



**Christchurch  
Learning Federation**

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy



## Attendance Statement

It is essential that children and young people form good habits of regular attendance at school from an early age and that good attendance is maintained throughout their school career. The schools that make up the Christchurch Learning Federation are committed to working together to ensure that there is a consistent approach to school attendance. It is a legal requirement that all children should attend their educational provision and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school.

The schools that make up the Christchurch Learning Federation have agreed the following:

- It is important that pupils are in school on time. Timekeeping is not only important in obtaining maximum benefit from education, it is also a key skill for adult life. Lateness is monitored by the schools and contributes to absence rates.
- The schools will monitor the attendance of our pupils and work closely with the Local Authority's School Attendance Service to support children and young people whose attendance levels are causing concern. This will include liaison between schools regarding siblings in more than one school.
- Whilst we understand that children do become ill on occasions, children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning. If a child's health continues to affect their education, schools are obliged to make a referral to the School Health Service to ensure that appropriate medical advice and support is provided.
- If a child is ill it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that they inform the school. The schools will operate a targeted 'Unexplained Absence' system, which means they will contact you to ask why your child is not in school and when they are expected to return.
- No leave of absence will be granted during term time, except in exceptional circumstances. For this reason, should you wish to take your child out of school for any leave of absence (holidays or otherwise) requests will not be routinely granted. It is essential that any requests for leave of absence are discussed with your child's Head of Year (or Headteacher in the case of primary schools) prior to the request being made in writing. Any absence which has not been authorised by the school will be recorded as 'unauthorised' and this has the potential to impact on your child's overall absence figure and could result in legal action.

**Further details of the specific procedures in place to support good attendance and punctuality can be found on the school website. The attendance and punctuality strategies can be found in the appendices to this policy.**

## Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

**Authorised Absences** include:

- Illness that deems a child 'unfit' for school.
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged out of school hours.
- Days of religious observance
- Leave of absence in exceptional circumstances as agreed by the Headteacher

*Should a parent believe absence should be authorised but does not meet the above criteria it is vital that they contact the school to discuss the absence well in advance.*

**Note:** "Regulation 7 of 2006 Education (England) Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupils except where an application has been made **in advance** and the proprietor considers that there are **exceptional circumstances** relating to the application." It should be recognised that the amendments **remove reference to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days.**

The amendments make it clear that a Headteacher **may not grant** any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### Unauthorised absences

All absence from school other than the above will be recorded as unauthorised.

## Responsibilities

### Students:

- Have a responsibility to attend school regularly, on time, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Have a responsibility to ensure that their lifestyle beyond school does not, in any way, adversely affect their ability to attend school regularly, punctually and in a fit condition to learn. During the primary phase this is a shared responsibility with parents.

### Parents:

- Have a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Must notify the school in line with the school's Attendance Strategy if a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late. A student's absence will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation as been given.
- Should work with the school to support good attendance and commit to engaging positively with the school should a child's attendance cause concern.

**Schools:**

- Identify specific members of staff who will take responsibility for attendance. This includes from class teachers/form tutors who are required to take registers and follow up on absence through to pastoral leaders who will liaise with parents as appropriate.
- Identify a member of the senior leadership team who will take responsibility for the individual school attendance strategy and will monitor and report on attendance patterns.
- Will publicise their own specific strategies and processes regarding attendance to parents.

In addition the Headteacher/School-based Social Worker/Pastoral Care Worker/ Attendance Officer will have responsibility for:

- Overall monitoring of individual and whole school absenteeism.
- Contacting parents to share concerns regarding high level or inappropriate absences or persistent lateness.
- Authorising leave of absence on behalf of the governing body.
- Making referrals to the Local Authority's School Attendance Service.
- Liaison with external agencies such as Social Care as appropriate.
- Reporting to parents, the governing body and the Local Authority as appropriate.
- Making decisions concerning school closure in line with Local Authority guidance.
- Informing the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, following the Local Authority's procedures for a Child Missing Education.
- Developing strategies and incentives to promote good attendance.

**Governors:**

- Will monitor overall attendance figures.
- Will work with the Headteacher and staff to improve attendance as required.
- Will liaise through the Chair of Governors with the Headteacher about school closure.

**Local Authority School Attendance Service:**

- Fully supports schools in expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school on a regular basis.
- Will support schools in ensuring the law is upheld. In law parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school. Therefore a pattern of unauthorised absence, which can include **taking holidays in term time**, can result in a Penalty Notice or further legal action, as outlined in the school's Attendance Strategy.

## Removal of a pupil's name from the school roll

Deletion from the admission register of the name of a pupil (of compulsory school age) is permitted when:

- A school attendance order naming the school has been altered or revoked
- The pupil has been registered at another school
- The pupil has ceased to attend and the parents have satisfied the Local Authority that he or she is receiving full-time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at a school
- Transfer of the pupil's ordinary residence makes attendance at the school unreasonable (i.e. he or she has moved to another area)
- The pupil has failed to return to school within 10 days of the expiry of extended leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday unless the absence is because of sickness or some other unavoidable cause and both the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.
- The School Medical Officer has certified that the pupil's health is such that he or she is unlikely to benefit enough to attend before becoming legally exempted from attendance
- The pupil has been continuously absent for at least four weeks and, after reasonable enquiry, neither the school nor the Local Authority has been able to locate the pupil (NB: this means that the School Attendance Team and the school must agree. One cannot act alone)
- The pupil is known to have died
- The pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and he or she intends to leave
- In an independent school he or she has ceased to be a pupil
- In a maintained school, he or she has been permanently excluded but only when the school appeal process has been concluded or the parent decides not to appeal
- Having been admitted to the school for nursery education, he or she has not transferred to the reception class

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 means that all schools now have a duty to inform the local authority in all circumstances when a pupil is deleted from the register. The only exception is when a pupil has completed their final year of education.

## Children Missing from Education

This refers to children who stop attending school and who are believed to have left the area without parents notifying the school and where the school has been unable to make contact:

- The school will try to make telephone contact.
- The school will write to the known home address.
- The school could make a home visit if appropriate.
- The school will make informal enquiries to relations or friends of the child and if the child has been missing, with no contact from parents or carers and no information as to where the child is for 10 days, a Child Missing Education Form will be completed and sent to the Local Authority.

- On receipt of such a referral the Child Missing Education representative in the Local Authority will complete checks to locate the child.
- The school will inform the Child Missing Education representative if the child returns to school.

If the school has any Child Protection concerns about the child it will follow the Child Protection Procedures and contact social care **immediately**.

## Employment of children and young persons

### The Law says:

The following rules apply until school leaving age. A child work-permit application should be completed by the employer.

*A child reaches the end of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the school year during which he/she becomes 16. A work permit is not required after this date.*

A child may undertake 'light work'. This refers to work that is not likely to be harmful to the health, safety or development of a child or to their attendance at school.

There are certain jobs that cannot be undertaken by a child under the age of 16. Examples of prohibited employment types include:

- to sell alcohol, except in a sealed container
- in a commercial kitchen (this includes washing up, unless the washing up area is separate to the kitchen)
- to collect or sort rubbish
- employment where harmful chemical, biological or physical agents are used
- in the personal care of residents of any residential care home or nursing home unless under the supervision of a responsible adult

### Hours a child can work during term time

During school term time	Children aged 13 and 14 years	Children aged 15 and 16 years
<b>Daily maximum (Monday to Friday)</b>	2 hours (of which no more than 1 hour may be prior to the start of school hours)	2 hours (of which no more than 1 hour may be prior to the start of school hours)
<b>Daily maximum (Saturday)</b>	5 hours	8 hours
<b>Daily maximum (Sunday)</b>	2 hours	2 hours
<b>Weekly maximum</b>	12 hours	12 hours
<b>Earliest start time</b>	7am	7am
<b>Latest finish time</b>	7pm	7pm
<b>Is employment during school hours permitted?</b>	No	No

### Hours a child can work during school holidays

During school holidays	Children aged 13 and 14 years	Children aged 15 and 16 years
<b>Daily maximum (Monday to Saturday)</b>	5 hours	8 hours
<b>Daily maximum (Sunday)</b>	2 hours	2 hours
<b>Weekly maximum</b>	25 hours	35 hours
<b>Earliest start time</b>	7am	7am
<b>Latest finish time</b>	7pm	7pm