



Christ the King CVA Attendance Policy September 2022

Mission Statement – We can and we will

By working together at Christ the King Catholic Voluntary Academy, we aim, through Jesus Christ, to share God's love, helping our community to learn, grow and make a difference. Each student is important to, and valued by the school community.

Christ the King Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to providing the best possible education for every pupil. Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. Our curriculum is carefully designed, and grounded in research about how children learn, with components of knowledge building to key composites. Therefore, it is vital that all our children have good attendance to ensure that building blocks of learning are not missed, which would create gaps in knowledge and could have a negative impact on our children achieving their potential.

As a Catholic School we seek to work in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure the best possible start for each child entrusted into our care. Regular attendance and punctuality are an essential part of this partnership.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Raise pupil achievement through promoting attendance and punctuality levels of 98% and above.
- Assist parents, carers and pupils through clear procedures and expectations for staff, parents and pupils regarding attendance.
- To safeguard vulnerable children through clear measures for dealing with absence and lateness.

Arrival Time

The gates will open at 8.45am for all pupils and will close at 9.00am. Morning arrivals will not be staggered. Children should arrive no later than 9.00am. The gates will be locked from 9.00am onwards. Any pupils who are late (arriving after the gates close at 9.00am) will need to enter via the office.

Notification of Lateness or Absence

Parents should phone the office before 8.45am on the same day if their child is going to be late or absent. The reason for absence must be as specific as possible – e.g. eye infection rather than simply sick or unwell.

Children arriving after 9:00am should come to the school office with an adult accompanying them to the main door so that their attendance and reason for lateness may be recorded.

Punctuality is a key part of good attendance and will be monitored to ensure every child maintains a good standard of attendance.

Involving Parents

Parents will be advised on our attendance policy:

- When their children first start at our school
- Through the school website
- In newsletters
- As part of our annual reports to parents
- At Parents' Evenings

Registration Procedures

1. Registers will be taken twice daily, once for the morning session and once for the afternoon session.
2. Morning registers will be completed between 9.00am and 9.15am; afternoon registers will be completed between 1.05pm and 1.15pm.
3. Teachers/Teaching Assistants will mark pupils 'present' with a / or 'absent' with an N.
4. All 'N's will be checked against absence messages and late arrivals. First day absences who have not left a message will then be given a follow up call.
5. Arrivals after 9:00am are marked 'L' (late)
6. Arrivals after 9:15am are marked 'U' (late, after register has closed)
7. Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons:
 - Registers provide a daily record of the attendance of all pupils.
 - They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law.
 - We have a duty to safeguard our pupils and non-attendance / poor attendance would give us cause for concern and investigation.

For this reason, all registers are checked by the school office administrator for accuracy and timely completion shortly after registration closes.

Authorised Absence or Lateness

Only the school can authorise an absence:

1. Where the school is satisfied with the parent's explanation for the absence and there have been no previous issues with the child's absence or punctuality record, the school

will authorise the absence.

2. As long as children are collected and returned in the same day, doctor/dentist appointments are not counted as absences. Please try and arrange appointments outside school hours where possible. The situation is the same for a child who leaves after registration for a good reason such as illness, visits to secondary schools etc.

3. Children should not be kept off for the whole day for medical appointments unless they are too unwell to attend, in which case the parent must contact the school confirming the reason for their absence and it will be counted as an absence. Routine medical appointments such as dental and eye sight checks should be made out of term time.

4. The exceptional circumstances code will be considered for circumstances outlined below. Parents should contact the school in advance, wherever possible, about such requests for absence.

Persistent lateness

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, parents/carers will be contacted. If persistent lateness continues, parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with the Family Liaison Officer or the Headteacher.

<u>Late Escalation Procedure</u>	
Stage 1	90% and below – Initial concern letter to monitor punctuality to be sent (monitor punctuality for 6 weeks)
Stage 2	Continued 90% and below – Second concern letter to be sent to all (monitor punctuality for 4 weeks)
Stage 3	Further monitoring for 2 weeks. Referral to Senior Staff at continued 90% or below - school meeting is needed – completion of Parent Agreement at 90%.
Stage 4	Further decline or continued 90% or below punctuality record may result in referral to the Local Authority.

Safeguarding

At Christ the King, we believe in supporting the whole family; our first duty of care, however, is to the child; where there is any doubt regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child, we will report it immediately to Social Services. Our preferred option is an open and honest relationship with our parents or carers; if there are genuine problems please talk to us.

Unauthorised Absence

The school office administrator will contact the parents to express concern and advise the Headteacher accordingly when:

- No satisfactory explanation has been given to explain the lateness or absence.
- There is reason to doubt the accuracy of the reasons given for the lateness or absence.

Unsuccessful attempts to contact the home will be recorded. In the case of families deemed to be 'vulnerable', a home visit will take place on day one of absence. For all other families, should contact be unsuccessful, a home visit will take place on day two of absence.

Absence Escalation Procedure

Attendance and Lateness is tracked on a weekly basis by the Office and monitored by the Headteacher. If a child has attendance below 90% they will automatically fall into our Stage 2 category and be monitored accordingly.

<u>Absence Escalation Procedure</u>	
Initial Absence	First day calling – Phone call if no contact has been made with school. Home visits if no contact is able to be made.
Stage 1	95% and below – Stage 1 concern letter to monitor attendance to be sent (monitor attendance for 6 weeks)
Stage 2	90% and below – Stage 2 concern letter to be sent to all. Medical proof required (if possible) for all future absences (prescribed medicines, prescriptions, doctors' notes, appointment confirmation cards or texts and hospital letters). If not received, the absence may be unauthorised.
	Referral to Senior Staff at sustained > 90% - school meeting/discussion arranged and completion of Parent Agreement at staff discretion.
Stage 3	Further decline or 8 unauthorised sessions in a four week school period will result in referral to the Local Authority.
Stage 4	Local Authority referral. Further decline may result in court action.

Leave of absence and holidays

The DfE have removed from the attendance regulations the ability of Headteachers to authorise up to 10 days absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents no longer have the option to take their child out of school simply for a holiday.

Examples of exceptional circumstances.

- Significant family bereavement.
- Significant family illness.
- Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or in criminal proceedings.
- Disclosure of significant abuse where a short leave of absence may be beneficial to recovery.
- A day will be authorised for a religious ceremony of a parent or sibling.
- Extra-curricular activities will be authorised subject to the correct documentation being received from the relevant Official Body within the specified time-scale of 10 school days e.g. a music examination.

All cases must be presented in writing to the Headteacher. The onus is always on the parents to provide evidence to support applications for leave of absence.

Family requests for holidays for family weddings (other than parents or siblings) or to see relatives are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances. The availability of cheap flights or holidays are also not deemed to be exceptional circumstances.

Parents who take their children out of school during Term Time, and the absence has not been authorised, will be issued with a Penalty Notice, in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer and in line with government directives.

Christ the King appreciates that in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for longer planned absences, however if a child is absent for longer than 21 consecutive days after an agreed return date, they can legally be removed from the school roll and may be liable to prosecution. A letter will be sent to the parent after the first 4 days of absence outlining the procedure for taking a child off roll in order to give the parent an opportunity to contact the school explaining the extended leave.

Further guidance and information can be found by following these links:

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/summary-table-of-responsibilities-for-school-attendance.pdf)

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance.pdf)

