



# Christ Church CE Primary School

 Learning  Listening  Living

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Headteacher: Tracey Cansdale

18<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Parents

Ofsted and the Local Authority expect that all children should be in school for 95%+ of the time. The Local Authority have a legal responsibility to ensure that children are attending school regularly and they directly employ Education Welfare Officers (EWO) who will investigate cases where children are not attending regularly or where siblings are absent on the same days.

The EWO have access to our registers electronically and also carry out home visits. Every six weeks they look at children whose attendance falls below 90%, where there is a pattern of absence or where children are absent and there is no reason given to school. **Below 90% is legally defined as being a persistent absentee and the EWO will take action to find out why.** It may be that your child has had an illness – and we will endeavour to explain this to the EWO – although they operate separately to the school. They may send you a warning letter or ask you to attend an official meeting or in some cases (where a warning notice has already been issued or school have not authorised holiday leave which has been taken) send out a penalty payment letter -up to £60 per parent, per child, per session (half day) missed.

Attendance Percentage	Days missed over a school year
100%	0 days
95%	10 days
90%	20 days
85%	30 days
80%	40 days

There has been some research on school attendance and GCSE outcomes which shows there is a direct link between being in school and succeeding. If a group of children attend less than 90% of the time, only 3 out of 10 of them will achieve five good GCSE passes. Attendance really makes the difference. If a child's attendance is only 90% they are missing the equivalent of a morning's

learning every week. Over a child's schooling this can add up and you can see why the local authority would be concerned and take action.

A reminder that the legal position is that we are unable to authorise term time holidays and the council are now regularly issuing fines. They also issue warning notices and fines where they suspect families have taken holidays and not notified school (this is where they look at the sibling absence pattern). The only reason we can authorise absence is an exceptional circumstance – this would be cases such as a close family wedding, a funeral and other events which are likely to happen only once and could not be arranged in the holiday time. Please look at the local authority's term dates before booking holidays.

When children are taken out of school during term not only does the education of the individual child suffer, but it can cause disruption to the rest of the class, with teachers





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having to repeat work and give extra help so that the pupil can catch up. There are 190 school days in an academic year, leaving 175 days free for families to take holidays. Not taking into account other absences, just taking a fortnight's holiday each year means that, between the ages of five to 16, a child would miss around half an academic year of learning.

We do appreciate that children get ill and need to be at home. This is why the EWO only takes action where attendance falls below 90%, although they do monitor children whose attendance is between 90-95%. Children can come into school with coughs and colds, as they are a normal part of life but clearly sometimes with high temperatures or disrupted sleep due to coughing, they need to be getting well at home. We have included a helpful NHS graphic on how long children need to be off school for various illnesses.

## When should my child return to school?

<b>Chicken Pox</b> When all spots have crusted over	<b>Conjunctivitis</b> None*	<b>Diarrhoea &amp; Vomiting</b> 48 hours from last episode	<b>Glandular Fever</b> None*	<b>Hand, foot &amp; mouth</b> None*	<b>Impetigo</b> When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Measles or German Measles</b> 4 days from onset of rash	<b>Mumps</b> 5 days from onset of swelling	<b>Scabies</b> After first treatment	<b>Scarlet Fever</b> 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	<b>Slapped Cheek</b> None*	<b>Whooping Cough</b> 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Flu</b> Until recovered	<b>Head Lice</b> None*	<b>Threadworms</b> None*	<b>Tonsillitis</b> None*		

**This information is based on the Public Health Agency guide - full copy here** \*No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed.

Finally we do realise that it can be hard to get dental/medical appointments outside of term time or the school day. If your child needs to be collected early/come in late because of this we are able to authorise this absence but will need to see a copy of the appointment card or letter from now on.

Tracey Cansdale

