



**Churchdown School Academy**  
ACHIEVING SUCCESS FOR ALL

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Churchdown School Mission Statement**

Our mission is to be a school where student development and learning are at the centre of everything we do. Students are expected to strive for personal excellence and demonstrate a commitment to learning as they fulfil their potential. Our community is a nurturing and caring one, where students are encouraged to show compassion, friendship and support towards one another. We aim to provide an education which is fully inclusive, where every child is valued for who they are and who they can become.

At Churchdown School the education we provide is guided by the values of integrity, resilience, respect, ambition and tolerance. These values are particularly important to us as we develop the students into lifelong learners and prepare them for a life beyond school.

### **Legal Requirements**

Parents or guardians of students of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise under the provisions of the education act 1996

### **Aims**

Churchdown aims for excellent attendance from all pupils. All pupils should aim for 100% attendance whenever possible. A minimum of 96% attendance is expected by all pupils and parents are encouraged to support students reaching these goals. For minor illnesses, pupils are encouraged to still attend school, where they will be supported and encouraged to attend as many lessons as possible.

This policy applies to main school pupils (Years 7 to 11)

### **Regular Attendance**

Churchdown school defines regular attendance as above 96%.

### **Holidays in Term Time**

Pupils are not permitted to take holidays in term time. The correlation between good attendance and good exam results is very strong and missing lessons will lead to significant underperformance in examinations. In exceptional circumstances, parents may complete a form and send it to the Headteacher, explaining why exceptional provision should be granted. Only in rare and pressing situations will a holiday be sanctioned.

## **Illness**

If a pupil is too ill to come to school, parents should:

1. Phone the school before 9:00am on the day of the illness and leave a message with the school's attendance technician.
2. This procedure should be repeated on each day that the illness continues.
3. Provide an explanatory note to be given to the pupil's tutor upon the pupil's return to school.

If the pupil becomes well enough to come into school later in the day, parents should encourage this to happen. If a pupil's attendance rate falls below 90%, the school will insist that parents take the pupil to their GP whenever further illness occurs, and written medical confirmation of attending a GP appointment from the surgery must be presented to the school. The school will also request a visit from the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) to the parents' house when attendance drops below 90%.

## **Absence for Extra Curricular Activities**

Churchdown encourages pupils' participation in extracurricular activities. Pupils will sometimes need time away from school to participate in their chosen field. Examples might include:

- Playing sport for a national or county side
- Performing in a drama production or TV/film role
- Instrumental performance for an orchestra
- A dance exam or a music exam

**Parents must always e-mail the Head of Year to request any time off from school for special events.** In all situations, professional discretion will be taken and close liaison with the pupil and parents will inform the school's decision. Where an absence is beneficial to the pupil's success in his/her chosen field and unlikely to significantly harm the pupil's education, then special permission will be granted to have time away from school.

## **Long Term Absence**

Where a pupil has long term absence, due to an independent professionally diagnosed medical condition, the school will work closely with parents and all relevant outside agencies (GP, consultant, counsellor etc.) to ensure a programme is in place to provide appropriate educational provision (within the limits of the school's funding and staffing).

## **Attendance Officer**

A full time attendance officer works in the school. The role involves:

1. Ensuring the registers are taken every am and pm registration
2. Accepting phone calls from parents when pupils are absent
3. Phoning parents between 9:00am and 10:00am on the first day of absence if no reason has been received (although all parents should phone in before 9:00am whenever their child is absent)
4. Phoning pupils whose attendance has been identified by the pastoral team as a concern, on the first day of any absence between 9:00am and 10:00am

5. Monitor for patterns of absence and keep HoHs informed if a pupil's absence is falling into a pattern
6. Liaise between the pastoral team and the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) about pupils whose attendance is a concern and further intervention is required
7. Producing accurate data, at regular intervals, to monitor attendance across the school
8. Send appropriate letter to parents when poor attendance is recorded.

**On the last day of each month the attendance officer will produce the following data:**

1. List of pupils with attendance below 90% from 1st September
2. List of pupils with attendance between 90%-92% since 1st September
3. Attendance percentage for the month just finished for each tutor group
4. Attendance percentage since 1st September for each tutor group
5. Attendance percentage for each House since 1st September
6. Attendance percentage for all of main school since 1st September
7. Record of punctuality for all pupils from 1st September

This information will be disseminated to the Headteacher, Deputy Head i/c pastoral, SENCO, HoYs

**Rewards**

Rewards are regularly used to encourage good attendance. The following are some of the rewards used by the school:

1. The tutor groups with the highest attendance over 99% will be given a free tutor group breakfast every month
2. At the end of term assemblies, the list of all pupils with 100% attendance will be displayed on the board and congratulated
3. At the end of term assemblies, a draw will take place, in the form of names of pupils with 100% attendance will be chosen from a hat, for a voucher usually to the value of £20. Usually there is one voucher per one or two year group(s).
4. House assemblies will regularly display names of pupils with 100% attendance and celebrate their success.
5. A cinema trip will take place at the end of the summer term for all pupils with 100% attendance and also for the tutor group with the highest attendance in each year.

**EWO (Education Welfare Officer)**

The school employs a part time Education Welfare Officer. The role of the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) is:

1. Liaise with the school's pastoral team and the attendance officer to ascertain which pupils have poor attendance and need further intervention
2. Attend regularly the pastoral meeting on a Wednesday lunchtime.
3. Visit pupils' houses when requested; when a pupil is absent from school or when attendance is a concern.
4. Conduct meetings with parents whenever attendance is a concern and discuss strategies for improving attendance of their child in the future
5. Attend AIM (Attendance Improvement Meetings) held by the school with parents and ensure that the legal position is made clear.

6. Support the school in the creation of any necessary paperwork needed for prosecution for poor attendance.
7. Ensure the school is kept aware of any changes to legislation regarding school attendance.
1. Registration

All pupils will attend registration once each day. This will take place at the following times:

**am registration**

**8:55 – 9:00am (Mon - Fri)**

Pupils should be heading towards their tutor rooms at 8:30am and be sat in their chair when the register is taken at 8:35am. The second legal registration point is at 1.25pm during lesson 5. Pupils should be sat at their chair when the register is taken at 1.25pm. The school's Register Policy details requirements for completing registers.

### **Heads of Year**

HoY have oversight of the attendance for the pupils in their year group. HoY have responsibility to:

1. Promote and encourage outstanding attendance within their house
2. Ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
3. Contact parents over student absences where appropriate
4. Liaise with the attendance officer about concern pupils and ensure that the attendance officer is alerted to which pupils are on the concern list and HoH are informed immediately when they are absent
5. Liaise with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) over visits to parents' houses whenever pupils have concerning attendance
6. Organise and conduct meetings with parents whenever attendance becomes a concern
7. Organise AIM (Attendance Improvement Meeting) meetings whenever necessary
8. Ensure, alongside the EWO (Education Welfare Officer), that paperwork from AIM meetings is accurate and promptly sent to parents
9. Monitor attendance in the light of targets set at AIM meetings
10. Ensure the necessary letters are sent out by the attendance officer based on attendance figures

For pupils who manage 100% attendance over 5 years, at the end of Year 11 they will enter a special prize draw on the last day of year 11, during the final assembly.

### **Prefects**

Prefects are selected in the spring term of Year 10. There are a number of criteria used for prefect section. One of the main considerations is that prefects must have an attendance rate of over 96% for the academic year so far, and must maintain this attendance rate or risk losing prefect status.

## **Appendix 1 - Letters**

### **Letter 1 – Attendance Concern**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

#### **Attendance Letter of Concern**

I am writing with regard to Xxx's pattern of attendance. Since the beginning of the year he/she has had x days off, plus he/she has been late to school on x occasions. This means that at present his/her attendance is xx%. For information, last year Xxx's attendance was xx% and he/she was late on xxx occasions.

I do appreciate that poor health can sometimes have an unavoidable effect upon a child's attendance. However, government guidelines expect pupils to aim to achieve 100% attendance throughout an academic year. Please note, that the Churchdown attendance target for every pupil during 2018-19 is at least 97.5%.

I trust that Churchdown can rely on your support and that we can work together to improve Xxx's present level of attendance. Should you wish to discuss the situation further please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely  
Xxx  
Head of Year Xx

## **Letter 2 – Punctuality Concern**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

### **Punctuality Letter of Concern**

I am writing with regard to Xxx's punctuality to school this year. Since the beginning of the year he/she has been late to school on x occasions. For information, last year he / she was late on xxx occasions and his / her attendance was xx%.

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children attend school. I do appreciate that poor health can sometimes have an unavoidable effect upon a child's attendance. However, government guidelines expect pupils to aim to achieve 100% attendance throughout an academic year. This includes being punctual at the start of both of the sessions of the school day.

I trust that Churchdown can rely on your support and that we can work together to improve Xxx's present pattern of punctuality. Should you wish to discuss the situation further please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely  
Xxx  
Head of Year Xx

### **Letter 3 - Further Attendance Concern**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

#### **Attendance and Punctuality Letter of Concern**

I am writing with regard to Xxx's pattern of attendance. Since the beginning of the year he/she has had x days off, (plus he/she has been late to school on x occasions). This means that at present his/her attendance is xx%. For information, last year Xxx's attendance was xx% and he/she was late on xxx occasions.

I do appreciate that poor health can sometimes have an unavoidable effect upon a child's attendance. However, government guidelines expect pupils to aim to achieve 100% attendance throughout an academic year. Please note, that the Churchdown attendance target for every pupil during 2018-19 is at least 97.5%.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. There is a risk that if your child's attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made to the local authority, who will start a legal process.

I trust that Churchdown can rely on your support and that we can work together to improve Xxx's present level of attendance. Should you wish to discuss the situation further please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely  
Xxx  
Head of Year Xx

#### **Letter 4 Attendance Follow-Up**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

#### **Attendance Follow-Up Letter of Concern**

Further to my letter dated xx-xx-xx I am writing with regard to Xxx's pattern of attendance since the beginning of the year. The sheet enclosed gives details of his/her absence week by week.

As stated in my previous correspondence, government guidelines expect students to attend school for a minimum of 95% of the present academic year with the Churchdown target set at 97.5%. It is disappointing that Xxx's attendance has deteriorated further since my last correspondence and at present is below the percentages stated above. I would appreciate it if you would discuss this matter with Xxx. Please note that I have spoken to him/her and hope that he/she appreciates the need to attend school as much as possible during the remainder of the year.

In order to authorise any future absences this year please note that some form of medical evidence will be required. This could be in the form of a note from a doctor, an appointment card, a photocopy of a prescription or a label from a prescribed medication with Xxx's name and the date on it. Any continued unauthorised absence will result in a referral to Mrs Susan Colin, the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

I would appreciate if you could contact me on 01452 713xxx in order that an appointment can be made to review the present situation and set some plans for improving Xxx's attendance.

I trust that the school can rely on your continued support and look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely  
Xxx  
Head of Year Xx

## **Letter 5 AIM Invite Letter**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

**WARNING LETTER TO PARENTS**  
**Churchdown School**  
**Times attended: X out of a possible X sessions.**

Further to our meeting on Xxx, I am writing with regard to Xxx's pattern of attendance since the beginning of the year. The sheet enclosed gives details of his/her absence week by week.

At the aforementioned meeting, it was made clear that Xxx needed to have regular attendance and punctuality to school. It was also stressed the need to supply evidence for any future absence. Since the meeting Xxx has been absent from school on X occasions and you have not provided acceptable proof of his / her inability to attend.

The 1996 Education Act Section 444(1) states:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996"

There is a risk therefore, that if Xxx's attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made to the Local Authority who will start a legal process. I would appreciate if you could contact me on 01452 713xxx so that an Attendance Improvement Meeting can be arranged. Please note that Mrs Susan Colin, Churchdown EWO (Education Welfare Officer), will be attending the meeting. Failure to attend the meeting will result in the meeting being conducted in your absence.

Yours sincerely,  
Xxx  
Head of Year Xx

**Letter 6 AIM follow up**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

**WARNING LETTER TO PARENTS**  
**Churchdown School**

**Times attended: xx out of a possible xxx sessions - xx%**

At the meeting you attended on xxxxxday (date) with myself (and other tcr) Xxx was set targets for his/her attendance. The hope was that he/she would achieve 100% attendance from the date of the meeting until the (target date), but it was agreed that Xxx was to have no more than two days absence for the rest of this term. It is therefore very disappointing that Xxx has already had (XX) days off school. I have enclosed Xxx's attendance record for you to see.

At the aforementioned meeting, it was stated the need for Xxx to have regular attendance and punctuality to school. It was also stressed the need to supply evidence for any future absence and that if this was not provided then it would go down as unauthorised.

The 1996 Education Act Section 444(1) states:

**"If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. There is a risk that if your child's attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made to the Local Authority who will start a legal process."**

As Xxx has failed to meet the agreed targets I would like to invite you to an Attendance Improvement Meeting. Please note that Mrs Susan Colin, Churchdown EWO (Education Welfare Officer), will also attend this meeting. Please contact me at school on 01452 713xxx to arrange a suitable time. If I do not hear from you I will set a date and inform you. Failure to attend the meeting would result in the meeting being conducted in your absence.

Yours sincerely,  
Mr / Miss  
Head of Year Xx

## **Letter 7 Warning Penalty Notice Attendance**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

### **Warning of Penalty Notice - Attendance**

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children attend school regularly. This includes being punctual at the start of both of the two sessions of the school day. If a child fails to do this then the parents or carers can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Practice the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers where a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

Xxxxxx has been absent from school for (XX) sessions in the previous (XX) weeks without prior authorisation or an acceptable reason being given to the Head Teacher. This absence has therefore been recorded as unauthorised in the school register. Please note there are normally 2 sessions in each school day.

I need to inform you that the level of Xxxxxxx's unauthorised absence places you at risk of a penalty notice and / or court action by the Local Authority.

Please note, providing that there are no further unauthorised absences within the next 15 school days, which will start 2 days after the date of this letter, to allow for postage, a penalty notice will not be issued on this occasion.

I must draw your attention to the fact that should Xxxxxx have more unauthorised absences within the next twelve months, you may receive a penalty notice without further warning.

Yours sincerely,  
Christopher Belli  
Headteacher

## **Letter 8 Warning Penalty Notice Punctuality**

Mr / Mrs Xxx  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL

Date

Dear Mr / Mrs Xxx,  
Re: (student name) (tutor group)

### **Warning of Penalty Notice (Punctuality)**

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children attend school regularly. This includes being punctual at the start of both of the two sessions of the school day. If a child fails to do this then the parents or carers can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Practice the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers where a child has missed the start of a session (morning or afternoon) on numerous occasions without permission from the school.

Xxxxxx has missed the start of XX sessions this year without prior authorisation or an acceptable reason being given to the Head Teacher. Please note there are normally 2 sessions in each school day.

I need to inform you that the level of Xxxxxxx's lateness for school places you at risk of a penalty notice and / or court action by the Local Authority.

Please note, providing that there are no further incidents of being late within the next 15 school days from receipt of this letter, which will start 2 days after the date of this letter to allow for postage, a penalty notice will not be issued on this occasion.

I must draw your attention to the fact that should Xxxxxx have more incidents of lateness within the next twelve months, you may receive a penalty notice without further warning.

Yours sincerely,  
Christopher Belli  
Headteacher