



THE CHERWELL SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential if students are to benefit fully from their education and we aim to be rigorous in helping them to achieve and maintain a good standard of attendance and punctuality. At The Cherwell School we know that parental support is vital to help students maintain full attendance. We aim that all students should attend a minimum of 95% in order to achieve their potential within school. Consistent attendance is proven to be beneficial for all students.

Punctuality

Students should be on site by 8.25 am and in their tutor rooms by 8.30 am. Students who arrive late without good reason/note, are detained at lunchtime on the day they are late. If the student is late after the register has been taken they need to report to the School Office and sign the "Lates Book" in order to secure their present mark.

Students allowed off site at lunchtime (Yr 11 with parental permission and Yrs 12 and 13 only) should be back on site by 12.55 pm and into lesson 4 at 1.00 pm.

Attendance

There are two categories of absence, authorised and unauthorised. Authorised absence is when a student is not in school because of approved sickness or another unavoidable cause, including days set aside for religious observance. Any absence where the school has not received written information from a parent or carer, or where a parent has had a request for authorised absence refused is an unauthorised absence.

Procedures

Parents

- To send child/children to school everyday
- To inform school on the day of illness as early as possible. The school has an answer phone system and specific key stage email addresses to assist with leaving this information
- To provide written explanation, or email, on day of student's return.

Students

- To arrive to school and lessons on time and be in the correct place as specified on their timetable
- To hand in any letters from home about absences or medical appointments
- To sign in at Reception if arriving late in school and then attend a lunchtime detention, unless YL or DYL has stated otherwise
- To sign out at Reception if leaving school during the day for appointments or any other reason. You cannot leave the premises without either a signed note or instructions from home received and noted by Reception
- To sign in at Reception if coming into school after 8.45 am for any reason; i.e. late, returning from an appointment/other absence during the school day
- To report to the Medical Room if feeling unwell (do not ring/text home yourself or leave school premises without permission from school)

School

- Staff to take registers at start of day and start of afternoon session
- Form Tutors to bring absences to the attention of their Deputy Year Leader
- For known poor attendees, Deputy Year Leaders will contact home on the first day of absence
- Subject teachers to let appropriate Deputy Year Leader/School Office know if a student is absent from a lesson and has been marked present on SIMS in the previous lesson - Deputy Year Leaders will contact home if it is thought that student has left the premises. Consequences will follow for students who are found to have truanted
- Cherwell Inclusion and Attendance Officer (IAO), Pastoral Information Officer and Oxfordshire County Council Attendance and Engagement Officer (AEO), with information from Year Leaders/Deputy Year Leaders, to meet regularly to discuss and make support plans/referrals as necessary for those students causing concern
- AEO's function is to work with parents to help them meet their statutory obligations with regard to regular attendance

Support

These are all measures to help the school support, and understand, the student's current difficulties:

- Pupils whose attendance is lower than 90% are consistently followed up by Year Leaders/ Deputy Year Leaders and they will phone home daily for a selected number of persist absentees (those below 85%)
- Our AEO may contact parents and students when absence, either authorised and/or unauthorised, causes attendance to drop below 85% and this may be followed up with a warning and fines (under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996) if no substantial improvement is evident. Letters go home regularly asking for reasons for unexplained absences.
- Letters will also go home at the end of each term to inform parents if their child's attendance has fallen below 85% for that term and/or punctuality is not good enough. If a student has too many occasional days off for medical reasons, proof of illness from the GP may be requested, and on occasions permission to allow our School Health Nurse to talk with the student's GP may be asked for
- It is ultimately the school's decision if an absence explanation is accepted in order to authorise an absence.
- It is also hoped that Parents and Carers will avoid making medical/dental appointments during the school day if possible.
- The relevant Year Leader and IAO as required will help in reintegrate students back into school following a prolonged period of absence (e.g. medical, pregnancy).

Leave of Absence

Parents and carers are advised to avoid long term absences and family holidays during term time as this has been proven to affect student progress. Whilst the Headteacher may consider authorising up to 10 days absence they are unlikely to authorise absence except in exceptional circumstances, and the school does not authorise absence for holidays taken during term time. Parents must apply in advance for permission from the Headteacher by using the form available from the School Offices and via the school website. No retrospective permission will be granted. The AEO can be involved if unauthorised holidays are taken.

Good attendance

This will be rewarded termly within our rewards system and celebration assemblies. Letters of recognition will be sent home to mark improved attendance.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their child's attendance they need to discuss it with their appropriate Deputy Year Leader or our Inclusion and Attendance Officer as soon as possible

February 2014