



Attendance Policy & Procedures

Approved by Governors on 23 February 2016

Review Committee: Student Support

Review: On change



ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Mission Statement

“Love one another as I have loved you” (John, 15)

We believe that Jesus Christ and his Gospel Call – to love God and all people – are at the heart of what we do.

He inspires us, as children of God, to uphold the dignity of each individual.

We strive to develop a community in Christ which fully supports all in achieving their potential – spiritually, academically and personally.

Aims

Following from our mission statement, we at Christ the King aim to foster good relationships between teachers, students and parents in a partnership of mutual responsibility and promoting encouragement and the praise of students. The principle aim of the Attendance Policy is to work with students and parents in a constructive way in seeking and promoting the value of education.

General Objectives

- Christ the King expects all students to achieve a minimum target of 97% each academic year. This is the whole school target for attendance.
- Christ the King aspires to be a friendly, attractive and inviting environment in which all students feel secure and comfortable.
- The curriculum at Christ the King aims to meet the needs of students using a variety of appropriate teaching methods. The school encourages good classroom practice in which all students gain regular feedback, and formal and informal awards are given.
- Students at Christ the King are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life and made to feel part of the school community.
- Improving school attendance is considered a role that is the responsibility of all subject areas and to which all can make a valuable contribution.

Specific Objectives

- To increase the awareness of students, parents, teachers and Governors of the need for regular attendance.
- To increase awareness and reach agreement with parents about acceptable and unacceptable attendance and punctuality.
- Correspondingly to attempt to reduce the amount of unauthorised absences.
- To attempt to improve the percentage attendance for individual tutor groups, houses, year groups and the school as a whole by developing:
 1. A school policy for consistent rewards and attainable targets for attendance and punctuality.
 2. A whole school commitment to supporting students with learning difficulties.
 3. Recognising, acknowledging and catering for critical phases: Primary/Secondary; Key Stage 3 to 4.
 4. Recognition and support for students experiencing difficulties “returning to school”.
 5. Implementing school policies on equal opportunities and bullying.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Staff and Governors expect full and punctual attendance from all students.

Principles:

- Parents of registered students have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.
- 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 each absence is always required.
- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason (e.g. illness or other unavoidable cause).
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy, absences which have not been properly explained, and children who arrive at school too late to receive a mark in the register.
- Any problems with regular attendance wherever possible are resolved by the school, the parents and the child. If a 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 may make things worse.
- Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving problems together. This is nearly always successful. If problems cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to outside agencies. They will also try to resolve the difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the school can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

1. Illness and Other Legitimate Reasons.

If a student is unfit for school, parents are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 10.00am. Without this contact, when the student returns, he or she must bring a written note signed by the parent for each period of absence. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a child's illness, such as a doctor's note, may be requested. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time; notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after younger children, day trips, hairdressers appointments etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which take place during school time.

2. Contacting Home.

If a student is absent at morning registration and the school has not received an explanation for the absence by 10.00am, the School Attendance Officer will contact the parent by telephone as a matter of concern.

3. Holidays.

All holiday leave will be unauthorised in term time except in exceptional circumstances, this at the discretion of the Headteacher. All holiday requests have to be made in advance in writing as soon as possible. (Application forms are available at the school office).

If a holiday is taken in term time this will be unauthorised on the student's school registration certificate and could result in each parent receiving a penalty notice. If the penalty notice is not paid within the set timescales this may result in prosecution.

4. Lateness.

Students must attend on time to be given a mark for that session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. Parents are expected to ensure that students are present at registration which begins at 8.40am. A late mark is given if arrival is between 8.41am and 9.30am. Absence marks are given if arrival is after 9.30am.

Continuous lateness could result in a penalty notice.

Procedures for House Tutors

- All tutor groups will be registered on SIMS or a paper register will be sent to reception.
- Registers must be completed accurately – this is a legal document.
- House Tutors will pass any letters or reason for absence onto the Achievement Co-ordinator.
- Students returning to school after an absence will bring a note from parents. House Tutors will collect notes and pass information onto Achievement Co-ordinators for entering onto SIMS, note will be filed in students personnel files.
- House Tutors who are not happy with the note for whatever reason will inform the Achievement Co-ordinator at weekly meetings and explain their concerns.
- House Tutors should be aware of students whose absences are becoming a cause for concern and should refer these to their Achievement Co-ordinators. These may be based on frequency of absences (even with notes from home), broken weeks, poor excuses from home for absences, absences following a particular pattern i.e. same day taken.

- Students will have a 'return to school' meeting with the Attendance Co-ordinator.
- House Tutors will raise awareness of the importance of good attendance by talking to the whole group and individual students on a daily and weekly basis, and reward them with commendations for excellent or improved attendance.

Procedures for Achievement Co-ordinators

- Students referred to Achievement Co-ordinators for failure to provide a reason for absence will be investigated. Achievement Co-ordinators may try to contact parents directly by phone or issue the standard letter of concern for completion.
- Achievement Co-ordinators should inform House Tutors of any new information regarding these absences for inclusion at the weekly house meetings.
- Failure by parents to provide this information will result in a second letter of concern being issued.
- If this also fails to elicit a response, the student will be marked as an "unauthorised" absence for that particular period of time, and Achievement Co-ordinators may decide to monitor student's attendance with an Attendance Card.
- Achievement Co-ordinators will speak to students whose erratic attendance (with or without notes) has been spotted by the House Tutor. If the Achievement Co-ordinator deems it necessary, he or she may contact home directly, ask parents into school or put the students on an attendance card.
- If this course of action brings about no improvement then the student should be referred to the Attendance Co-ordinator as a cause for concern.
- Achievement Co-ordinators should liaise closely with the Attendance Co-ordinator, informing them of all the current concerns and on-going situations.
- Achievement Co-ordinators should emphasise the importance of good attendance at assemblies. The presentation of certificates at the end of each term and the resulting prize draw is an ideal opportunity for this.

Procedures for Attendance Co-ordinator

- The Attendance Co-ordinator will monitor whole school attendance and will issue a letter to parents at the beginning of each school year outlining school expectations, procedures etc.
- Attendance Co-ordinator along with admin officer will monitor attendance generally across the school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will discuss causes for concern with Achievement Co-ordinator.
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will work with student whose attendance and lates are a cause for concern. This will include target setting and tracking.
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will contact parents/carers with concerns re: students' attendance and lates. This may include home visits, when no reasonable reason has been given for absence or no contact can be made with home.
- The Attendance Co-ordinator every term invites parents/carers into school to Attendance Panels with the Headteacher.
- If students attendance falls below 80%, there are concerns about the amount of time off, no reasons for absence are given and parents cannot be contacted, the Attendance Co-ordinator may feel it necessary to raise a Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- The Attendance Co-ordinator after working in school with the student and family will issue a warning letter informing the parent/carer of the students failing attendance and requesting that they attend a meeting in school to discuss the attendance. If no improvement is seen a 2nd warning letter will be issued inviting them to come in and discuss attendance. After 10 unauthorised absence sessions (5 days) have been recorded within a term or 14 sessions (7 days) over two consecutive terms, and no improvement has been made, Penalty Notice papers are issued to the court officer for a Penalty Notice to be issued.
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will also complete Penalty Notice papers for students who are persistently late throughout the school year.
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will pass this information to all necessary personnel: Achievement Co-ordinators, Senior Leadership Team etc.
- Praise Postcards will be sent home at the end of each term for Excellent Attendance and Improved Attendance.
- Throughout the school year the Attendance Co-ordinator will organise Attendance Trips/Competitions for students with outstanding or improving attendance.

Procedures for Office staff

- All calls received from parents/carers with reasons for absence are entered in SIMS Lesson Monitor.
- First day of absence calls are made once all registers have been taken in SIMS Lesson Monitor. If it is not possible to contact parent/carer for a reason of absence, then a letter is sent home.
- Students arriving later (after 8.40am) are recorded in the late book and a late mark and minutes late are recorded in Lesson Monitor.
- Students will be on After School Detention on their second and subsequent lates in one week. (30 minutes for 2 lates, one hour for each subsequent late).
- Persistent absentees are asked to provide evidence of any medical appointments or copy of prescription before any absences are authorised.
- Any student who leaves school during the day signs out at the office and the mark entered in Lesson Monitor.
- Students presenting themselves at the office as unwell are encouraged to go back to class if at all possible, but are sent home when necessary.
- Weekly reports are produced for Achievement Co-ordinators and Attendance results by house and by tutor group are uploaded onto the briefing notes and the website.
- Any requests for holidays in term time are sent a letter advising them that the absence will not be authorised. If the absence is for more than 5 school days then the parent/carer is invited to see the Headteacher to discuss the matter and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Improving Attendance – some good ideas

- “Attendance and Punctuality” weeks designated – more spot checks occur, House Tutors should focus on importance of good attendance.
- Students should monitor their own attendance – complete weekly records and set themselves targets. Their success will be evaluated termly, and commendations awarded by House Tutors each week, and referred onto the Governors’ Student Support Committee.
- Tutor Groups should have attendance charts on walls. An overall target % should be set (realistic if the Tutor Group has long-term absentees).
- The Attendance Co-ordinator will award prizes on a termly basis to the Tutor Groups who have met or exceeded their targets.
- Attendance Panels to be held on a REGULAR basis – end of Autumn and Spring Terms.

Appendix A

Penalty Notice Policy.

Penalties were introduced in September 2008 and are used in certain circumstances. They have been proved to be most effective with students whose attendance is just below or below the acceptable (80-92%). Students whose attendance is below this level usually need other agency intervention.

Fixed Penalties will be issued to:-

1. Students with 10 or more sessions of UNAUTHORISED absence PER TERM.
2. Students with 14 or more sessions of UNAUTHORISED absence over 2 CONSECUTIVE TERMS.
3. Students whose parents / carers fail to attend ATTENDANCE PANELS (at second invitation).
4. Students who take UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAYS in term time *

Parents can receive more than one penalty notice in a year.

As Fixed Penalty Notices can only be issued in the case of UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE, it is essential that student absence is recorded with the correct letter code. Only the Attendance Co-ordinator and Attendance Administrator can enter codes.

ONLY SCHOOL can AUTHORISE or UNAUTHORISE ABSENCES. Just because a reason has been given does not mean that the absence is authorised. Achievement Co-ordinators and Form Tutors must track Medical / Illness absences (M / I). In the case of students with a large number of these, Achievement Co-ordinators must contact home or a letter must be sent explaining that no more absences will be authorised without some form of medical proof (prescription, medication, doctor's note etc).

* Penalty Notices could be incurred for withdrawing a student during term time for family holidays. No absences during term time are authorised, a Penalty Notice will be issued.



Appendix 2

Dear Parent / Carer

As you know, at Christ the King we place a high priority on good attendance which is essential to your son or daughter making good progress.

We have improved our overall attendance from 87.1% in 2006-07 to 96% in 2012-13 which is an excellent improvement and has definitely improved overall student progress.

At the start of the new school year all students are on 100% attendance – until they have time off.

Here at Christ the King we expect our students to have 97% attendance over the year.

In line with government recommendation fixed penalties were introduced from September 2008 and were issued to –

1. Students with 10 or more sessions (5 days) of UNAUTHORISED absence PER TERM.
2. Students with 14 or more sessions (7 days) of UNAUTHORISED absence OVER TWO CONSECUTIVE TERMS.
3. Students whose parents / carers fail to attend ATTENDANCE PANELS (at second invitation).
4. Students who take UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAYS in term time.

Please ensure that in the event of an unavoidable absence of your son or daughter due to illness, etc that you contact school before 8.40am on the day of absence and provide them with a note explaining the reason for their absence when they return to school.

Your continued support in these matters is very much appreciated and we look forward to another outstanding year.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



CATHOLIC
TEACHING
ALLIANCE



CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Lawrence Avenue, Frenchwood, Preston PR1 4PR
T 01772 252072 F 01772 885674 E reception@ctk.lancs.sch.uk W www.ctk.lancs.sch.uk

HEADTEACHER - Mr D Callaghan BA (Hons), NPQH