

Churchdown School Academy



Whole School Attendance Policy

Governors' Policy Document 2017

Attendance

Churchdown School is committed to providing an education which is fully inclusive, where every child is valued for who they are and who they can become. Our community is a nurturing and caring one where students are encouraged to show compassion, friendship and support towards one another.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to a range of education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. Each year the school aims to achieve a minimum of 97% attendance across all year groups.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement contains details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our parents and pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and the benefits of this by:

- Promoting attendance in assemblies
- Rewarding students for good attendance each week
- Celebrating individuals' attendance each term
- Communicating with parents regularly through termly newsletters

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances such as a bereavement; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence. When dealing with longer periods of absence for some pupils, we work within Government and Gloucestershire County Council's guidance to schools on this issue:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/3002/leaflet_for_parents_-_attendance-56832.pdf

http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/3003/leaflet_for_parents_-_penalty_notices_aug_20151-56833.pdf

http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/3004/leaflet_for_parents_-_prosecution_aug_151-56834.pdf

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Registers

Tutors are expected to complete registers electronically during morning registration. In the event that they are unable to do so, they should collect a paper copy of their class register from Student Services and return it once it has been completed. Afternoon registers are taken at the start of lesson five. In addition to this, registers should be submitted electronically within the first ten minutes of every lesson.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40am. The registers will remain open until 9.30am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be at 1.25pm. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period (in the first 10 mins) will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

Parents/carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence using the school's absence line. If a child is absent and school has not been informed, Student Services will contact the parent/carer. All absence calls are recorded by Student Services and the appropriate registration mark is then transferred to the register.

Student Services will endeavor to make contact with the parents/carers on subsequent days should the child continue to be absent without parents/carers contacting the school.

Continuing Absence

If there has been no contact from parents/carers for a period in excess of five days, a home visit will be made by the School's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Ten Day's Absence

On the tenth day of absence school will follow the Child Missing in Education (CME) guidelines issued by Gloucestershire County Council:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/children-missing-education/>
<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/13085/cme-guide-january-2017.pdf>

Absence notes

Parents/carers may record reasons for absence in their child's planner, separate notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year by the pupil's tutor. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the pastoral team to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible. We will do this by:

- Working directly with pupils and parents to identify and address issues that may be barriers to attendance
- Rewarding improvements in attendance
- Referring to external agencies where a need for support has been identified
- Referring to the Local Authority

Persistent Absence (PA)

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% may be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the EWO and/or the Assistant Head. The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance and will follow Gloucestershire County Council's guidance on Persistent Absence.

Taking Pupils out of School During the Day

Children in Key Stage 3 and 4 should not leave school during the school day unless it is for a medical appointment that has been arranged in advance. If this is the case we expect the following procedure to be followed:

- The pupil should have a note in their House Diary (signed by their parent or carer) that they show to their tutor in the morning and to Student Services when they sign out. They should also show this note to their class teacher at the start of the lesson should they need to leave school during a lesson
- Parents / carers should e mail us on the day of the appointment to confirm that this is the case using the following address: attendance@churchdownschool.com and stating who will be collecting the pupil from reception (we may contact you to confirm this)
- The person collecting the pupil should present their photographic identification to reception on arrival

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils. This will be organised by their Head of Year.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- Tutors give weekly rewards to targeted pupils who are below 90% but improving
- Tutor groups are rewarded weekly and termly for good attendance
- Pupils with 98% plus attendance are entered into a termly prize draw
- Pupils who have shown an improvement in their attendance are entered into a termly prize draw to reward them and their families

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending a school where they are dual registered, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorized absence
O	Unauthorized absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorized absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorized absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups or microfiche copies and will be available for each month.

Register Security

Electronic registers are stored securely. Paper registers are stored securely in Student Services.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the "RAISEONLINE" system and Data Dashboard when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

Emergency Procedures

On occasion, a pupil may need to leave school due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness) before the end of the day. Pupils must not call parents directly. Contact with parents will be made by the appropriate member of staff or student services. All pupils must be signed out at student services.

Action Plan

The school will produce an action plan to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets.

Appendices

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) To any special needs he may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:

- The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007.

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording:

- Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities).
- Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations).

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

Revised: 25th May 2017