



Chapel-en-le-Frith
High School

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Attendance and Punctuality policy

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Context

Chapel-en-le-Frith High school recognises that pupils will only benefit from their education if they attend school regularly and on time. Attendance will be maximised through an effective partnership between pupils, their parents and the school.

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education as stated in section 576 of The Education Act 1996. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable full-time education. As a last resort schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

The school seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

The school fulfils its responsibilities by taking registers at every lesson using Go4schools, of being open for the required 190 student school days (unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance), and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- › The link governor for attendance is Jayne Jodrell, who can be contacted via the clerk to governors. (jemsley@chapelhigh.org.uk)

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sue Dunn and can be contacted via 01298 813118 or sdunn@chapelhigh.org.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to the leadership and pastoral team and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Family Outreach Officer to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher/ assistant headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Bagshaw and can be contacted through the school office (01298 813118)

3.5 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 8.55am and 1.05pm every day.

Every half term the attendance officer will provide pastoral leaders and tutors with the previous half term's attendance and lates data for their house and tutor group. The attendance board will be updated with this data and the tutor group with the top attendance will be identified and rewarded.

Attendance will be recorded on all progress reports that go home to parents.

Regular attendance at school is extremely important and is the responsibility of students, parents and all staff to ensure that students attend school as regularly as possible. When a child returns from an absence, form tutors will have a conversation with the student about the important of excellent attendance and inform the pastoral leader of any concerns.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the pastoral leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.35am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return. This should be by telephone using our dedicated absence line 01298 811878 and leave a message or telephone 01298 813118 after 8am if you wish to speak to a member of staff, or email: attendance@chapelhigh.org.uk
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am and will be kept open until 9.05am, the register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.35am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7). This should be by telephone using our dedicated absence line 01298 811878 and leave a message or telephone 01298 813118 after 8am if you wish to speak to a member of staff, or email: attendance@chapelhigh.org.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Parents cannot authorise absence. This decision rests with the school in accordance within the boundaries set by The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1997. Where deemed necessary the school reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in writing or by email in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Morning registration starts at 8.35am and students are advised to be in school by 8.30am to enable them to be in their tutor rooms at this time. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they are registered in school for morning and afternoon registration as well as at the start of each lesson. A student who does not register is assumed to be absent from school and parents will be contacted.

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school on a punctual bases.

If students are late for school, they will sign in with a member of office staff at the main reception and make their way to their tutor room.

Late detentions

If a student is late for school, they will be placed in a lunchtime detention on the same day. If a student chooses not to attend this detention, they will be placed into an after school detention.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- › Call/text the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may send a member of staff on a home visit and appropriate safeguarding procedures will ensue, which may involve contacting the police or social services.
- › Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- › Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- › Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via written reports. Parents are also able to monitor their child's attendance using the Go4schools app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be **'exceptional circumstances'**. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Parents should be aware that circumstances such as not being able to get leave from work, or to attend a family wedding, would not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website, or alternatively a paper copy can be collected from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Parents will be notified of the Headteacher's decision by letter

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

The Educations (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 that came into effect on 1st September 2013 make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holiday, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. It is entirely the schools' decision and not a parental right to authorise absence from school. Parents should be advised that absence without the consent of the school could result in further action and sanctions including a penalty notice.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- › The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- › One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- › Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is rewarded using the schools reward system. This includes certificates and prizes at an individual and tutor group level. Tutor group and House attendance will be celebrated weekly and postcards will be sent home to celebrate good attendance.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school attendance team will meet regularly to monitor and analyse the attendance and absence data. Students that require support with attendance will be identified and families will be offered support to improve attendance.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- › Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- › Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to form tutor and pastoral leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- › Make use of the Learning Centre to enable a smooth reintegration to school following an extended period of absence
- › Enlist the support of the Family Outreach Manager to work with families to promote good attendance
- › To work with feeder primary schools to identify students who might need additional transition visits to support the transition between year 6 and 7.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the senior leader with responsibility for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- › Child protection and safeguarding policy
- › Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or

		approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of

		time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: absence letters

Letter 1 – below 96% more than 3 absence occasions

Remember Parent initial with name

Dear Name

Absence from school

I am writing to advise you of our concerns around your child's attendance at school. [Name] has now been absent on 3 or more separate occasions and as a result their attendance has fallen below 96%.

96% is the target that we set for all students at school and although this might sound an impressive figure, a child with 96% attendance will have missed the equivalent of 8 weeks of school by the time they reach year 11.

Studies show a direct link between attendance and academic performance, and I hope that you will support your child by ensuring that they are in school regularly from this point forwards.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries or if I can help in any way.

Yours sincerely

Sue Dunn
Assistant Headteacher

Letter 2 – below 96% more than 5 absence occasions

Dear Name

Absence from school

I am writing to express my concern at [name's] high level of absence from school.

Your child's attendance has now fallen to [percentage]. The school's attendance target for students is 96%, and although this might sound an impressive figure, a child with 96% attendance will have missed the equivalent of 8 weeks of school by the time they reach year 11. Your child's repeated absence is therefore now likely to be impacting on their academic achievement.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different, and we want to work with you to ensure that your child is in school regularly. We believe that good attendance is key to students feeling happy and achieving their best.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this further or if you need some additional support regarding this.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Dunn
Assistant Headteacher

Letter 3

Dear

Failure to attend Attendance Meeting

You were recently invited to attend the School Attendance meeting on _____ at _____. Unfortunately you failed to keep this appointment and therefore another one has been made for you on _____ at _____.

If you are unable to attend on that date please contact me, or your child's Pastoral Leader at your earliest convenience to rearrange it to a mutually convenient time. I cannot stress enough; if you are experiencing difficulties in relation to your child's attendance or there is anything you feel the school should be made aware of, please let the school know so that we can start to look into support for yourself and your child.

Evidence shows that poor attendance does have a significant impact on a child's academic achievements and a period of just 17 days absence over the 5 years in High School can reduce a child's GCSE grade by at least one grade.

I must point out to you that as a parent you have a duty to ensure your child receives an appropriate full time education. If you fail in this duty you may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996 and liable to prosecution. Alternatively the authority have the right to issue you with a fixed penalty notice which would mean you have to make a payment of either £60 or £120 depending on when you pay the notice.

Yours sincerely

Sue Dunn
Assistant Headteacher

Letter 4 – below 96% more than 7 absence occasions

Remember parent initial with name

Dear

Attendance support meeting

I am writing to advise you that [name] has been now absent from school on 7 or more separate occasions.

The school's attendance target for students is 96%, however, where attendance falls below this due to 7 or more absences, we become concerned about the impact on a child's academic progress.

I am therefore writing to invite you to an **attendance support meeting** with your child's pastoral leader. This will be an opportunity to talk about any problems that are preventing your child from being in school and to discuss any additional help and support that we can offer.

The meeting will take place on [Date] at [time].

If you are unable to attend the meeting on this date, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange an alternative time.

Please be aware that should your child have any further absences during this academic year we may ask you to provide supporting medical evidence. Should this not be supplied, then a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

As a parent you have a duty to ensure that your child receives an appropriate full-time education. If you fail in this duty, you may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996 and be liable to prosecution.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Dunn
Assistant Headteacher

Letter 5 – below 90% more than 5 absence occasions

Dear Name

Attendance support meeting

I am writing to express my concern at [name's] recent high level of absence from school.

Your child's attendance has now fallen to [percentage] due to repeated absence this half term. The school's attendance target for students is 96%, and where attendance falls below 90% there is further cause for concern about the impact this will have on a child's academic progress.

Attendance below 90% is classed by the government as 'persistent absence' and your child will now be monitored in this category. The Department of Education guidance suggests that schools should also consider referring such absence to the Local Authority.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different, and we want to work with you to ensure that your child is in school regularly. We believe that good attendance is key to students feeling happy and achieving their best.

I am therefore writing to invite you to an **attendance support meeting** on [Date] at [time] with your child's pastoral leader. This will be an opportunity to talk about any problems that are preventing your child from being in school and to discuss any additional help and support that we can offer.

If you are unable to attend the meeting on this date, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange an alternative time.

Please be aware that should your child have any further absences during this academic year we may ask you to provide supporting medical evidence. Should this not be supplied, then a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

As a parent you have a duty to ensure that your child receives an appropriate full-time education. If you fail in this duty, you may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996 and be liable to prosecution.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

