

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Date: Autumn 2023

Date of Review: Autumn 2024

### **Introduction**

Christ Church School aims to encourage all children to achieve the maximum level of attendance. By law, a child is required to attend regularly the school where he/she is a registered child.

### **Reception Class Arrangements**

By law, a child must attend full time education the term after their fifth birthday.

Almost all children will start full time in reception from September each year. Parents may request, in writing, part time education. As a minimum, we recommend all children on the school roll in reception should attend school full time in the term of their fifth birthday.

This recommendation is made to maximise a child's learning potential and prepare them properly for Year 1, whilst at the same time recognising that some children, particularly those that are summer term born, may need longer to adjust to being at school all day, every day.

In exceptional circumstances, depending on the child in question, the school may suggest part-time education beyond the term of their fifth birthday, if deemed appropriate for that child. This would be discussed with the parents and a plan put in place.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **School**

We expect children to attend school regularly and on time, in a fit condition to learn.

The staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will investigate all absenteeism and lateness.

The staff will support the attendance of the children and will deal with problems that may lead to non-attendance.

The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality. We will offer an environment in which children feel valued and welcomed. Children must feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent or late and that follow up action will be taken.

Every effort will be made to match the curriculum to the child's needs  
Children who find punctuality difficult will be set targets for improvement  
Children who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will have work sent home  
The Headteacher will make a termly report to the governing body on attendance matters  
The appropriate senior members of staff will liaise with external agencies when appropriate.

### **Parents/Guardians/Carers**

Parents/Guardians/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a suitable condition to learn.

Parents/Guardians/Carers are responsible for informing their child's school if he/she is absent. This must be done on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed in writing when the child returns to school.

Parents/Guardians/Carers should not book holidays during term time. Parents do not have the automatic right to take holidays in term time.

Parents/Guardians/Carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registers will be called promptly at 8.50am and 1.20pm and will be marked in accordance with the list of officially recognised symbols set out in the registration guidance.

If a child is persistently late, the parents/guardians/carers will be contacted.

Parents/Guardians/Carers are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed, the child's absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' late for that session.

The Headteacher will monitor all registers each half-term to ensure that correct procedures are being followed.

## **AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

The Headteacher is responsible for decisions relating to authorised and/or unauthorised absence.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent/guardian/carer does not in itself authorise an absence, and only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

Absence can be authorised if:

The child was absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the Governing Body of the school')

The child is following Government guidance for isolation due to a positive case of Covid-19

The child was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause

The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body of which the child's parent/guardian/carer belongs

There is a family bereavement

The child is attending an interview for a place at another school

The child is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition

The child is attending a child referral unit

The child is participating in a licensed public performance or event (the number of these is monitored closely for negative impact on the child's attendance & educational outcomes)

The child is participating in an exceptional special occasion (e.g., The graduation of an older sibling)

The leave of absence is authorised by the school for exceptional family reasons (e.g. a wedding day or funeral)

Absence should be unauthorised if:

No explanation is forthcoming

The school is dissatisfied with the explanation

The child stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings

The child is shopping during school hours

The child is absent for unexceptional special occasions (e.g., the child's or a sibling's or a parent's birthday)

The child is away from school on a family holiday

## **Holidays**

All holidays in term time are unauthorised. Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. Fines may be issued.

## **Chess Valley Primary Learning Trust**

Registered address: The Common, Rickmansworth Road, Chorleywood, Herts, WD3 5SG

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## **Leave of Absence**

Requests for leave of absence are made to the Headteacher with *at least 3 weeks'* notice prior to the first day of absence requested. Leave in term-time can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher decides if the circumstances are exceptional, taking into account everything they know about the reasons given, the attendance record of the child (or child's) and any other information provided.

## **Procedures for following up Absences**

If a child is marked as absent without an explanation, the school office will make a first day telephone call to the parent/guardian/carer.

If a child is persistently absent the parent/guardian/carer will be invited to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

If a child returns after a period of absence without an appropriate explanation offered, the school office in consultation with the Headteacher will contact the parent/guardian/carer.

## **Review of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher in consultation with the Headteacher & People Working Group (PWG) annually (or earlier if appropriate).

Date: Autumn 2023

Next review: Autumn 2024