



Chenderit School
A VISUAL ARTS COLLEGE

<p>CHENDERIT SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY</p>

REVIEWED BY GOVERNING BODY - June 2022

ADOPTED BY GOVERNING BODY - July 2022

A High Attendance Partnership

Regular attendance at school is vital. Without it, the learning process becomes fragmented and unsatisfactory. It is a simple fact that students who do not attend do not achieve. This policy explains how we monitor attendance, what we are required to record about your child's attendance, and how you can help. We explain what 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absences are, the procedure and regulations for school-time holidays, and where parents can find help if they are worried.

Registration and Attendance Procedures at Chenderit

- (a) The tutor group register is marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Afternoon registration is taken at the beginning of period 5 by subject teachers. Students not present to answer their names will be marked absent. Students arriving late should sign the late book at Inclusion Centre Reception. Registration is closed at 9.30am and 2.15pm. Any student not present by then could be considered to be absent, whether or not he or she subsequently arrives. If your child is absent, please let the school know on the first morning – phone 01295 711567 – option 1 – email attendance@chenderit.net or text 07860 095542.
- (b) Tutors monitor attendance daily, and record the reason for absence, provided that written explanation has been received from parents. If no written explanation is received we must try to obtain this; we start by reminding the student, then contact parents directly. If we do not receive a written response, we must assume that the absence was unknown to parents, and therefore unauthorised. If this happens, External Agencies are likely to investigate.
- (c) If we have not heard from parents, we shall try to contact all contacts by telephone, text or email. Contact will be made on the first day if a student is absent. Each student requires a minimum of 4 contacts, and where a student is absent each contact will be called until a reason is provided.
- (d) If we discover a pattern to absences, or are concerned about the frequency or validity of absences, we shall contact parents. If we discover a school-based difficulty, we shall seek to remedy it. If there is an out-of-school problem, we shall offer support and access to other services as appropriate. In all cases we shall help the student to re-establish him/herself into the usual pattern of school life. This is important in terms of their success in school.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

It is the responsibility of the school, under The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016), to decide whether or not any given absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

Unauthorised Absence

We **cannot** authorise any requests for students to be taken out of school during term time for any reason. It is commonly believed that 'unauthorised' absence means truancy and although there are occasions when parents are unaware of their son/daughter's absence from school, there are a number of other reasons for absence which the school may not authorise. Examples include:

- i) staying at home to care for a sick relative (e.g. parent, brother or sister);
- ii) staying at home to await a tradesman or delivery;
- iii) shopping;
- iv) preparing for a holiday and taking an annual family holiday (not long weekends, etc) where this cannot be taken in school holiday time because of parents' leave restrictions;
- v) keeping a hairdressing or similar appointment;
- vi) a birthday or family celebration;
- vii) missing the bus;
- viii) not having school uniform;
- ix) family day visits out.

Authorised Absence

Only in exceptional circumstances will leave of absence from school be granted as authorised absence. Some examples of 'authorised' absences are:-

- i) when a child is ill or receiving medical attention; (appointment cards should be available). For absence of longer than 5 days a doctor's appointment note should be supplied. Chenderit does not have a 48 hours stay away rule after a bout of sickness or diarrhoea;
- ii) when a close family member has died;
- iii) when prior consent has been obtained from the Headteacher, for example for a music examination;
- iv) non-provision of school transport for students living beyond three miles in the school's preference area.

We do not wish to record unnecessarily absence as 'unauthorised'. Please help us to avoid doing this by providing signed absence notes quickly and by encouraging your son or daughter to recognise that good attendance is important: going to school is as important as going to work.

Leave of Absence from School in Term Time

Schools **cannot** grant leave from school (including holiday leave). However, in exceptional circumstances, requests will be considered. We are not in a position to stop parents/carers taking students out of school **during term time**, however, it must be pointed out that all requests for **leave of absence from school**, if agreed, are as **unauthorised** absences and are liable to Penalty Notice Fines

or prosecution for non-attendance (issued after 5 days of unauthorised non- attendance). Only in exceptional circumstances will **leave of absence from school** be granted as authorised absence.

Request for “Leave of Absence from school in term time” forms are available from Inclusion Centre Reception and the school website.

DfE (Department for Education) guidance states that in the case of family holidays, each case will be considered on its merits and approval is not automatic. The South West Northamptonshire schools consistently oppose holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances, and normally all holidays are recorded as unauthorised absence – Coded G.

Holiday leave will be acknowledged only if a written request is made, four weeks in advance, by the parent/carer with whom the student normally resides.

(Some visits offer a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity: please consult the Headteacher in such cases and these may then be recorded as authorised).

Absences without prior approval or outside the criteria will be registered as unauthorised, and may involve liaison with the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT).

The timescales for issuing Penalty Notices (PN) for unauthorised absence from school have been changed and are explained below.

What is a PN?

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and requires the parent(s) to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child’s irregular attendance and avoid a court appearance.

It is issued per parent, per child. Please note **only** a Headteacher can authorise absence from school.

Who issues them?

In Northamptonshire the Local Authority issues them through the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team.

When are they issued?

When a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions (5 days consecutive) of absence which is recorded as unauthorised in a 6 school week period; a school day is two sessions AM and PM.

This includes; any absence marked in the register as unauthorised.

Persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken and is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

An absence in term time which has not been authorised by the Headteacher. The Government has directed that Headteachers may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances.

PNs can also be used during the first 5 days of exclusion. Parents are made aware of the consequences by letter when a child is excluded from school.

How Can Parents/Carers Help?

- i) Do not allow your son or daughter to stay away from school unless absolutely necessary – attendance matters.
- ii) Let the school know of any absence, especially if you expect it to last for more than one day.
- iii) Send a signed note of explanation when your son/daughter returns to school, even if you have telephoned or emailed or texted.
- iv) Late arrival is recorded: arrival after 9.30am/2.15pm counts as absence; please send a note as in (iii). Students whose late arrival is due to school buses have to be counted as 'late', but we do not record such instances on reports etc.
- v) Try to avoid doctors, dentists and hospital appointments during school time.
- vi) Avoid family holidays in term time.
- vii) If your son/daughter seems reluctant to come to school, and you suspect a problem at school, please contact us sooner rather than later. Please do not 'condone' an absence by providing an excuse which may be covering a problem. We are partners in your son/daughter's education and by sharing the problem, we may solve it. We do not consider any problem to be trivial: we shall try to act to solve a problem as soon as we know about it.
- viii) You may wish to discuss attendance difficulties with the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT) who may be contacted through the school.

Reporting Attendance

Any parent who has reason to check on his/her son/daughter's attendance record can do so by contacting his/her tutor or Head of Learning or the Attendance Officer on 01295 711567 ext. 247 or by emailing attendance@chenderit.net.

Normally a student's attendance record is included as part of their school report in the form of the number of sessions attended, out of the possible number, and the number of sessions missed due to unauthorised absence. We will contact parents by letter to report attendance between 90 - 93% and 93 - 95% on at least six scheduled occasions during the year.

The school is also obliged to report attendance to the local authority and to the DfE so that data can be published. These records are reported as global figures and contain no individual data.

The school also has to make registers available to the local authority's Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT) who, as part of their duties, may contact parents to seek clarification or follow up matters of concern.

Attendance Strategy Proposals

Objective

- To meet our attendance target of 95%
- To ensure that the persistent absence rate is less than 8.2%

Proposals

- To use data on attendance to help set realistic targets and to monitor progress:
 - monthly whole school data published showing % authorised and unauthorised attendance
 - monthly year group data published showing % authorised and unauthorised attendance
 - monthly tutor group data published showing % authorised and unauthorised attendance
 - monthly individual data published showing % authorised and unauthorised attendance
- Attendance targets set for:
 - Whole school
 - Year groups
 - Tutor groups
 - Individuals whose attendance is causing concern
- Clear guidance given to all staff on completion of registers
- Early identification of those for whom attendance is a concern and first day calling arrangements put in place. Tutors to send an 'email alert' to Inclusion Centre Reception to make a phone call/ text home before 9.30 am
- When a student's absence drops below 95% there will be contact with home from the tutor and a target of 97% attendance for the following 2 weeks. If this target is not met, then parents will be invited into school to meet the Attendance Officer or Head of Learning to discuss any issues, ensure that the student receives appropriate support in keeping up with school work, and to ensure attendance is as high as possible. If attendance remains below the targeted level, the steps outlined in the attached Attendance Procedure and Protocol 2022 will be implemented to secure improved attendance as swiftly as possible. This may include informing the EIPT if other support proves unsuccessful
- If the problem persists than parents should be invited into school to discuss the problems with tutor, Head of Learning or LT link as appropriate. A target of 95% attendance will be set within a 2 week period to monitor and improve attendance
- If there is no solution to the attendance issue the EIPT should be informed and asked to contact the parents
- Praise should be given for full attendance each full term
 - Certificates to be given out in assemblies and letters sent home for 100% attendance for each full term
 - Students who achieve full attendance in a year are awarded a prize at the annual Celebration Evening
- Use newsletters to highlight the importance of regular attendance
- Where students are finding attending school difficult a meeting should be held with Head of Learning, Tutor, PSA, parents and student and an agreed support programme put in place

Late Arrival to School

Objective;

- To reduce the number of students arriving late to school and to make it clear to students, parents and staff that arriving after 9.30am or 2.15pm counts as a ½ day absence and needs a note to explain the reason.

Proposals;

- Students arriving late should sign in at Inclusion Centre Reception but should have a signed note from home explaining the reason. (Where a bus is late and the school know this then a note will not be required)
- Where there is no note provided the Attendance Officer will call the parents/carers to ascertain the reason and request a note. Letters are also regularly sent out requesting a signed note to explain absence
- A note or email will be sent to the tutor and Head of Learning indicating that a student has been late with no adequate reason given and this will trigger a number of consequences
 - 1st offence student spoken to by tutor
 - 2nd offence lunch time detention
 - 3rd offence 2 lunchtime detentions and a letter sent home
 - 4th offence after school detention and a letter sent home
 - 5th offence in a half term, loss of lunchtimes until a meeting with parents has taken place and the problem resolved
 - If the problem persists the EIPT should become involved

How Our Attendance System Works

What the tutor does each day

1. Tutors collect the plastic wallets containing **Pupil Registration Form** and the **Absence Notes Sheet** and **Attendance Alert Slip**.
2. The register is taken at the start of the registration session. One mark is made for each student.
 - Registration is taken electronically with SIMS
 - Students are either present or absent
 - If a student arrives before the end of the registration session the tutor can change the mark to indicate the student was late before registration was closed and the minutes late are recorded in SIMS
3. Tutors collect in absence notes, sign and date them. On the "Absence Notes" sheet tutors record receipt of the absence notes and state the reason for absence. Absence notes are passed to the Attendance Officer for filing.
4. Registers **must** be returned to the Inclusion Centre Reception immediately.

What Support Staff do Each Day

1. Registers are returned to the Inclusion Centre Reception
2. Attendance reports will be printed out for MWW and Heads of Learning weekly and monthly
3. Students who arrive late will sign in to the **Late Book**
4. Where no note is brought giving a reason the student's parents will be telephoned or a text sent
5. An email will be sent to the tutor and Head of Learning indicating that a student has been late with no adequate reason given and this will trigger a number of consequences

What Happens at the End of the Week

1. **It is vital that all registers are returned promptly.**
2. On a Friday an **Absence Report** will be generated by the Attendance Officer and put in the register wallet. This will indicate all the students who have been late or absent during the week. Tutors complete the **Absence Report** by assigning a code to each absence. Student names will reappear on this list until each absence has been coded.
3. If students have not brought in an absence note a week after the absence the Attendance Officer will phone home. Tutors will be notified of the nature of this conversation. After three attempts to contact parents the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
4. MWW regularly monitors the attendance of all students to target any issues. Action is taken on an individual basis to ensure students attend school as required.
5. Persistently Absent students are identified at the end of each half term. (Persistently Absent students will be identified as having attendance below 90%). Parents are contacted to seek explanation for absence with the intention of ensuring attendance returns to above 95%. All Persistently Absent students are reported to the EIPT and necessary action taken as a result to maintain the persistent absence target at less than 8.2%.

Attendance Procedure and Protocol – 2022

All contact with parents/carers over student attendance should be logged on Sims as normal practice.

Attendance at school across KS3 and KS4 and Post 16 is an ongoing issue and needs constant action. We need to clarify the process and actions we will take to ensure students are at school and achieving our 95% target. Please follow the procedure outlined below which clarifies roles and responsibilities in monitoring our attendance.

	Triggered by	Action/Role	Responsibility
1	Daily action	Registering students – twice daily on Sims. Tutors to be clear on absence codes – eg all holidays coded as unauthorised G. Late arrivals am/pm must sign the late book at Inclusion Centre Reception.	Tutor. Codes checked with Inclusion Centre Reception if unclear. Paper registration copies must be sent to Inclusion Centre Reception straight after am/pm registration.

2	1 st day of any absence	Student absent on the day – First Day calling/text home to all KS3/4/5 students. Tutor alerts the Attendance Officer to prevent first day call if reason known. Absence letters must be logged on absence and tutors need to chase students/parents for not providing a letter	Tutor and Attendance Officer. Text/call to take place after registers closed and student recorded as absent. Tutor to contact home by email or phone.
3	Attendance dips below 95% - monitoring attendance as part of the 6-weekly monitoring process	Monitoring Absence and checking reason for absence. Where attendance is below 93 - 95% over a six-week period – an attendance letter will be sent home by MWW – below 95% - and an attendance target set for 97% over the next 2 week period. Where attendance is below 90 - 93% over a six week period a replacement attendance letter is sent home by MWW – and an attendance target set for 97% over the next 2 week period.	Attendance Officer creates letter below 93 - 95% and below 93% signed by MWW.
4	Student not achieved 97% attendance over any 2 week period when under 95% attendance <i>A Penalty Notice may be issued for <u>unauthorised absence</u> for 5 days or a minimum of 10 sessions in a 6-week school period</i>	Monitoring Absence and checking reason for absence. Invite parents in to school to discuss attendance issues and try to resolve amicably. Attendance Officer/PSA to meet parents and student with RLJ/MWW. Attendance targets and agreed actions to be recorded and shared with HoL and parents. SENDCO to be invited to attend the meeting if appropriate. RLJ/MWW to record meeting on comments section of register. 97% attendance target set.	Sendco/ RLJ/ MWW/ PSA/ Attendance Officer to meet with parents and student. RLJ/MWW to record meeting on register in Sims.
5	Student attendance remains below 95%	In addition to the supportive measures above, if any student's attendance falls below 95% at each end of half termly check, they fall into a category of Persistent Absentees until their attendance is higher than 95%.	Attendance Officer will send home the Persistent Absence letter signed by MWW which outlines the following: Student is now identified as 'PA' - all future absence is unauthorised – even when supported by home letter/contact until attendance raises above 95%.
6	Student not achieved 97% attendance for a further 2-week period when	Referral to Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT) and letter sent home. External process put into place with parents.	EIPT and external agencies - HoL/Sendco/RLJ/MWW/PSA/EIPT.

	remaining under 95% attendance		
7		Level 1 – parents provided with information about local and national services.	LEA, EIPT and external agencies.
8		Level 2 – EIPT working with parents, student and staff to resolve any issues.	LEA, EIPT and external agencies.
9		Level 3 – formal parenting contract – time limited and reviewed formally.	LEA, EIPT and external agencies.
10		Level 4 – Parenting Order – deemed essential to improve the behaviour /attendance of a young person.	LEA, EIPT and external agencies.