

# ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CHURCH of ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE AND REGISTRATION POLICY

### Rationale

Archbishop Runcie First School is a Church of England First School. In harmony with the Christian ethos of the school our attendance policy is rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ. At Archbishop Runcie First School we believe that each child is unique, with talents and abilities to be nurtured and developed in order that they reach their potential. Each individual is entitled to the best opportunity and children need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

### Introduction

This policy has three functions:

- a) To provide information on the legislation (1996) and current regulations regarding registration and attendance – The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 – which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2006.
- b) To outline the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in school attendance and the services available to support schools in maintaining and improving attendance
- c) To ensure consistent practice throughout school.

Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and may lead to educational disadvantage. Research demonstrates children who attend regularly are more successful and have fewer difficulties in school. Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend school. It is the schools responsibility to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. Parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance so it is also important that parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time.

### Why attendance matters:

Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance

14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance

20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance

30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

### School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carers, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 have removed all references to family holidays and leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application had been made in advance and the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has

been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Whilst the Headteacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused.

### **Communication**

At the induction meetings for children about to join the school, the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. At this initial meeting parents are asked to arrange their family holidays within school holidays, rather than in term time so that their child's education is not disrupted. The school's policy relating to authorisation of holidays is also communicated to parents.

When children join our school at other times of the year, the importance of regular attendance is discussed with parents.

### **Absence**

All parents are asked to contact the school by 9.15 am if their child is absent. If no notification is received about a child's absence, then the school's administration officer will phone the child's parents by 10 o'clock to establish the reason for the absence.

### **Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments**

If the school is satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness, the absence will be treated as authorised. Leave for medical or dental appointments will be authorised where confirmation has been received from the parents (either in person, telephone call or writing).

### **Attendance Registers**

These are required in law to be called twice a day; once at the commencement of the morning session and once at the commencement of the afternoon session. Attendance registers are kept electronically. School complies with and uses the DFE compulsory national attendance codes. The registers are closed at 9.15 am. Registers are legal documents and should be marked twice a day. Parents must always give reasons for absence to the School.

### **Punctuality**

It is important that children arrive for school punctually to ensure a calm and purposeful start to the day. If children are late regularly it impacts negatively on their education. During registration children start their work as soon as they arrive with handwriting, mental maths, computer maths or word level work so it is important that they arrive on time. Where pupils arrive late for school [after the register has closed at 9.15a.m] this will be marked as unauthorised absence for that session, even though they may arrive later. If a child is late the parents will need to take their child to the office where the parent will have to complete the Punctuality form where they will need to sign their child in and write down the reason why they are late. This will help us to establish the reason why the child is late and discuss strategies to support.

### **Leave of absence**

This can be applied for by parents by requesting and completing a form available from the school office. The Headteacher will check leave of absence against late and absence lists and liaise with class teacher re impact upon education before a decision is made. Leave of absence will only be authorized by school if there are exceptional circumstances and factors such as frequency, duration, attendance patterns, i.e. within reason will be considered. The form will be completed by the headteacher, returned to the Administration Officer to update systems and send copy to parents. The form will contain the child's current attendance figure.

The guidelines below clarify whether absence will be authorised or unauthorised:

#### **AUTHORISED**

- Illness
- Medical/ Dental Appointment
- Family Bereavement
- Religious observance
- Sport/ Music/ Exams
- Excluded children
- Agreed other educational reasons at the discretion of the Headteacher.

#### **UN-AUTHORISED**

- Absence without valid reason
- Latecomers beyond 30 mins after session starts
- Extended holidays

- Special occasions

### **School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead and where appropriate the Family Support Advisor will work closely to manage risks, ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

### **Procedures for Monitoring and improving attendance**

- The Administration Officer will produce for the Headteacher a weekly report to show each child where attendance is less than 96% and/or more than 3 sessions have been entered as late. The child's attendance will be categorised as follows:

GREEN 97% attendance and above.

AMBER 93%- 96% (missing 8 days+ education)

RED 92% attendance and below (missing 3 weeks+ education)

- At the amber stage the class teacher will discuss this with the parent to establish the reasons and whether the school can support.
- This will be monitored by the Head teacher over the half term and at the red stage or if there are any continuing issues identified concerning absence, illness or lateness these will be addressed by either the Headteacher or Family Support Advisor contacting the parents to agree strategies to be put in place to improve attendance.
- The Family Support Advisor (FSA) will support any issues raised and work within the Gosforth Pyramid of Schools to maintain transition interaction and liaison to benefit all pupils in a family.
- At termly parent-teacher consultations, attendance figures are shared with parents including whether their child has been at the green, amber or red stage of monitoring and any concerns discussed.
- Pupils with persistent absenteeism will be identified (pupils with more than 10% absence rate) and an action plan will be put in place to address the underlying reasons for the absence level.
- Advice can be sought from the LA if legal action may need to be taken as a result of attendance failing to improve.
- Parents will be thanked for their collaboration where improvements achieved or move to legal proceedings where child's education continues to be detrimentally affected by attendance / lateness.

### **Reintegrating long term absentees**

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so staff may wish to arrange a phased or gradual return, and all staff will be made aware of the situation. The Family Support Advisor may support this process.

### **Improving punctuality**

Repeated absence at the beginning of a School session can amount to failure to attend regularly for the purpose of 1996 Education Act. All parents and children must understand that lateness is actively discouraged, although sensitivity may be appropriate in some cases. The Family Support Advisor will be used to support pupils and families with any of the above issues.

### **Data Analysis**

Attendance data is submitted to the DFE, most schools use the management information systems via the school census. This data is published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

Analysis of data helps to identify the main causes of absence within the school and plan appropriate action to ensure all pupils attend school regularly.

Attendance data is analysed to identify particular groups of children whose absences cause concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils.

Attendance data is analysed attendance by year group, classes, groups of pupils for example ethnicity or gender to help identify areas of concern and attendance patterns.

### Monitoring the policy

The governors will receive termly information from the Headteacher regarding attendance figures and the data analysis and use this information to monitor the effectiveness of the policy. This policy will be reviewed every two years, or in light of changes in legislation or national and local guidance. Data Analysis

### Conclusion

At Archbishop Runcie First School we want our children to have the best possible opportunities. To this end we will encourage regular attendance with parents by placing value on attendance and punctuality and through the consistent application of this policy. We will encourage attendance and punctuality with children through good role models, through positive relationships and by providing a stimulating curriculum which inspires the children to participate.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reviewed / updated</b>	<b>Staff involved</b>
September 2007	New policy	HT & staff
June 2009	Reviewed	Curriculum & Performance cttee
December 2011	Reviewed	JRo
December 2013	Reviewed	JRo
September 2015	Reviewed	Curriculum & Performance Cttee
June 2017	Updated	SP and KM after consultation with staff and governors.
January 2018	Reviewed and updated	DH, Teaching and Learning Committee -consultation with staff and governors.

