

ARCHBISHOP BLANCH SCHOOL



Archbishop Blanch
SCHOOL

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLICY WRITTEN BY:
(Based on LA model policy)

DATE POLICY PREPARED:

DATE FIRST RATIFIED BY GOVERNING BODY:

DATE REVIEWED:

DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW:

Headteacher

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**Community, Compassion, Forgiveness,
Friendship, Thanksgiving, Trust**

ARCHBISHOP BLANCH CE HIGH SCHOOL

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy should be taken and used as part of Archbishop Blanch Church of England School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our Mission Statement and Instrument of Government aims.

As a Church of England School, we accept and respect all members of our community as unique children of God, precious in His sight and of infinite worth.

1 INTRODUCTION

Archbishop Blanch CE High School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for students within our School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our young people every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all students attend regularly and on time. Students should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all students to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation **all** students achieve at least 97%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.***

Archbishop Blanch CE High School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Students and all members of our school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve.

Excellent attendance and punctuality are key factors both in learning and raising achievement as well as being important for lifelong learning. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is therefore critical that parents and carers ensure their child attends school every day, on time.

2 AIMS

- Maximise the overall percentage of student attendance and punctuality at Archbishop Blanch High CE High School.
- Reduce the number of students who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the whole school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, students and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for students.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

2.1 Promoting regular Attendance at Archbishop Blanch CE High School:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and students.

To help us all focus on this, Archbishop Blanch School will ensure:

- Appropriate interventions are in place to deter poor punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Students are provided with appropriate support to minimise disaffection from school. This includes Archbishop Blanch CE High School support and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Students with SEND, Disadvantaged, Looked After students and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of students' attendance and punctuality through first day response , progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular student incentives.
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with students in form time and at assemblies.
- Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff ensure these are followed.

3 ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS AND ABSENCE PROCEDURES

A child not attending school for any reason is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

Expectation of Students

- Ensure you arrive at Archbishop Blanch School by 8.25 am with correct equipment and uniform. This will give you time to go to your locker and be organised on time for registration at 8.30 am.
- Be in your class by 8.30 am.
- Arrive to all lessons on time.
- Always attend every lesson.
- Never leave the school site without permission.
- Always use the signing in/out system when late or leaving school for appointments.
- Following any absence complete any missed work that may be provided by your teachers.

Expectations of Parent/Carer

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers' legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

- Ensure your child leaves for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- If your child is to leave school during the day, they must be picked up by parent/carers. They will not be allowed to leave school on their own during the school day. If anyone other than a parent is to pick your child up, the school must be notified in advance in writing.
- Contact Archbishop Blanch School preferably by 8.00 am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact Archbishop Blanch School if the reason for absence requires a more personal discussion.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)

- Requests for leave of absence under exceptional circumstances must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Requests must be made in advance with as much notice as possible given to the school.

If a student is absent we will

- Telephone and text Parent/Carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 8.30 am.
- If no response is received after three days unauthorised absence, we would consult the School's Police Liaison Officer to organise a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a student's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carers will be invited to meet an appropriate member of staff in school.
- If absences persist a representative of the school will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

4 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Archbishop Blanch School has to record every absence that a student takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by text or phone on the first day of absence and in writing on the student's return.

Authorised absence

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school. Absences though illness may be authorised if appropriate medical evidence is provided to the school.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which have not been explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get their mark

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 Archbishop Blanch School will issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 schools days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer the case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

Persistent Absence

- Students are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before students reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that students can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a student is reluctant to attend or a parent/carers has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

- Parent/Carers are asked to contact the Pastoral Leader for their child's year group in the first instance.

NB

Although an absence may be explained, it is ultimately the school's decision whether to authorise it. Extended periods of absence or persistent absence without medical evidence may not be classed as authorised.

5 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS VERY IMPORTANT

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect students' learning. Students who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a student missing one half day of lessons per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

The DFE has published a strong link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement:

Students attendance	Chance of achieving 5 good pass grades at GCSE
100% - 96%	73% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
96% - 94%	64% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
93% - 90%	55% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades
80% to 70%	Only 20% chance of achieving 5 good pass grades
50% and below	Only 6% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

6 THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

The Education Welfare Officer provides support for parents/carers and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.

The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the student's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists, the EWO will be required to give consideration to the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

7 LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in **truly exceptional circumstances** and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice fine for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Applications should be requested directly to the Head Teacher of the school before any expenses are committed. All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent. Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence must write directly to the Headteacher and sent to the Headteacher's PA at least 3 months before the proposed absence (where possible).

8 LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and late arriving students disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the student arriving late and can encourage future absence. A range of support and sanctions apply to students who arrive late.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 8.30 am by the Form Tutor and students receive a late mark if they are not in their Form Group by that time. School recommends that students arrive by 8.25 am at the latest.

- Students who arrive late to school will be met by a member of staff and will be instructed further on actions that will be taken.
- If a student arrives late to School parents/carers receive a text message to inform them of their child's late arrival.
- A student who arrives late will receive a break time detention that day. If a student has 2 or more lates per week they will receive a Friday lunch detention as well.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the Pastoral Leader for their child's year group, who will offer support to resolve the problem.

9 PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE MATTERS AT ARCHBISHOP BLANCH SCHOOL

All school staff, parents/carers and students need to work as a team to support the attendance and attainment of students. This continued support therefore is vital in making every student's journey through school a success.

10 REMOVAL FROM ROLL

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to:

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register.
- Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- Provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Give the Pastoral Leader comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.