



Archbishop Temple School

A Church of England Specialist College

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date Agreed : March 2021

To Be Reviewed : March 2022

Name of Policy: Attendance Policy

Sub-Committee Responsible: Governors' Pastoral, Community & Chaplaincy (PCC) Committee

Lead Responsibility in School: Assistant Headteacher

Source of Policy: (Please tick)

- LA:**
- Diocesan:**
- School: X**
- Other – Please specify:**

This policy supports our work as a Church school as summarised in our Vision Statement:

Purpose

Archbishop Temple School seeks to care for young people and prepare them well for adulthood, valuing the whole person.

Mission

Through our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we strive to nurture each person's ability, gifts and talents so that they can 'have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10) and use it in the service of God and other people.

Introduction

This 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 school community to feel safe, valued and attain excellence. For our young people 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 absence is unavoidable.

Why Regular Attendance is Important

Absence from school can affect your child's progress and regular absence seriously disrupts their education. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. It is your legal responsibility to ensure your child maintains regular attendance in school and is not permitted absence without good reason.

School attendance and punctuality data are detailed on references for further education, training and employment.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – pupils, parents/carers and members of staff.

To help us achieve this we will:

- Promote a culture within the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance at all times.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Celebrate good attendance through the use of reward, including recognition of individual and form achievements and the regular awarding of certificates through the House system.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole school attendance levels, including statutory targets.
- Employ a traffic light system which will alert parents/carers to declining attendance on a termly basis.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents:

- Ensure children attend regularly and punctually.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence unless previous notification has been given.
- Holidays are not permitted in term time.
- Attend meetings in school if concerns are identified.
- Participate in parenting contracts and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and cooperate in support and interventions offered by school or other agencies.

Pupils:

- Aim for 100% attendance. The school's expectation is that pupils achieve a minimum of 96% attendance.
- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school to support high level of attendance e.g. reasonable bed times.
- Attend all school sessions punctually (every lesson and form period).
- Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration, appointments out of school, etc.
- Speak to parents/teachers if issues arise that may have an effect on school attendance.
- Cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by school or other agencies.

Headteacher/Director of Pupils:

- Take the lead in ensuring that attendance has a high profile within the school and that the school conforms to all statutory requirements.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day to day responsibility for attendance matters.
- Ensure collaboration with other schools and the Pupil Access Team in order to share good practice in attendance matters, and also in the use of managed transfers.

Pastoral Manager:

- First day response: Contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided.
- Input and update the attendance registers.
- Regularly identify and monitor pupils, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups.
- Liaise with Heads of House to regularly communicate pupil attendance and punctuality to parents/carers.
- Work with children and parents to remove barriers to regular attendance and use parenting contracts as necessary.
- Provide whole-school attendance data to the local authority as requested.
- Attend local authority attendance network meetings as necessary.
- Working with Heads of House, acknowledge, celebrate and reward good attendance.

All School Staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all our pupils and provide a safe learning environment.
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns.
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance.
- Understand that pupils' attendance is the responsibility of all school staff.
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures.

Governors:

- Agree statutory targets for the school.
- Adopt the whole school policy and review regularly.
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is the school's responsibility to make this judgement, therefore information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for acceptable reasons like:

- Illness.
- Medical/dental appointments which unavoidably occur during school time.
- Emergencies or other unavoidable, justifiable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, unavoidable or justifiable.

- Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Shopping.
- Looking after siblings.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the Headteacher.
- Leave of absence that exceed the amount agreed by the Headteacher.
- Moving house.

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/carers 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 message 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 academic year, for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers 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. All our PA pupils and their parents/carers will be subject to an Action Plan as necessary and appropriate. This may include:

- The allocation of additional support.
- Increased communication between home and school.
- Regular meetings between parents/carers and the school.
- Individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities.
- Parenting Contracts and the use of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and referral to appropriate outside agencies.

All PA cases are automatically made known to the Local Authority.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, ideally before 9.00am.
- Provide the school with an absence note on your child's return to school.

If your child is absent we will:

- Alert you via Parentmail on the first day of absence as soon as we can if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the matter with our Pastoral Manager/Head of House if absence persists.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child is late for school they will miss important information delivered during tutorial time and in assemblies. In extreme cases of lateness pupils can also miss vital lesson time which will inevitably impact upon their progress. Being ten minutes late everyday throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8.20 a.m. and we expect your child to be on their respective yard by 8.15 a.m. At 8.18a.m. a warning bell sounds indicating that pupils should line up at this point. At 8.25 a.m. registration commences and closes at 8.40 a.m. Pupils arriving to school after 8.25am must report to reception where they must sign in and their register will be updated with the minutes late and reason for lateness recorded. This is vital in maintaining an accurate daily record of attendance and is essential for Fire, Health & Safety. Pupils arriving at this time will receive the appropriate mark depending on the circumstances of their absence.

Pupils arriving late in school will serve a half hour lunch detention as appropriate. This means that pupils arriving late in school without good reason will be punished in this manner. Should this become a persistent problem parents/carers will be contacted.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

It is the view of Archbishop Temple School that taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. It is therefore the policy of Archbishop Temple School that leave of absence will only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances. Regardless of the circumstances, no leave of absence will be authorised if a pupil's attendance is below 90%.

As from 1st September 2013 schools cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant the granting of leave.

All applications for leave must be made in advance using the extended leave request form. Parents will then need to make an appointment to see the headteacher in order to submit the form to the school. 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.

Leave of absence will not be granted retrospectively and will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be certain times of the year when it is very unlikely that extended absence will be authorised, these include:

- 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; dates of these will be provided at the start of each academic year.

In cases where a child has been granted authorised leave and a return date has been agreed, any further absences immediately following the authorised leave will not be authorised, unless a valid reason for the absence is given by the parent/carer.

Religious Absence

The school will authorise 1 day leave per religious festival e.g. Eid, but no more than 3 days in any one academic year. Parents must request this leave of absence in advance.

Summary

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