

Chiltern Edge School



Whole School Attendance Policy (2016-2017)

Person responsible for Policy: Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)
Committee responsible for Policy: Children, Families and Community Committee
Date to Governors: August 2016
Date Agreed: 15 November 2016
Review Due: September 2017 and annually thereafter

Is this Policy to appear on school website: Yes

Is this Policy to be displayed in Reception: Yes

Headteacher's Signature: Date:	 21 November 2016
Signature of Chair of the Governors: Date:	Pauline Conway – Acting Chair of Governors 21 November 2016



Introduction

Chiltern Edge is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

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 including e.g. newsletters and end of term reports.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Oxfordshire attendance targets.

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.

School Procedures

A child will be marked present (/ \) at the morning or afternoon registration.

1. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised (relevant authorisation code), unauthorised (O) or as an approved educational activity (V) (attendance out of school).
2. 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 must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.
3. Subject teachers have a responsibility to record attendance accurately and promptly on Lesson Monitor.

Lateness

1. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at **08.45** am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes.



2. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed.
3. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.
 - The afternoon registration will be at 13.45pm (except on a Wednesday when it will be at 12:45)
 - The registers will close at 14.10 pm (except on a Wednesday when they will close at 13:10 pm)
4. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close.
5. Parents/Carers must inform the school if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day. This must be followed up in writing to explain the reason for the absence. If no reason is given within 2 weeks the absence will become unauthorised.
6. When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

Absence from School

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us. This can be recorded in the Planner.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you by 11:00am;
- Refer the absence to child's Head of House and Form Tutor if absent for 3 days, to make additional contact;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Head of House or Pastoral Team if absences persist;
- If attendance falls below 85%, a Parent Contract may be offered.

Ten Day Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to



Oxfordshire County Council. **This is a legal requirement.** The school will include details of the action they have taken.

Absence Notes

Absence notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. 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

It is the responsibility of the Head of House, with the support of the Tutor 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 any concerns with parent/s.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward. Pupils will receive a Head of House sanction or Senior Leadership Team after school detention if the lateness is repeated in a single week.

Penalty Notices and Legal Action

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.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a referral to The County Attendance Team to issue a fine or take further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the County Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the school's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for school after registration is closed.

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark **or** is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the school and a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and school to try and help resolve any issues. PA cases may be referred to the County Attendance Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that 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 other pupils.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their



responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. We will give you details on your child's attendance in our regular data updates and report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments.

Leave of Absence

As of 1st September 2013, the Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Parents/Carers should seek permission in writing from the Headteacher prior to the leave of absence period in question.

The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school **if** the leave is granted. Parents/carers who remove their children from school without authorisation or do not return their child to school on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution (see Penalty Notices and Legal Action above).

Attendance Awards

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

- Celebrating individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through assemblies, rewarding 100% attendance by entry into a competition with a prize of vouchers.
- Raise profile of attendance in school with students and parents in partnership with Attendance and Engagement Service.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school at the time of registration 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 a 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. This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits;
- Sporting activities;
- Link courses or approved education off site;
- Most types of dual registration.

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

