

The Archbishop's School

Attendance Policy

2015

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'Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve'

Principles

The school motto of "Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve" perfectly describes our mission: to provide the very best education for all our students; to prepare them for life in the world where they are able to make a positive contribution and to share the love of God.

Parents and Teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance at The Archbishop's School is maximised to enable this aim to be achieved. Research both locally and nationally demonstrates a clear link between good attendance and good attainment which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his / her true potential.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance.

The Archbishop's School will consistently work towards a goal of 95% attendance for all children and endeavour to keep rates of unexplained and unauthorised absenteeism to a minimum by conveying to both pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The school recognises the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents, the Attendance and Behaviour Service, Stagecoach Bus Company and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents and is working towards providing an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Authority. The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement, but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the school can request a Fixed Penalty Notices, In accordance with keeping, 'Penalty Notices Code of Conduct 2005', Penalty Notices – Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Court P Proceedings – Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1).

Procedures

Registration

Registration is carried out at 8.50 am and 1.30 pm. Registers will be marked promptly at these times. Register should close no later than 09:20am. Registers should be marked in accordance with the Schools' guidelines using Lesson Monitor in SIMS.

Should a student arrive after the registers have closed they will be marked as late for that session. (i.e. morning or afternoon)

Pupils who are late after the close of registers should sign in at the school office where their late mark will be placed in SIMS with the reason for lateness.

Additionally, staff are expected to register during every lesson, also using SIMS if possible.

Absences

All absences will be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. Should the school not receive an explanation for an absence or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised. For example, shopping, day trips and birthdays.

Ongoing absences may require further evidence to be provided in order for the school to authorise them.

The School will decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

Parents are asked to telephone the school office as soon as possible on the first day of absence. A note will be placed electronically in SIMS for the Form Tutor to see.

Upon their return to School the student should bring a letter and hand this to their Form Tutor to explain the reason for the absence. Parents can also use the email address attendance@archbishops-school.co.uk.

The morning staff briefings on Monday and Friday provide a forum in which all such concerns may be raised.

Lateness

Students who arrive at school after morning or afternoon registration should sign in at the main school office, entering their time of arrival and the reason for their lateness in the signing in/out sheets. This is important for health and safety reasons.

The Attendance Officer with the Head of House and Mrs Behan, will monitor lessons. If a student arrives after 9.30 am they will be required to bring a letter from a parent to explain the lateness.

Pupils arriving after 09:20am will be marked as a U code which is our unauthorised mark, unless there is a genuine reason i.e. Medical appointment which authorised M code.

First Day Calling

If a student is absent from morning registration and this has not been explained in advance or during the early morning, the school will call parents using the contact details in Keep Kids Safe. A follow up call will be made by the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attendance) after **THREE** days.

Extended Absence

In the case of any further absence lasting more than 3 days without contact from Parents (i.e. when truancy is suspected) the Form Tutor or Head of House should contact parents by telephone.

The Attendance Officer will issue a weekly report to show the unexplained absences for each registration group. A letter will then be sent home if no explanation is received. This could be obtained from the Attendance Officer as required.

Term-Time Holidays

The school strongly urges parents to avoid booking family holidays during term time. Leave for holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

If a parent would like to make a request for leave of absence, they must apply in writing to the Headteacher, or by email to attendance@archbishops-school.co.uk.

The Headteacher will make decisions about leave of absence and record on the appropriate form (LOA Slip) for absences.

The school will decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. The Attendance Officer will keep a record of all leaves of absence granted for holidays and will publish these annually.

If a holiday is taken without permission the school may decide to request a Fixed Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

Arrangements for study leave for pupils in years 9 – 13, will be published by the Headteacher or a delegated representative, and individual leave of absence is not required.

Truancy

The procedures for registration and for parental notification of a pupil's absence mean that the truancy rate in school is very low. However, any member of staff who suspects that a pupil is absent from school without authorisation must report this suspicion to the appropriate Form Tutor, Attendance Officer or Head of House as soon as possible, who in turn should report it to a member of the Mrs Behan.

All members of staff must also be vigilant to ensure that pupils are not absenting themselves from individual lessons by doing occasional checks of absentees against the attendance register and notifying the appropriate Form Tutor or Head of House of any such absences. They return should report it to Mrs Behan.

Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

The Archbishop's School encourages good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unauthorised absence.

Pupils

Pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time;
- Attend all lessons punctually;
- Not leave the school without permission;
- Have all individual records of attendance acknowledged by the school.

Parents

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance and:

- Are responsible for immediately informing school by 9.30am, of the reason for any absence by phone or email;
- Should confirm in writing the reason for the child's absence when the child returns to school, by letter or email;
- Will avoid arranging family holidays during term time;
- Can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance record.

Staff Roles

The Form Tutor

At The Archbishop's School the Form Tutor is seen as a key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance. The Tutor should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual to registration;
- Carry out registration in the prescribed manner, marking a student as absent, present or late;
- Ensure that all notes from parents are checked and initialled before placing them in the register and entering into SIMS;
- Chase students for absence notes in response to the unexplained absence report issued by the Attendance Officer each week.
- Use the Tutor/student interview to discuss attendance and/or punctuality issues, setting and monitoring targets as appropriate;
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves.

The Subject Teacher

Subject teachers should;

- Take a register at the beginning of every lesson (and ensure that the students know that a register is being taken);
- Follow up any suspected internal truancy by checking with the Attendance Officer or Head of House immediately.
- Notify the Head of Department and follow up with appropriate punishments.

The Head of House

Head of House are responsible for monitoring the attendance of their House. They should:

- Monitor attendance on a regular basis, setting targets for improvement as appropriate;
- Monitor the performance of individual Tutor groups, following up with individual Tutors instances where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed;
- Regularly put attendance onto the agenda of Pastoral Meetings;
- Ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attendees, supporting the

Tutor where appropriate in dealing with parents directly;

- Follow up internal truancy with appropriate punishments;
- Promptly deal with issues which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties;
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, commendations, rewards, etc.
- Notify the Head of Department as required and follow up with appropriate punishment.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer and member of Senior Leadership Team.

The Attendance Officer

At The Archbishops School the Attendance Officer is responsible for the data entry and monitoring of attendance and should:

- Monitor attendance on a regular basis, liaise with Mrs Behan setting targets for improvement as appropriate;
- Ensure the correct attendance codes are entered;
- Send a report to Form Tutors should a pupil return to school after an absence without a written explanation from his/her parent/ guardian.
- Send letters to parents should a pupil return to school after an absence without a written explanation from his/her parent and one is not forthcoming after one week;
- Ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attendees via Head of House;
- Liaise with Mr Knoupe regarding students whose absences falls under 80% to be advise that absence will no longer be authorised without medical evidence.
- Discuss pupils with under 85% attendance.
- Collect, analyse and assess the following data every month:
 - Whole school attendance rates;
 - Numbers and proportion of persistent absentee pupils (under 80%);
 - Rates of unauthorised absence;
 - Attendance rate for particular cohorts and groups (year groups, SEN, etc)

Senior Leadership Team

A member of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring attendance and should:

- Liaise with the Attendance Officer on a regular basis and set targets for improvement as appropriate;
- Monitor all students whose absence falls under 80% to check reasons why they have been away and to check if medical evidence is available as required;
- Liaise with Heads of House re pupils giving cause for concern;
- Meet with the Education Welfare Officer every fortnight in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance is a source of concern.

Communication

The Archbishop's School Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- A précis in the parents' prospectus;
- The home-school agreement;
- Regular newsletter items;
- Guidance and advice in the staff handbook