDCO and Well Being Officers to give support and to structure the pupil's time, initiating a phased return and appropriate changes to the curriculum when necessary.
- The Well Being Team offer additional support to vulnerable pupils, working with individuals and small groups, to raise self esteem and promote positive attitudes to school.
- All new staff are supported by their Heads of Year in their form teacher role and are given initial training by the Assistant Head (Pastoral).
- Form teachers work positively with their pupils to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

- We are aware that pupils' attendance and punctuality records are included in school references and in their Progress File and that details of Main School's authorised and unauthorised absence rates are published in Ofsted's RAISEonline, in the DfE School Census, in LCC documents (LSIP) and in our school's prospectus each year. All Pastoral staff are keen to promote high levels of achievement in this area.
- Form teachers, Heads of Year and the Wellbeing Team liaise closely on all matters of attendance, punctuality, pupil welfare and progress. This strong pastoral system ensures that we support and encourage the whole child to flourish and be the best they can be.

Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Action Planning

The Assistant Head (Pastoral and Well Being) works with Heads of Year and the Attendance Officers to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's policy and procedures.

- The school funds the post of Attendance Officers in order for us to give a higher profile to Attendance issues, to provide first day contact for all unexplained absentees, to support the Pastoral and Wellbeing Team in their day-to-day work on attendance, and to improve our analysis of attendance data and monitoring of attendance issues.
- The Attendance Officer produces attendance data each half term and distributes it to the Pastoral and Wellbeing Team. This includes data on individual pupils, form groups, year groups, ethnic minorities, PP, F.S.M. pupils, S.E.N.D. pupils boys/girls and whole school.
- The Pastoral and Wellbeing Team use this data to monitor and work with those individual pupils whose attendance is causing a concern, liaising with parents when appropriate and providing pupils with targets for improvement.
- The Pastoral and Well Being Team hold weekly meetings during which issues of punctuality and attendance are regularly addressed, data is analysed, trends and patterns are identified, the effectiveness of registration and punctuality procedures is evaluated and changes to policy and procedures are instigated.
- The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral and Well Being) attends meetings of the Governors' Well Being Committee each term. Attendance issues are considered at each of their meetings when data is shared, attendance is monitored, policy and procedures are discussed and recommendations made.
- The attendance and punctuality record of each pupil is communicated to parents in their progress and annual written reports.
- The Synergy system enables the Pastoral and Wellbeing Team to view individual attendance records for use in e.g. parental interviews and to distribute to Main School form teachers in preparation for each pupil's annual Form Inspection.

Monitoring/intervention for individual pupils

Staff monitor and when necessary, intervene when the attendance or punctuality of any individual pupil causes concern.

The Attendance Officers monitor pupils whose attendance is below average and refers individual cases to the Heads of Year who use a range of intervention strategies depending on the nature and severity of the problem:

- Telephone call to parents
- Written letter to parents
- Pupil monitoring or "Goal" cards
- Referral to a Well Being Officer
- Home visit by a Well Being Officer
- Attendance meeting in school
- Follow-up support to aid improvement (eg. regular meeting with one of the Well Being Team, one-to-one support in school, adjustments to timetable).



**That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-
whatever they do prospers.**

Psalm 1:3



St Christopher's CE High School

Queens Road West, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 4AY

 **01254 232 992**



www.st-christophers.org

