



4th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Attendance

As we approach the start of term on Monday 7th September, we would like to share some key attendance information and reminders to help students make a positive start to the academic year.

At Chew Valley School, we want every student to attend regularly, arrive punctually and feel ready to learn each day. Good attendance plays a vital role in academic achievement, but it also supports wellbeing, friendship groups, confidence, independence and the development of important social skills.

Preparing for a Positive Start

Returning to school after the summer break often means a change in routine, and every family will prepare for this in their own way. If it is helpful, many families find that gradually re-establishing routines before the start of term helps students feel more confident and prepared for the return to school. You may wish to consider:

- Gradually resetting sleep schedules 3 to 5 days before school begins by bringing bedtimes and wake-up times forward in small steps.
- Re-establishing simple school-day routines, such as making time for breakfast, preparing uniform and equipment, and packing school bags the night before.
- Reducing the use of phones, tablets, gaming devices and other screens during the hour before bedtime, as this can help support healthy sleep habits.
- Encouraging some reading before bedtime. Students are expected to have a reading book in school throughout their time at Chew Valley School, so choosing a book and getting into a regular reading routine before term starts can be a great way to support a positive return to learning.
- Planning a calm and organised first morning back so that your child feels relaxed and prepared for the start of the school year.

We know that every child is different, but consistent routines can often make the return to school a little easier and help children start the year feeling positive and ready to learn.

Supporting Children Who May Feel Anxious About Returning to School

While many students are looking forward to seeing friends and returning to familiar routines, we recognise that some may feel worried or anxious about coming back to school.

If your child is feeling unsettled, it can help to talk openly about any concerns they may have, acknowledge those feelings and focus on the positive aspects of returning to school. The following organisations provide useful advice and guidance for parents and carers:

- NSPCC – Children's Mental Health
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/>
- Mind – Support for Young People's Mental Health
<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/>
- NHS Every Mind Matters for Parents
<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/parents/>

If your child is feeling particularly anxious about returning to school, we encourage you to contact us via attendance@chewvalleyschool.co.uk. A member of the team will be happy to discuss any concerns with you ahead of your child's return to school.

Attendance and Punctuality

The school day begins at **8.35am**, with students expected to be in their tutor bases and seated by **8.40am**.

To support a calm and punctual start to the day, we recommend students arrive on site by **8.30am**. This allows time to see friends, visit the toilet, organise equipment and settle before tutor time begins.

Each day starts with **30 minutes of tutor time**, an important part of the school day that provides structure, pastoral support, personal development opportunities and key information. Arriving late means missing this valuable time and can make it more difficult for students to start the day positively.

Changes to Morning Drop-Off Arrangements

We have worked closely with the Local Authority and coach providers to ensure that school transport arrives before **8.30am**.

As a result, the school gates will close at **8.40am** each morning.

Students arriving after this time should enter via the Reception/Sports Hall entrance. Parents and carers dropping students off after **8.40am** should use this entrance or ensure they stop in a safe and legal location on the public highway.

The Rugby Club continues to provide a safe and convenient location for both morning drop-off and afternoon collection.

Reporting an Absence

The Government's expectation is that children attend school every day unless they are too unwell to do so or there are exceptional circumstances that prevent attendance.

On the rare occasion that your child is unable to attend school, it is important that their absence is reported promptly.

From **September**, all absences must be reported through the MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) app or website, <https://www.mychildatschool.com/MCAS/MCSParentLogin>.

Where possible, absences should be reported by **8.00am**.

Before reporting an absence, we ask parents and carers to consider the following:

- If your child is feeling unwell, could they attend school and see how they get on?
- If they are too unwell to attend at the start of the day, could they attend later if they begin to feel better?
- If your child has a medical or other appointment, can this be arranged outside of the school day? We appreciate that this is not always possible. Where appointments do take place during the school day, students should attend school for as much of the day as possible.
- If you need advice or are experiencing difficulties with attendance, please contact your child's tutor or the attendance team so that we are aware of any concerns.

When reporting an absence, please provide as much information as possible. The more detail we have, the better we are able to understand and accurately record the reason for your child's absence. The MCAS app makes this process quick and straightforward, taking only a matter of minutes to complete. Parents and carers can also upload supporting evidence, such as appointment letters, screenshots of appointment confirmations or other relevant documentation where appropriate.

If your child remains absent for more than one day, the absence should be reported through MCAS on each day they are not attending school.

If you are unsure of your MCAS login details, please check your email or contact reception during school opening ours 01275 332272.

Looking Ahead

Thank you for your support in helping your child establish strong attendance and punctuality habits from the beginning of the academic year.

By working together, we can ensure that every student is present, on time and ready to make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H Kenyon', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Miss H Kenyon
Assistant Headteacher