



CHEW VALLEY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE

POLICY

Regular attendance is a legal requirement

Optimum levels of attendance can only be achieved when responsibility is accepted and shared by all concerned: Bath and North East Somerset Council, Governors, School Staff, parents, pupils and the local community

Regular attendance is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their reliability and commitment to their own learning

3.22

CHEW VALLEY ATTENDANCE POLICY

At Chew Valley School we demand the highest level of attendance from every student. Regular and ongoing attendance will provide the opportunity for each student to develop his/her full potential during their time at school. The school governors, parents, all staff and students must do all in their power to ensure that this objective is achieved.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)

- (i) To oversee and monitor whole school attendance
- (ii) To liaise with Heads of Year, Children Missing Education Officer (CMEO) and the Home-School Liaison Officer

Head of Year:

- (i) To oversee and monitor overall Year attendance
- (ii) To check registers
- (iii) To monitor student attendance patterns
- (iv) To co-ordinate action with their tutors, parents, the Home-School Liaison Officer and CMEO.

Subject Teacher:

- (i) It is the subject teacher's responsibility to be on time for all lessons
- (ii) The subject teacher is responsible for supporting student attendance by keeping accurate class registers. These must be taken near the start of every lesson.
- (iii) The subject teacher is a significant role model.

Tutor:

- (i) It is a tutor's responsibility to be on time for registration and PSHE lessons.
- (ii) The tutor is responsible for recording student attendance, recording lateness, receiving letters from parents, liaising with the Home-School Liaison Officer and Head of Year (HOY).
- (iii) The tutor is a significant role model.

Students:

- (i) The student is responsible for making sure that his/her attendance is maintained at the highest possible level.
- (ii) Students are responsible for ensuring that they receive their attendance mark, especially when arriving late and for bringing notes to school before (if possible) or after absence.

The Home-School Liaison Officer:

- To compile the registration data on a daily basis using the OMR.
- To record details of parents who phone in with absence information.
- To make phone calls to ascertain reasons for absence using the following priority:
 - *Looked after children
 - *Serious known absentees
 - * Students with unauthorised/ unverified absences
 - *Students below 80, 85, 90% attendance
- To liaise with the Assistant Head and HOY on a regular basis to share information on absentees, holiday applications and social problems.
- To be the main point of contact for all parents re absence requests to contact HOY.

Parents:

- (i) The parent is responsible for ensuring that his/her child attends school regularly and punctually in accordance with their legal obligations.
- (ii) Parents must phone or e-mail the school and report absence on the first day. Messages will be picked up by the Home-School Liaison Officer.
- (iii) If, after five days, no phone call is made by the parents and no note written to cover the absence, a letter will be sent by the Home-School Liaison Officer.
- (iv) If a response is not received the HOY will initiate a formal interview with the parents. If parents do not attend, or are unwilling to attend, a written referral will be made to the CMEO. This procedure is designed to promote regular ongoing attendance.

CMEO:

- (i) To liaise with the Assistant Headteacher, Heads of Year and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) regarding concerns over student absence.
- (ii) There will be regular timetabled meetings between the Assistant Head, the Home-School Liaison Officer and the CMEO to deal with attendance issues.
- (iii) The CMEO monitors attendance with the Home School Liaison Officer.

SEN Co-ordinator:

It is the SEN Co-ordinator's role

- (i) To support students with a known reading difficulty. This difficulty has been shown to contribute to students' non-attendance due to low self-esteem.
- (ii) To be involved in any reintegration programme where deemed necessary.

REWARDS AND INCENTIVES:

Praise and rewards have an important part to play in motivating students to achieve and maintain good or improved levels of attendance.

Rewards will include:

- 100% attenders receive a certificate at the end of the year
- A termly report of 100% attenders is given to HOY who will meet each student and give praise
- 100% attenders will also be praised in year assembly
- A form reward (a healthy snack) is given to each form which achieves 100% attendance in any one week.

POLICY GUIDELINES

MISSION STATEMENT:

- Regular attendance is a legal requirement.
- It is important because the student has the opportunity to experience the full range of a balanced curriculum with its contribution to the student's moral, spiritual, cultural, mental and social daily developments.
- Regular attendance is an opportunity for each student to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to their own learning.

LEGAL POSITION:

- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 all children of compulsory school age must receive suitable education by regular school attendance or otherwise.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend, and stay, at school. They are also responsible for informing schools of any absence as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of absence.
- It is the responsibility of the schools to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. The Education (Student Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 1997 state that attendance records must show whether an absence of a child of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

- The LA's duties are to provide regular education and also ensure that parents fulfil their responsibilities by sending their children to school. If necessary it must institute legal proceedings against the parents of non-attending children. (DfEE School Attendance 1994).

GUIDELINES ON THE MARKING OF ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

1. There is an attendance register for each tutor group in Chew Valley School.
2. The following information is printed on the front cover of each attendance register:
 - (a) Education Year
 - (b) Name of School
 - (c) Tutor Group
 - (d) Name of the teacher responsible for marking the register
3. The following information for every student who joins the tutor group during the Education year is recorded on the School Information Management System (SIMS) information sheet:
 - (a) Admission Register Number
 - (b) Date of Birth
 - (c) Name of Student
 - (d) Home Address
 - (e) Change of Address and responsible adults who may be contacted in case of emergency.
4. Attendance Registers will be marked in the period set aside for registration at the **beginning** of each morning and **once** during the afternoon session.

Guidelines for completing the register are to be found at the back of the register wallet and in Appendix 1 of this policy.

5. **Authorised Absences:**

Absence on approved educational activities count as attendance for National Performance Tables and Prospectuses.

6. **Unauthorised Absences:**

If a student arrives at school after the period set aside for registration an entry should be made on a **Late Slip** kept for this purpose at Reception. This entry

should include the time of the arrival and the reason for being late and where appropriate should be signed by the student. Further details are to be found on Appendix 2 of this policy.

The registration marks of pupils who arrive late will be amended at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions by the Home-School Liaison Officer.

7. All Attendance Registers should be marked by a member of the teaching staff at the school and must be returned to the Home-School Liaison Officer's Office after the period set aside for registration.

Registers are important legal records and they should be kept securely. They may be needed in prosecutions for school attendance offences and in the event of an emergency such as fire, they may be the only complete record of who was on site.

8. All Attendance Registers and Late Slips should be available for inspection by authorised staff in the Education Department. CMEOs will inspect attendance registers at a minimum of at least once every half term and will sign the register above the week ending in which it was inspected. In practice registers will be inspected on a more regular basis in many schools.

Further reference may be made to School Attendance and the role of the Children Missing Education Service, Guidance for Schools and LEAs.

Registers must be kept for three years after the date on which they were last used. There is no legal requirement for parents' notes to be retained but if a student attends irregularly and there is a possibility of legal action, it may be sensible to keep the notes for a time.

It should be noted that once an absence has been authorised by the school, it cannot thereafter be used as evidence in a non-attendance prosecution.

By law only the school can approve absence, not the parents. School staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation.

REINTEGRATION PROCEDURES:

Supporting a student upon a return to school involves careful planning and flexibility. Having a procedure within school to manage returnees can reduce the burden on individual staff and minimise any difficulties which the student may face. Parents should be involved at every stage.

Return dates should be set in advance with a named member of staff, such as the form tutor, co-ordinating with other teachers and administrative staff as appropriate. Consideration should be given to the use of a phased return or negotiated timetable

with subject teachers providing details of relevant 'catch up' work. It is important that there is a clear understanding of the duration of any special arrangements so that returning pupils are able to attend a full timetable as quickly as possible.

All staff will understand the work involved in getting a student back to school and the personal courage some pupils show in returning. The need for sensitivity should not be under rated as even fellow-students' well intentioned 'jokes' can undo much good work. Discretion will be exercised upon minor discrepancies in behaviour or appearance eg not having the correct school shoes, for the period of reintegration and to address these with parents once regular attendance is re-established.

Appendix One

Attendance

1. Registers will be stored in colour coded boxes and lodged outside the Home School Liaison Officer's Office.
2. HOY will oversee the delivery of registers to the tutor base.
3. Attached tutors will be available to cover registers where necessary.
4. Procedure for completing the register is set out on a sheet in the back pocket of the register.
5. Registers must be returned to the Home-School Liaison Office at **9.00am and not later than 9.05am** Registers can be returned by a student. They will be stored in the coloured Year boxes.
6. It will take the Home School Liaison Officer about 2 hours to complete the registration check. S/he will then prioritise inquiries in the following order:
 - looked after children
 - priority list of students identified with attendance problems
 - first day absence that is unexplained
 - students below 80%, then 85% and 90% attendance
7. If tutors have any concerns about student attendance, please see the Home School Liaison Officer at break or mention concerns before school.
8. Support from the CMEO:
 - The Home School Liaison Officer and Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Student Welfare will meet with the CMEO fortnightly to discuss attendance issues.
 - Tutors need to inform HOY of any concerns weekly.
 - CMEO will pick-up problems from HOY on Tuesday.

- Tutors will receive an absence report weekly from the Home School Liaison Officer.
9. It is essential that information is communicated by tutors ⇒ HOY ⇒ Home School Liaison Officer.

Appendix Two

Family Holidays During Term Time

- 1) There is a clear correlation between attendance and achievement at school.
- 2) The Government and Local Authority are placing new pressures on schools not to authorise holidays in term time. The statutory position, however, remains the same: the Headteacher has a discretionary power to authorise holiday leave for pupils during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and, in law, are required to apply, in advance, for permission.
- 3) The Headteacher, in making his or her decision is required to take into account:
 - The age of the child;
 - the time of year of the proposed holiday;
 - the nature and purpose of the holiday;
 - the duration of the holiday;
 - the impact on continuity of learning;
 - the circumstances of the family and the wishes of the parents;
 - the distance being travelled, the expense of such travel and whether the trip is seen as a rare event in the child's school career;
 - the overall attendance pattern of the child.
- 4) The Local Authority has been granted the power to fine parents who take their children out of school without the Headteacher's authorisation.
- 5) The Governors of Chew Valley School have expressed their view that leave of absence of more than three days in term time should only be authorised in exceptional circumstances in any school year. Where the pupil is in an examination year (Years 9-13) there should be a presumption that applications for leave of absence of more than three days will not be authorised.

Agreed: January 2008

Review Date : Autumn Term 2010