



# CANNOCK CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

A C H I E V E M E N T F O R A L L

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

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## **Introduction**

Cannock Chase High School is a successful school, and your child plays their part in making it so. The Governors and staff of Cannock Chase High School are committed to providing a full and effective education for all our students to ensure they achieve their potential in all that they do. We believe that all students benefit from the education we provide and from regular and punctual school attendance and good behaviour. To these ends, we do everything that we can to ensure that students attend school everyday it is open, on time and ready to learn. We work proactively with parents to ensure student attendance is of paramount importance, with students expected to attend school unless their absence is unavoidable.

## **Principles**

Non-attendance at school is one of the single biggest blocks to achievement. Whether absence is due to illness, term-time holidays, other condoned absences, or truancy, not being at school disadvantages children.

By focusing on good attendance, we can make a significant impact across the range of outcomes for which we are held accountable, including those relating to school standards and closing attainment gaps.

By offering our students an exciting curriculum, personalised learning, a safe and enjoyable environment to work in and an ethos of inclusion, we foster a coherent and an effective approach to tackling the problems associated with persistent absenteeism.

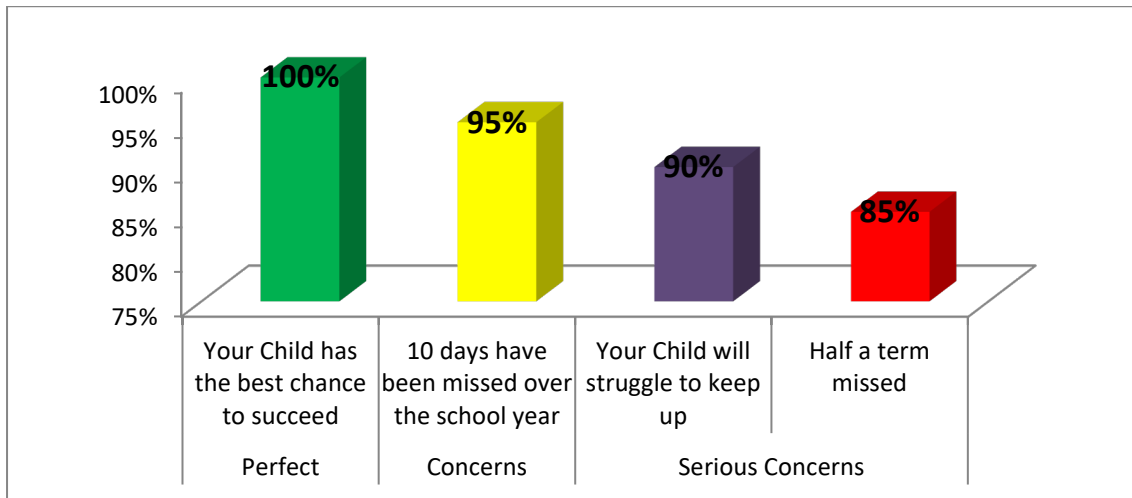
Setting good patterns of attendance is vital. An attendance rate of 90% may sound impressive in the first instance, but it means that a student only attends school for 4.5 days out of every five. This, over a five-year span, equates to a child missing out on an entire half a year of their education.

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

All students should be in school, on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

This policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the wellbeing of children including safeguarding and behaviour.

## Missing School Means Missing Out



## Expectations

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly;
- arrive on time, appropriately dressed in school uniform, with relevant equipment for each lesson during the day and ready to learn;
- through our effective Pastoral system, tell their tutor or Director of Year (or any other member of staff) about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend regularly.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- encourage their child(ren) to attend school on time every day school is open. Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend regularly;
- ensure they contact the school as soon as possible (i.e. on the first day of absence before 8.30 am) whenever their child is unable to attend school;
- ensure that their children arrive in school appropriately dressed, with appropriate equipment for the day and 'Ready to Learn';
- try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day;
- provide the school with up-to-date home, work and emergency telephone numbers;
- provide the school with up-to-date e-mail addresses;
- not to arrange holidays to take place during the school term;
- inform the school in confidence about any problem which may affect their child's attendance or behaviour.

Parents/Carers can expect that the school will:

- provide a good quality education;
- record their child's attendance regularly (every lesson), accurately and efficiently (via Class Charts registration system whenever possible or alternatively paper based and sent to the Attendance Officer);
- make every reasonable effort on the first day of absence to contact the parent/carer when their child fails to attend school without good reason;

- deal discretely and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent/carer;
- work with parents/carers to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance and involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school, such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team where required. The school will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this;
- make all efforts to encourage good attendance and behaviour;
- instigate appropriate enquiries before removing the child from the school role.

## **Procedures**

### **Dealing with Non-Attendance**

Attendance is accurately recorded at the beginning of each session and within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

On the first day of absence, if a student is absent without authorisation contact will be made via either: a telephone call, a text message, email or ClassCharts app notification during the morning session at the earliest opportunity.

If no contact via the telephone numbers provided can be made, a letter will be sent home requesting information regarding the absence.

If the non-attendance continues beyond nine school days or if the student fails to attend for three complete weeks in any six-week period, a further attempt will be made to telephone the parent/carer and another letter sent and a home visit made if this has not already taken place.

If the student or parent/carer fails to respond, the matter will be formally referred to the Local Authority.

Tutors will be made aware of students with low attendance and for each period of absence the student will have a back-to-school conversation with their tutor.

### **Dealing with Lateness and Authorised Absences within the School Day**

Students who arrive later than 8.55am are expected to sign in using the InVentry system in Reception giving reasons for their lateness.

If a student accumulates 3 unauthorised lates then they will be issued with a C3L (40 minute after school detention), and parents/carers will be notified. A Pastoral Manager is based in Reception each morning to ensure that students are spoken to regarding a reason for their lateness, with contact home made if necessary.

If a student is late to school due to an authorised reason (i.e. medical appointment), students are expected to sign in using the InVentry system in Reception giving a reason for their lateness.

If a student is required to leave school for any authorised reason (i.e. medical appointment) the parent/carer must provide a note from home/medical evidence to the Attendance Officer (preferrable through the Class Charts App) and sign out at Reception using the InVentry System at the relevant time.

If students arrive after 9.30am then the register will be marked with a U code (late after the register has closed). If there are 10 or more U codes in any 12-week period, then a Penalty Notice for unauthorised lates will be issued.

### **Dealing with Persistent Absence and Promoting Good Attendance**

The school actively celebrate good attendance through rewards, competitions, and assemblies.

Regular meetings with the Pastoral Team are held to monitor whole school attendance and to track and monitor the attendance of students whose attendance is below 95%.

If a child's attendance falls below 95%, a letter will be sent informing the parents/carers about concerns the school has regarding their child's attendance (See Appendix 5 – Attendance Letter 1). This occurs following meetings between members of the Pastoral Team to discuss reasons for a child's absence.

If a child's attendance falls below 90% (the Persistent Absence figure sent by the DfE from September 2015), a second letter (See Appendix 6 – Attendance Letter 2) will be sent informing parents/carers of our serious concerns about their child's attendance. The child's parents/carers may be required to meet with a member of Leadership team in an attendance clinic to discuss the reasons for the absence. We understand that occasionally there may be extenuating circumstances for the non-attendance in which case the parent/carers attendance to any meeting arranged is vital so that we can discuss how we can work together to support the child in improving their attendance at school to fill gaps in their learning.

When attendance falls below 90%, the school will require medical evidence for any further absences. All individual cases will be monitored closely, and extenuating circumstances will be considered when deciding if an absence should be recorded as either **Authorised** or **Unauthorised**.

When there have been 14 unauthorised sessions the Director of Year will be alerted by the Attendance Officer. This will then trigger a meeting with the Director of Year or Pastoral Manager in school, where a discussion will be held as to how we can support the child to attend school. At the attendance clinic meeting parents/carers and school will discuss strategies that can be put into place to support improvements in attendance, with an attendance plan created and outcomes monitored.

Where there are 20 unauthorised sessions (am session and pm sessions count as one session each, i.e. 20 sessions could be 10 am sessions and 10 pm sessions which equals 10 full days absent from school - these days do not need to be consecutive), the school will notify the Local Authority which could result in the parents/carers receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s444.

A penalty notice is initially £60 per child per parent/carer. If this £60 is not paid within 21 days from the date of issue it increases to £120 per child per parent/carer. If after 28 days of the date of issue the £120 is not paid, the Local Authority will prosecute the parents under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. This will lead to a hearing in the Magistrates Court and may result in a fine per parent of up to £1,000. If after this point there are further unauthorised absences, this may lead to prosecution under section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996 which may result in a fine per parent of up to £2,500 and/ or 3 months imprisonment.

### **Children Missing in Education – CME**

Should a child that is expected to join the school not arrive we will try to contact the parents/carers by letter and/or telephone call to find out why.

Should we not be able to find out why, after one week the school will contact the schools Admissions Team to establish if the child has been registered elsewhere. If the child is not found to be on roll elsewhere, the school will contact the Local Area Support Team who will investigate.

If after four school weeks (20 school days) the child has not been located, the school will complete a CME referral form to [cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk).

Once the referral has been acknowledged then the child can be removed from the school roll – this will be the decision of the Headteacher.

If a child is absent from school because they are believed to have moved away, and parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the school will contact the Staffordshire admissions. If there is a concern regarding the immediate safety of the child Staffordshire Children's Advice Service will be contacted.

### **Leave of Absence**

Parents/carers must complete and return a Leave of Absence Form for any period of planned absence from school. This can be obtained from the Attendance Officer (See Appendix 7 - Leave of Absence Request Form).

Only the Headteacher can determine if an absence is deemed as authorised, and only then in exceptional circumstances. All other requests will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Parents/carers will be notified in writing regarding the decision to authorise or unauthorise the absence.

In the event of an absence being unauthorised the parent(s)/carers or other significant adult who has the responsibility for a child's attendance (determined by internal checks which include using information about previous attendance history), may be subject to a Penalty Notice as detailed above. This is in line with Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct.

## The Importance of Good Attendance and its Link to Attainment

The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams (February 22, 2015 - Department of Education). The research is based on data from all Schools in England.

The results are very clear: missing even small amounts of time from school can have a significant effect on achievement. For example: 2012/13, 94% of students who were present achieved 5 or more GCSE A\* - C or equivalent. When attendance dropped to between 85% and 90%, only 75% of students achieved these results.

## Useful Contacts

### Attendance Officer

Preferred communication is via Class Charts App, you can report absences on here and upload letters and medical evidence.

01543 502450 Extension 212 (please note that the attendance officer will not provide confirmation of receipt of each message left and will not always be able to return calls).

[attendance@cannockchase-high.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@cannockchase-high.staffs.sch.uk)

<b>Implementation date:</b>	January 2024
<b>Last review date:</b>	
<b>Next Review date:</b>	January 2025
<b>Statutory Policy:</b>	No

## Responsibilities at Attendance Levels

<b>100% - 95%</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
100% Certificates	Directors of Year	Termly
Reward activities	Directors of Year	Half termly
<b>94.99% - 90%</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Attendance Letter 1 Sent	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
Attendance Monitoring	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
<b>89.99% and Below, up to 19 Unauthorised sessions</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Attendance Letter 2 Sent	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
Attendance Monitoring and Tracking to consider formal referral	Attendance Officer, Director of Student Services, Directors of Year	Half Termly
Attendance Clinic Meeting to discuss Attendance Concerns	Leadership Team	Half Termly
Medical Evidence to be provided for each absence	Parent / Carer	Each absence
<b>89.99% and Below and/or 20 Unauthorised sessions or more</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Early Help Assessment (where deemed appropriate)	Attendance Officer, Director of Student Services, Directors of Year	Throughout the academic year
Fixed Penalty Warning	Staffordshire County Council	Throughout the academic year
Team around the Child Meetings, or other appropriate meetings.	Director of Student Services, Pastoral Team	Throughout the academic year
<b>85% Attendance and Below</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Failed Fixed Penalty Warning</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Fixed Penalty Notice (Fine)	Staffordshire County Council	Throughout the academic year
Team around the Child Meetings, or other appropriate meetings	Director of Student Services, Pastoral Team	Throughout the academic year
<b>Failed to Pay Fixed Penalty Notice</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Court Action	Staffordshire County Council	Throughout the academic year



### Useful Links

Staffordshire Code of Conduct - <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Attendance.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance> - Statutory guidance for schools, local authorities and the police on dealing with poor attendance and behaviour in school

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Children-missing-from-education.aspx>

## Official Attendance Codes

Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
B	Educated Off Site – e.g. College
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family Holiday not agreed
H	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registration closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointment or sickness absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Travellers Absence
U	Late after register closed
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
X	Non-comp school
Y	Enforced Closure

### Legal Framework

The Education Act 1996;  
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013;  
The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;  
The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011;  
Crime and Disorder Act 1998;  
The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;  
The Education Act 2005;  
The Education and Inspections Act 2006;  
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;  
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments;  
The Education and Skills Act 2008;  
The Equality Act 2010.

## Attendance Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer

### Attendance Letter 1 - Concerns about your child's School Attendance

Concerns have been brought to our attention regarding STUDENT NAME school attendance which is currently

**ATTENDANCE%.** Attendance below 95% is a cause for concern.

- **If attendance is 90% to 95% your child's chances of achieving 5 good GCSE grades are 51.2% compared with students who have attendance over 95% which is 69.4%.**
- **Absence can cause problems with friendship groups and self-confidence.**
- **All holidays count as absence.**
- **If your child is often absent due to illness we may be able to give you extra support and advice.**

Our whole school's attendance target is **96%** and above. With an attendance figure of ATTENDANCE%, we are sure you must agree that this amount of absence could be affecting your child's progress.

Your child's attendance will now be monitored by the school. If your child's attendance falls further you may be asked to attend a meeting and the school will require medical evidence to authorise any further absences i.e. a GP appointment card, hospital letter and/or named and dated prescription/s.

The Local Authority may also be informed.

For more information on our school's Attendance Policy please visit the school website.

More information can also be found at:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/Attendance>.

If you need to discuss this letter, please contact the Attendance Office on 01543 502450 Ext 212 add ClassCharts information.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C E Mills  
Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes)  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

## Attendance Letter 2

Dear PARENTS NAME

### Attendance Letter 2 - Concerns about your child's School Attendance

**Current Attendance:**    %

We are concerned about STUDENTS NAME attendance which is currently ATTENDANCE%. We wish to inform you that any further absences due to illness will be recorded as '**unauthorised**' unless medical evidence is provided i.e. a GP appointment card, hospital letter and/or named and dated prescription/s.

Legally if any student's attendance drops below 90% due to unauthorised absences the Local Authority will become involved. This can and does result in fixed term penalty notices being issued by Staffordshire County Council.

We understand that occasionally there may be extenuating circumstances for the non-attendance, in which case we urge you to contact the school as soon as possible so we can work together in supporting your child's education.

You may be invited to meet with a member of Leadership Team to discuss your child's attendance. If you wish to discuss this letter, please contact our Attendance Office on: 01543 502450 Ext 212.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C E Mills  
Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes)  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

## Request for Leave During Term Time

Dear Mr Turnbull

I request consideration of a grant of leave of absence from school during term time for:

My child(ren) full name(s) .....

Date(s) of birth .....

Address .....

For the period from (date) ..... To (date) .....

Total number of school (working) days .....

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are:

**(Please detail below the reason for your request for absence in term time and where relevant include any supporting information. Please read the attached guidance notes for parents.)**

.....

.....

Sibling details of compulsory school age, if appropriate:

Child(ren)'s full name(s) ..... School(s) attending .....

.....

**Declaration:**

*I have read the guidance notes for parents overleaf and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice **per parent, per child**, if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. **Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.***

Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> parent/carers ..... Print Full Name .....

Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> parent/carers ..... Print Full Name .....

**Please return the completed form to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE no later than TWO WEEKS before the requested leave of absence.**

**For Office Use Only**

Current Attendance .....%

Last Year's Attendance .....%

Number of school sessions this academic year taken as leave during term time .....

**Agreed/Not Agreed**

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time on the requested dates.

Rationale to declined request .....

Signed ..... Head teacher Date .....

Date parent/carers notified of decision .....