

Attendance Policy



Statement of policy intent

We aim to maximise attendance rates and secure high levels of punctuality in order to ensure that all pupils are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them. If allowed to remain unchecked, persistent absence and lateness can significantly impact a pupil's progress and achievement. We believe it also benefits pupils greatly if they participate in learning with the rest of their class and avoid learning gaps that occur due to absence. Our partnership with parents plays a vital role in ensuring that this is achieved.

Background and Regulations

The parents of a child of compulsory school age are required by law to ensure that the child regularly attends the school at which s/he is registered.

This policy has regard to

- [The DfE Guidance Working Together to improve school attendance May 2022](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools February 2023](#)

This policy is linked to

The Safeguarding Policy

Children Missing Education Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for leading attendance across the school by

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Class and subject teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a twice daily basis on integris.

School Office Staff will

- Take calls and emails from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Check that the daily registers have been taken and contact parents/carers regarding unexplained absence

Promoting Attendance

The school will promote good attendance by including it in the PSHE curriculum and addressing and celebrating it in assemblies.

Reporting Attendance to Parents

Each pupil's attendance is included in their written school report.

Recording Attendance

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will mark attendance and absence in accordance with the codes in the DfE's guidance.

The morning register is taken at **8.45am**. If a pupil arrives at school **between 8.45am and 8.55am**, he or she will be marked **late**.

If a pupil arrives **after 9.00am**, he or she will be marked **absent for the morning session. This will be an unauthorised absence if no satisfactory explanation can be given.**

The afternoon register is taken at various times after 1.00pm depending on the timetabled activities for the class.

How Parents notify the school of absence

Parents or carers are required to inform the school office by telephone or email (mail@londonchristianschool.com) **by 8.40am on every day of the pupil's absence**, with a reason for the absence. If a pupil is unwell, then the nature of the illness should be indicated.

Requesting permission for absence in advance

Parents must submit a request to the Head Teacher via the school office stating the dates of requested absence and the reason for it (including absences for secondary school visits or assessments and medical appointments).

Wherever reasonable, the request must be made at least 2 weeks before any planned absence.

The Head Teacher will then consider whether to give permission for the absence and will decide how many days a pupil can be away from school if the absence is granted.

You will be notified of the outcome by email.

The Head Teacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher makes a judgement as to what are exceptional circumstances but examples are given below.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be away or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory explanation for absence.

Parents may not authorise absence; only schools can do this. Should school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is not genuine, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually only apply to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family are likely to be refused.

Absence may generally only be authorised for the following exceptional circumstances.

- Illness (including mental illness)
- Medical or dental appointments (though we encourage parents to make non emergency appointments out of school where possible).
- Days of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Senior school visits and assessments
- Involvement in a public performance (depending on circumstances)

- Special occasions - the nature of such special occasions will be determined by the Head Teacher on an individual basis
- Lateness (when the pupil arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation)

Absence is unlikely to be authorised for

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Attending a wedding that is not immediate family
- Family birthdays

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness or due to an emergency medical or dental appointment as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness/appointment.

We recognise that there can be attendance challenges where a child has a social, emotional or mental health issue. Our expectation on attendance remains high and we will work with parents to develop a plan to support attendance.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the parents of other pupils who are known to be close contacts and/or the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

Monitoring Attendance

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data half termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual level. It will use this data to find patterns and trends. Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school.

The school will meet with parents of pupils who are persistently absent (regardless of whether the absence is authorised or not) with a view to finding ways in which to improve attendance.

Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents or carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where their child is of compulsory school age.

Missed Work

Except in rare circumstances, usually when the absence is outside the control of the parents or guardians, staff will not be expected to supply work for absent pupils.

Policy Approved by the Headteacher: January 2024

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