

Christ the King Catholic Primary School

Easton Hill Road
Thornbury
Bristol
BS35 1AW
school@christthekingprimary.co.uk
01454 866680

DIOCSE OF CLIFTON



Making a difference by
Inspiring a love of life and learning
We build strong foundations within
God's loving hands

Attendance Policy 2025-26

Authors		Admissions Committee	
Date approved by Admissions Committee		Chair of Committee	Mary Baskerville
Date ratified by Full Governing Body	October 25	Chair of Governors	
Start Date	October 25	Head teacher	Mary Mainwaring
Review Date	Sept 26		

Author/Person Responsible	Head Teacher – Mary Mainwaring
Date of Ratification	27th November 2014
Review Group	
Ratification Group	
Monitored By	
Review Frequency	Every 1 Subject to local education authority and/or national policy change
Review Date	Sept 26
Previous Review Amendments/Notes	Sept 26
Related Policies	
Chair of Committee Signature	Mary Baskerville and Gill Brooks

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices:	Attendance	DATE:	27th November 2014
EIA CARRIED OUT BY	Mary Mainwaring	EIA APPROVED BY	Mary Mainwaring

Groups that may be affected:

Are there concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for a positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly; issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		N/A
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication)		N/A
Gender reassignment (transsexual)		N/A
Marriage and civil partnership		N/A
Pregnancy and maternity		N/A
Racial groups (consider language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)		N/A
Sex (male, female)		N/A

1. Rationale

Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are the foundations for academic achievement and personal development. They establish a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available at school and underpin the basis for the world of work. Attendance and punctuality are strongly linked to students' well-being and safety.

2. Guiding Principles

We are committed to ensuring that all students benefit from the opportunities available at Christ the King Catholic Primary School. Our expectation is that students arrive on time and attend regularly; we will actively promote this ethos throughout the school community and encourage our students to achieve this. Where this expectation is not met we will identify and address the barriers that prevent this. At Christ the King Catholic Primary School **excellent regular attendance is considered to be 98%** or higher.

We will set an attendance target for the school community each academic year (currently 96%) as we work with families to reduce absence and raise attendance.

3. Responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that **parents/carers** have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of school age attend school regularly and punctually and that they receive an education suitable for their aptitude and ability. Where this is not the case school will provide ongoing support as needed or may, in some cases, request Penalty Notices or legal proceeding in conjunction with the Local Authority.

The school have a legal responsibility for maintaining school registers and taking the register twice a day. The school also has a responsibility for reporting absence to the Local Authority. We also have safeguarding responsibility and duty of care to all our students.

Pupil responsibilities – we encourage our pupils to become independent young people as they grow older and encourage them to improve their attendance and punctuality.

4. Attendance

- We will promote high attendance and punctuality through assemblies and class discussions, always reinforcing the link between attendance, achievement and enjoyment of learning.
- The school will communicate attendance matters to parents via text; telephone; email; letters and through the school website.
- We will talk to pupils about their attendance as they move through KS2 and discuss reasons for any late arrivals with both pupils and parents

5. Absence from school

There are only two categories of absence from school:

Authorised – approved

Unauthorised – not approved

Only the Headteacher or Deputy Head (as delegate) can approve an absence from school. That is the law.

Absence will be recorded using the code recommended by the Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance.

Authorised (approved) absence – types of authorised absence that may be approved:-

- Leave of absence – requests must be put in writing to the Head Teacher and will be considered on a case by case basis. The school does not provide forms for completion in these circumstances.
- Medical absence for appointments – at Hospital or Orthodontic appointments. (Non urgent, routine check-up appointments should be made for after 3.30pm or during the 12 weeks of school holidays over the year.) Students are expected to be absent for the minimal amount of time and not absent for the whole day.
- Illness
- Religious observance – the Head Teacher must be informed of this in advance.
- If a student is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised (not approved) absence – types of absence that will not be approved

- Absence due to birthday, shopping for uniform, looking after family members.
- Holiday in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed to by the Headteacher – in line with changes to the law implemented in 2013.
- Late arrival to school after the register has closed at 9.15 am has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

This is not an exhaustive list but just gives examples of unauthorised absences. Only the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher (as delegate) can authorise an absence from school. That is the law.

All absence – authorised and unauthorised (including lateness) – will be analysed and subject to challenge to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly.

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence (01454866680) and each day thereafter informing the school of the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.

6. How our policy works in practice

Punctuality

- Pupils who arrive late to registration after 9:00am are recorded as L (late before registration closes.) Frequent late arrival will be challenged by the attendance team and letters sent to parents. Persistent late arrival will result in parents and pupils being asked to attend a meeting with the Education Welfare Consultancy.
- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed at 9.15am, this is recorded as U (unauthorised late arrival.) Ten unauthorised sessions over a 10-week period can result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.
- We will at times operate a late arrivals/check at school with the Education Welfare Consultant. Parents will be challenged about the reason for the late arrival of their children, this is followed up with a daily telephone call to parents whenever possible.

Medical appointments

- We monitor the amount of lessons missed due to medical appointments carefully.
- We acknowledge that hospital and specialist clinic appointments, including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a student having time out of school. Our expectation is that the minimum amount of learning is lost. We will seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. Proof of unavoidable medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school.
- Routine, non-urgent appointments must be made after 3.30pm and during the 12 weeks of school holiday during the year.

Illness

- Pupils are likely to experience bouts of illness from time to time. Some pupils will be managing chronic or more serious medical conditions that impact on their attendance. We will support pupils in these circumstances to ensure they do not miss out on their education.
- When a pupil is identified as having frequent absence for reasons of minor illness, or a more serious longer-term illness, a meeting will be arranged to discuss this with the Deputy Head teacher and provide any support required.
- When absence for pupils has been high due to illness, we will also ask for evidence to show medical advice has been sought.
- If a child is off for more than three days, the family needs to seek medical advice and a home visit from school may happen if no medical evidence is shown to the school.

Holiday absence in term time

- If a parent feels there are exceptional circumstances that support a request for leave of absence in term time; they must put the request in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head teacher or Deputy Head Teacher will respond to these requests.
- Each case will be considered individually, and the decision communicated to the parents. Governors have adopted a zero tolerance to absence in term time for holidays and agreed that where parents ignore the policy, cases will be referred to the Local Authority for the issuing of a Penalty Notice. Any pupil who does not meet 'excellent regular attendance' expectations (98%+) and 10 unauthorised absences in any 10-week period may be subject to a Penalty Notice.(see Appendix 2.)

Children missing education

- We have a duty to inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is on the school roll, not in attendance and whose whereabouts we have not been able to establish. This particularly applies to students who move to another authority or country but are not yet in education but may also apply to pupils whose parents have not contacted us to explain why their child is not in school.
See Children Missing Education Policy

Home education

- Parents have a right to educate their children other than at school. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from school to pursue this option, this decision must be put in writing to the Headteacher. The school will then complete a form with the students' details and send to the Local Authority.

7. Procedure

Concerns about absence from school and the likely impact on a pupils' progress will be communicated to both pupils and parents through our attendance procedures. Please see Appendix I.

Daily

- ✓ It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence by phoning or emailing the school on 01454 866680 or school@christthekingprimary.co.uk
- ✓ The School Office collates messages left by parents/carers regarding absence and enters correct code in register
- ✓ Teacher takes attendance register and enters present or absent code
- ✓ Class teacher takes register in mornings and afternoons.
- ✓ School Attendance Officer enters late arrival marks in register
- ✓ School Attendance Officer contacts parent/carer to follow up reasons for school not being informed of pupil absence.
- ✓ School Attendance Officer updates registers

Weekly

- ✓ Attendance for all students is monitored by Deputy Head Teacher in consultation with the School Attendance Officer and SG Education Welfare Consultancy. Particular focus is on those pupils below 95%, those pupils who have a high number of broken weeks and pupils who are identified as being part of a vulnerable group
- ✓ Attendance issues shared with staff team where needed.

Monthly

- ✓ Meetings between Deputy Head/SENco, Headteacher and Education Welfare Consultants regarding interventions with students below 95%, with high number of broken weeks and particular groups of students where no improvement is shown. School Attendance Meetings are set up with students, parents and the Attendance Manager
- ✓ Standard letters to parents of pupils with below 90%
- ✓ Standard letters to parents of pupils with high number of broken weeks
- ✓ Standard letters to parents of pupils with 10 or more late arrivals
- ✓ School attendance meetings with parents as agreed
- ✓ Report for Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team

School Attendance Meetings with parents follow a staged process with the aim being to investigate the reasons for low level of attendance and to look at what is needed to secure and sustain an improvement. Formal procedures are implemented when this intervention does not bring about change. Please see Appendix I

8. Personnel

School Attendance Champion

At Christ the King Catholic Primary School, this will be the Head Teacher, supported by the Deputy Head, SLT and School Office Team.

Key roles will include:

- Meeting weekly monitoring attendance over the last week and respond to any concerns.
- Having informal conversations with parents when attendance is declining or where there is regular lateness
- Responding to any requests for absence in term time
- Meeting with the Education Welfare Consultants termly
- Reporting back to SLT and Governors on attendance concerns and data.

The School Office

At Little Stoke Primary School this is the Administrative Assistant.

Key roles include:

- collating messages left by parents/carers regarding absence and enters correct code in register
- Entering late arrival marks in register
- Contacting parent/carer to follow up reasons for school not being informed of pupil absence.
- Updating registers
- Reporting concerns to Deputy Head Teacher / Head Teacher

SG Education Welfare Consultancy

Key roles include:

- Providing professional support and guidance, including necessary legal processes, in a package of support to ensure good attendance at our school
- Provision of casework, consultation and awareness sessions, so staff can identify, track and improve attendance to better-support pupils' learning outcomes
- Casework support is designed to ensure that no attendance issues drift but are appropriately addressed and handled in a timely fashion
- Keeping schools informed and staff trained on new and emerging initiatives to help promote and maintain good attendance
- The consultant will attending school to monitor school attendance, hold attendance meetings with parent/carers for individual pupils with poor attendance, track and monitor attendance, and suggest ways to improve attendance. The consultant may also advise, make recommendations on the school attendance policy in line with government legislation.
- Further sessions may take place to promote awareness during new pupil intake times, school assemblies, as drop-in surgeries, at parent's evenings, on INSET days, and for new staff to ensure effective first day contact.
- Informing staff of new and emerging support – including attendance punctuality and initiatives, register sweeps, early bird, and late gate initiatives.

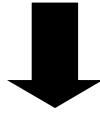
9. Formal guidance informing this policy

- ❖ Education Act 1996 & 2002.
- ❖ Pupil Regulations 2006 amended April 2013
- ❖ Parental responsibility measures – regarding Penalty Notices (Fines)
- ❖ Working Together to Safeguard Children DFE 2013 – keeping children safe.
- ❖ Educating Children with Health Needs – DFE Jan 2013 – Ensuring children with health needs do not miss out
- ❖ Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – June 2014
- ❖ Children missing education – children who are not on roll of school
- ❖ School Attendance – DFE August 2020
- ❖ Parental Responsibility Measure - Nov 2013
- ❖ South Gloucestershire Council local code of conduct with regards to issuing of Penalty Notices – updated April 2017
- ❖ Working together to improve school attendance – August 2024

APPENDIX I

Flow-Chart of Actions

LETTER 1 – Cause for concern AMBER	Attendance and/or punctuality is a cause for concern
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LETTER 2 – Invite to SAM AMBER	No improvement after 4 weeks – invite both Parents/Carers to School Attendance Meeting (SAM)
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During the School Attendance Meeting (SAM)	If appropriate: Medical Letter/Medical Action Plan completed and Medical Consent form signed by Parent/Carers. 4 School weeks from date of SAM review of attendance and/or punctuality to take place. If no Parent/Carer attends then the Education Welfare Officer will complete the Attendance Action Plan and ensure a copy is sent home
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EITHER

LETTER 3A GREEN If attendance and/or punctuality has improved since SAM	LETTER 3B AMBER Invite to SAM Review If no improvement has been made since SAM then Parents/Carers invited to a review meeting.
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	At this meeting an appropriate attendance target will be set and reviewed for next 4 school weeks.
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IF NO IMPROVEMENT

School invite Parent/Carers to Attendance Panel Meeting	
LETTER 4 – Invite to Attendance Panel Meeting RED	School invite Parents/Carers to Attendance Panel Meeting - 6 school weeks given to improve attendance and/or punctuality




LETTER 5 – Invite to Attendance Panel Review Meeting RED	Local Authority send Attendance Panel Review meeting invitation letter to Parents/Carers and invite a representative of the school.
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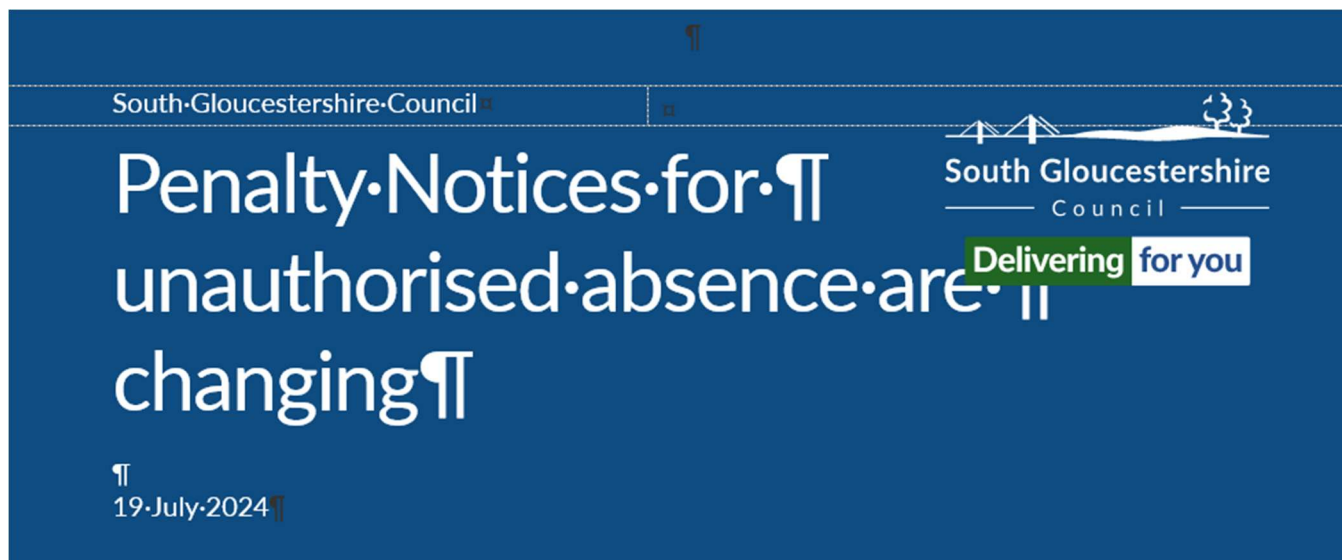
REVIEW MEETING TAKES PLACE



EITHER

<p>Improvement in attendance and/or punctuality since Review Meeting.</p> <p>Further review meeting maybe set</p> <p>or</p> <p>School continues to monitor if Improvement to attendance and/or punctuality is not sustained prepare for prosecution</p>	<p>No improvement in attendance and/or punctuality since last review meeting</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  PREPARE PROSECUTION </div>
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Appendix 2



What you need to know if your child is absent (unauthorised) during term time – from September 2024 onwards

Unauthorised absences will be monitored on a rolling 3-year basis (including between schools and different local authority areas).

Penalty Notices can be issued when there have been 10 unauthorised absences (1 school day = 2 sessions, 5 school days = 10 sessions). The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence within 10 school weeks. Penalty Notices are issued for any term-time or irregular absences that are unauthorised (for example, a 5-day term-time holiday) - whether these absences are taken consecutively or cumulatively over a period of 10 school weeks.

1st Penalty notice

The first Penalty Notice is issued for term time absences or irregular absences, the amount will be:

- **£80** per parent, per child (if paid within 21 days of issue)
- **£160** per parent, per child (if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of issue)

No. of parents	No. of children	Fine amount up to 21 days	Fine amount after 21 days but within 28 days
1	1	£80	£160
1	2	£160	£320
2	3	£480	£960

2nd Penalty notice

The second Penalty Notice is issued for term time absences or irregular absences, issued to the **same parent** for the **same child**, the amount will be:

- **£160** per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days). This is a flat rate. **There is no discount for early payment.**

No. of parents	No. of children	Fine amount up to 21 days	Fine amount up to 28 days
1	1	Not applicable	£160
1	2	Not applicable	£320
2	3	Not applicable	£960

Further offences

The third time an offence is committed for unauthorised term time or irregular absences **within 3 years** by the same parent for the same child (including those from other schools or Local Authorities) may result in an automatic request for Prosecution.

Education Act: 1996: It is your responsibility as the parent/carers to ensure your child's school attendance is on a regular basis and if you fail to do this without good cause, you are liable to prosecution. If found guilty of this offence you could be liable to, amongst other things, a fine of up to £2500 and/or a custodial sentence of up to 3 months.

Appendix 3



Application for Leave of Absence from School during term time

Dear Applicant,

All schools **by law** must follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance relating to school attendance. They must use the appropriate national attendance or absence code, and follow the criteria set out within the guidance. The statutory guidance states:

- A leave of absence **must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance**
- A leave of absence must be requested **in advance** by a parent who the pupil normally lives with
- Schools must judge **each application individually**, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request
- Where a leave of absence is granted, **the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school**
- **A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance**
- A school **cannot** grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, the leave of absence should not be granted
- Where this guidance refers to a parent, the school and/or local authority will need to decide which adult(s) is most appropriate. Generally, parents include:
 - All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
 - All those who have parental responsibility
 - Those who have day to day responsibility for the child

Please note all schools are expected to regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence.

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to their educational progress. If the absence is not authorised and the leave is taken, schools may refer to the Local Authority for legal action. Please find attached information regarding Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance.

Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance

From 19 August 2024, there is a National Framework for Penalty Notice Fines being issued for unauthorised absences recorded by schools

National Threshold

A single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by ALL schools in England, this is:

- 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence
- For example, a 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet the national threshold
- The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years

Who may be fined?

- Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent without authorisation from school
- For example, 3 siblings absent for unauthorised leave during term-time would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, the fine amount will be:

- £80 per parent, per child if paid **within 21 days**
- If **not paid within 21 days**, the fine will increase to **£160 per parent, per child**, payable between the 22nd and 28th day

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available. The amount therefore will be:

- £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued, and the case will be presented **straight to the Magistrate's Court**

- **Prosecution** can result in **criminal records** and **fines of up to £2,500**
- Cases found **guilty** in a **Magistrates Court** can show on the parent's future DBS certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) due to a **'failure to safeguard a child's education'**



Application for Leave of Absence from School during term time

Dear Headteacher,

I would like to request permission for leave of absence for my child, a pupil registered at your school for the reasons detailed below (*further information can be attached if required*).

Pupil's full name	
Pupil's Date of Birth	
Year Group	
Class / Registration	
Pupil's full address and postcode	

First date of absence	
Last date of absence	
Date of return to school	
Number of school days absent	

Please be aware, as per our school's attendance policy and the South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct relating to school attendance, that the law requires parents to seek permission from the head teacher to take their child out of school during term time. The law states permission can only be granted if:

1. An application has been made in advance by the parent the child normally lives with; and
2. There are exceptional circumstances.

Please also note that, if on the rare occasion circumstances are deemed exceptional by the head teacher, the duration your child is permitted to be away from school may only be determined by the head teacher.

Reason for request including why you believe your circumstances to be exceptional
(Further details may be attached to this form)

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If you have a child/ren at another school/s, please detail their name/s and which school/s they attend below

Pupil's name, name of school and school telephone number:

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Full name of person making request (note requests must be made by a parent who the pupil normally lives with)

Relationship to child

--

Full address and postcode (if different from child's above)	
Signature	
Date	



Application for Leave of Absence from School during term time

School Response

School to complete the below, keeping the originals, returning copies of all pages together with the appropriate letter, to all parents/carers

Dear	(Insert parent title, forename, and surname)
Copy sent to (Send to other parent)	(Insert parent title, forename, and surname)

Re: Application for Leave of Absence from School during term time

Date of response from school	
Date application received by school	

Pupil's full name	
Pupil's Date of Birth	
Year Group, Class / Registration	
Pupil's full address and postcode	
Pupil's percentage attendance year to date	
Number of sessions absent this academic year (total)	
Number of which are authorised	
Number of which are unauthorised	

Has this pupil had any previously recorded unauthorised leave of absence?	
Was a Penalty Notice Fine requested as a result?	
Are you aware of any Penalty Notice Fines that the parent or parents may have previously received for this pupil and/or a sibling/child for whom they hold parental/day to day care and responsibility?	

School response to parent/s request for leave of absence

Number of requested sessions authorised	
Number of requested sessions unauthorised	
Date pupil required to return to school	

Headteacher Signature	
Headteacher Name	
Date	

