



THE CHERWELL SCHOOL
OPPORTUNITY, RESPONSIBILITY, EXCELLENCE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Person responsible for policy: Assistant Headteacher (BfL)

Revised: January 2019

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Governor Committee: SIC

THE CHERWELL SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Research has shown that regular attendance and good punctuality are crucial factors in students achieving their full potential in education. At The Cherwell School we always aim to work in partnership with parents and carers in ensuring that students attend school every day and on time. We work with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties and are committed to improving attendance levels at the school.

We understand that at times students get serious illnesses or have ongoing medical issues, which mean they cannot attend school. In these cases, we will do all that we can to help students to continue their learning as well as possible at home. Having a minor ailment should not prevent them from coming and students should not take odd days off for minor ailments or fatigue.

The target attendance figure for all pupils is a **minimum of 97%** attendance. Evidence suggests that an attendance of less than 97% brings increased risks of underachievement. We inform all parents and carers about their child's attendance on a termly basis and invite parents to a strategy meeting if attendance becomes a concern

Recording Absence

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 or carer has had a request for authorised absence refused is an unauthorised absence.

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 kept in at lunchtime on the day they are late. If a student is late after the register has been taken they need to report to Reception and sign the "Late Book" in order to secure their present mark.

Students allowed off site at lunchtime (Yr11 with school/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.

School actions to support good attendance:

- Regular reminders in assembly about the importance of good attendance and strategies for personal wellbeing
- Our assembly and tutor programme will include topics on resilience and skills for life
- Individual conversations with tutors on a termly basis to share attendance data with students so they are aware of the potential impact on progress
- If areas for concern arise from the tutor conversations regarding attendance, strategies will be put in place to support students and their attendance
- We will reward students who have excellent attendance and those students who show significant improvement in attendance
- We encourage students to catch up on any missed work due to absence so they don't fall behind
- We encourage students to ask a friend to inform them of any homework set if they are absent, and to collect extra work sheets so they don't fall behind

- We can help and provide advice to parents who are experiencing difficulties getting their children to come to school
- We will ensure a careful reintegration programme is followed so students who have had long term absence are fully supported

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.

Procedures

Parents and carers can support good attendance by:

- Sending child/children to school every day fully equipped and ready to learn
- Informing their child's Deputy Year Leader by email or phone on the first day of illness by 8.30 am.
- Providing written explanation, or email, on day of student's return.
- Ensuring that routine medical appointments are made outside of school time, wherever possible and if not possible, ensuring that they return to school afterwards.
- Downloading the Parent App in order to be able to monitor attendance and punctuality on a daily basis

Students must:

- Arrive at school and lessons on time and be in the correct place as specified on their timetable
- Hand in any letters from home about absences or medical appointments
- Sign in at Reception if arriving late in school and then attend a lunchtime detention, unless Year Leader or Deputy Year Leader has stated otherwise
- 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
- 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
- Report to the Medical Room if feeling unwell (do not ring/text home or leave school premises without permission from school)

The School will:

- Ensure that staff take registers at start of day and start of afternoon session
- Ensure that Form Tutors 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
- Ensure that Subject teachers let Deputy Year Leader/Reception know if a student is absent from a lesson and has been marked present on SIMS in the previous lesson - Deputy Year

Leaders will follow our 'missing students' procedure and will contact home if it is thought that student has left the premises. Consequences will follow for students who are found to have truanted

- Ensure that Cherwell's Inclusion and Attendance Officer (IAO), Pastoral Information Officer and Oxfordshire County Council Attendance Liaison Officer with information from Year Leaders/Deputy Year Leaders, meet regularly to discuss and make support plans/referrals as necessary for those students causing concern
- Work with County Council Attendance Liaison Officer and 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:

- Students whose attendance is lower than 90% are consistently followed up by Year Leaders/ Deputy Year Leaders and they will phone home daily.
- Our Inclusion and Attendance Officer (IAO) 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 and emails will be sent regularly asking for reasons for unexplained absences.
- Letters will also go home at the end of each term to inform parents of their child's attendance and punctuality.
- 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 IAO or 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.
- 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).
- Mrs Young our Inclusion and Attendance Officer (IAO) will support parents and carers who are experiencing difficulties getting their children to come to school Her email is kyoung@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk

Student reported Missing from School (procedure)

Inform SLT

Check

Medical room	Base	Intervention Lessons	Counsellor
School nurse	Toilets	Music lesson	Trip/fixture

Playground	Field	Rugby Club	Cycle Track
Cycle sheds	Hedgerow – tennis courts	North/South Site	Room Change

If not found within 20 minutes:

Phone parents and carers
If no reply phone 101

If parental contact made, agree next steps: eg parental search of own neighbourhood and contact friends. Mobile phone contact etc
Parents to inform school if successful or not.
If unsuccessful advise they call 101
if they refuse school phone 101

Other people to notify

- Headteacher
- Year Leader
- Social Worker
- Chair of Governors