



Codsall Community High School

Attendance Policy

Introduction

At Codsall Community High School (CCHS) we are committed to working together to ensure all students receive the best education possible and to enable them to make progress and do as well as they can. For this to happen, students need to be in school to access the valuable teaching and learning opportunities.

This policy aims to make clear what is expected of parents and students and to assure parents of our willingness to work positively with them if problems arise.

Principles

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. The school will promote the importance of good attendance through the curriculum and personal/social opportunities.

Good attendance by students will be recognised appropriately. All students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We will ensure that parents are aware of attendance matters and work with them to ensure good attendance and punctuality. To support the school in our commitment to improve school attendance and punctuality, we have employed an independent Education Welfare Service – VIP Education who will provide advice and guidance to the school, parents, and students.

Students are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the student. If a student is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance and education does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Registration

School opens at 8.30am and closes at 2.55pm every day except Thursday when it closes to students at 2.20pm.

Schools are required by law to take an attendance register twice a day and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student is absent, every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. Therefore, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason e.g., illness, medical appointments, or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents keeping students off from school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- students who arrive to school after the close of the register
- school refusal
- holidays taken during term time that have not been authorised by the head teacher

When completing the register, school follow the DFE school attendance guidance to determine which relevant code to use; Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

The register will be taken twice a day, at the start of the morning and the afternoon.

Morning registration

The morning register is taken in morning registration between 8.40am and 9.00am. Students arriving after the register has been taken but before 9.10am are recorded as late – L.

Registration closes at 9.10am. Students arriving to school after this time are late - after registration closes, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness – U.,

Afternoon registration

The afternoon register is taken at 12.20pm. Students arriving after the register has been taken but before 12.50pm are recorded as late – L.

Registration closes at 12.50pm. Students arriving to school after this time are late - after registration closes, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness – U.

Late procedures

Parents are requested to contact The Attendance Office using the EduLink One app, calling 01902 907560 extension 2245 to leave a voicemail or by email using attendance@cchs.sslp.uk if their child is going to be late and provide a reason for lateness.

If lateness is a cause for concern, the following procedures will be followed.

1. Parents will receive a letter informing of the concern.
2. If no improvement, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from VIP Education will contact parents to further discuss and offer support and advice to improve punctuality.
3. If still no improvement, parents and students will be invited to a meeting with the EWO to discuss the reasons for lateness and to offer support. Referrals to wider support services may be offered if needed. The discussion held will be documented by the EWO and an action plan to improve school attendance will be devised with parents and the student during the meeting and a review date set if needed.

4. If no improvement is seen after the meeting has taken place, the school may follow insert Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for persistent lateness.

Reporting Absence

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact their child's Head of Year at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. If problems persist, parents should contact Mrs Gwinnett, the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) on pastoral@cchs.cclp.uk. Alternatively, parents may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from VIP Education themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office.

If a student is absent from school, we ask parents to:

1. Contact school via EduLink One, phone, or email each day of absence by 8.45am. The dedicated phone number for attendance is 01902 907560 extension 2245 the email is attendance@cchs.sslpuk.
2. Reply promptly to any request or inquiry concerning an absence.

If parents do not contact the school on the morning of the first day of absence, a member of the administration staff will try to contact them to find out the reason for absence. This ensures that the parent is aware their child is not in school enabling the parent, where necessary, to establish that their child is safe. The school may also ask the EWO from VIP Education to establish contact either by telephone, text message or a home visit may be completed. If a reason is still not known after 5 school days, the absence will be unauthorised.

Children Missing in Education

Schools have a duty by law to refer any absence of 20 days or more to Staffordshire Children Missing in Education department where they have been unable to establish contact with the parent/student or have general concerns about the absence.

To avoid any referrals, parents are requested to inform the school if they are moving house/area or country and to provide a forwarding address, contact number and the name of the new school if known.

Medical Absence

Schools have the responsibility to decide whether an absence can be authorised on medical grounds. If the school has concerns about the level of medical absence that a student has incurred, they will contact the parents to discuss it further and to find out whether their GP or other health professional has been contacted.

Parents may be asked to provide evidence that their child is too unwell to attend school by providing a note from a medical professional or a copy of any prescribed medication. If the school do not receive medical evidence, the absences will be unauthorised.

Medical and Dental Appointments

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays whenever possible. If this is not possible, confirmation of the appointment will be required prior to authorising the absence and an M code used on the register to record when the child has attended the appointment.

Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents are expected to return their children to school following the appointment.

Monitoring attendance procedures

The school aims to achieve at least annual attendance target 97% each year. To help with this, we monitor attendance regularly.

The school attendance officer will:

1. Contact parents /carers via text message on each day of absence if the school has not been informed of the reason for non-attendance.
2. Let parents /carers know if their child's absence or lateness is giving cause for concern by sending an Edulink One message or a letter.
3. Let parents / carers know of any changes or special dates for the term.
5. Listen to parent / carers' worries and concerns and pass on information to their child's form tutor, Head of Year (HOY) or the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral).
6. Work in partnership with VIP Education, the Local Authority, and any other organisations that offer support to children and their families.

7. Arrange meetings in school to resolve attendance issues with Heads of Year, the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) - students or with VIP Education.
8. Keep the HOY and the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) updated with extreme attendance concerns.
9. Send to VIP education a list of absences not accounted for by 11.00am.
10. Complete Child Missing in Education forms, if a child is missing 20 days or more and no contact is made between parent/carers and school.

Data administration officer will:

1. Include a record of your child's attendance on each school report.

The form tutor will:

1. Take the morning register
2. Ensure all absence notes go to Student Services
3. Welcome students back after any period of absence and help them to catch up with any missed work.
4. Put 7 reward points on Edulink One for 100% attendance for individuals in the tutor group who have 100% attendance in a half term.
5. Ensure that weekly attendance information is recorded and discussed with students every Monday morning.
6. Ensure that individual punctuality information is discussed with students one morning per week when appropriate.
7. Encourage students to improve to 100% and monitor their improvement by making links between attendance, attainment and future income.
8. Hold detentions for students who are 3 x late to school.
9. Refer students who are persistently late to the HoY having completed the actions above.

Heads of Year will:

1. Actively monitor tutor period, ensuring AM registers are taken appropriately and accurately during tutor time
2. Support the form tutors with attendance matters
3. Send out names of students to tutors who should have 7 attendance reward points each half term
4. Regularly promote good attendance through assemblies, displays and by monitoring the data sent on a Monday morning regarding the year

group attendance and individual students. This needs to be sent out to the tutors for the Monday morning attendance discussions.

5. Hold after school detentions for those who fail to turn up, or whose punctuality does not improve.
6. Identify students who are at risk of poor attendance or persistent absence and liaise with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) to ensure that appropriate letters have gone out to parents.
7. Be on the corridors during tutor time to ensure all students are in their form rooms and that PSHEE is being delivered in their year group.
8. Provide the headteacher with the names of students who have made a marked improvement in attendance and/or punctuality for a congratulatory letter.

The SENCO will:

1. Analyse attendance data for the SEND students and appoint a TA to mentor students who are on 93% attendance and below.

Subject teachers will:

1. Take a register within 10 minutes of the lesson starting, recording students who are late for lessons after the first five minutes.
2. Refer students whose attendance is affecting their attainment the HOY to ensure that concern letters have gone out to the parent/carer.
3. Welcome students who are returning to the class and provide appropriate catch up work.
4. Use the reward system to note recognise excellent behaviour and effort in the classroom, thus creating encouragement for continued attendance.
5. Welcome late comers to the class and address the issue at the end of the lesson and re-send the register.

Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) will:

- 1.
2. Analyse the weekly attendance and punctuality data and liaise with VIP education and the attendance officer and co-ordinate which letters should go out to parents/carers.

3. Hold attendance and or punctuality clinics for students whose attendance drops below 90% and continues to fluctuate without good reason.
4. Phone /send letters to parents where a student's punctuality does not improve.
5. Report to SLT on a weekly basis, identifying concerns, trends and strategies to improve attendance and punctuality
6. Review practice in an ongoing process and devise and implement strategies to further improve attendance and punctuality
7. Lead staff training and appropriate over the course of the academic year.

Senior Leadership Team will:

1. Ensure students are not on the corridors during tutor time and at the end of lunch when on duty.
2. Hold staff responsible for the implementation of this policy as appropriate
3. Run SLT detentions on Fridays for students who have missed previous Head of Year detentions.

Inclusion and Mentoring Officers will:

1. Monitor the toilets on the camera and alert the HOY/SLT if the area needs clearing, when the warning bell goes to ensure that students go to their form rooms.
2. Phone parents/carers of students who miss a late detention three times or more, addressing any concerns as appropriate

VIP Education will:

VIP's Independent Education Welfare Officer from VIP Education and CCHS staff regularly monitor every student's attendance. Where there appears to be a particular problem with attendance, the following procedures are applied.

A letter is sent to parents informing them of a decline in school attendance and the need for this to improve due to the impact on their child's education. If school attendance continues to decline, a further concern letter is sent to parents.

If no improvement seen, parents and students where appropriate will be invited into a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss the

concerns and to offer support around any possible barriers or problems at home or at school which may be contributing to low attendance. Referrals to wider support services may be offered where appropriate. The discussion held will be documented by the EWO and an action plan to improve school attendance will be devised during the meeting and a review date set if needed.

If school attendance does not improve, the school may follow the Local Authorities Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for students with persistent absence.

Students will:

- 1) Ensure they are in school, on time and ready to learn every day.
- 2) Report to Student Services to sign in if they are late during the school day
- 3) Ensure they attend any detentions as appropriate.

Rewarding good school attendance

Students with 100% attendance for the half-term are awarded 7 Achievement points by their Form tutor. This is added to their total and can help them to earn additional rewards.

The form with the best attendance each term receives a prize.

Requests for leave of absence

Amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 make it clear that headteachers should only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this.

If a parent wishes to request leave for their child for any reason, they must fill in the Pupil Request for Leave of Absence form, this can be found on the school website in the policies section and send it to customercare@cchs.sslp.uk

Where a child does not reside with both parents, it is the responsibility of the parent making the request to inform the other parent. The school will send a

letter to the parent making the request informing them if the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

If a request for leave has not been received and we have reason to believe a student is on holiday, a letter will be sent to parents requesting medical evidence. If no medical evidence can be provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised, and a penalty notice request sent to the Local Authority.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time, properly dressed, with the correct equipment and ready to learn.

Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This is in accordance with the 1996 Education Act, Section 444 or 444 (1A). It aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher. (e.g., family holiday)
- Persistent late arrival to school, i.e., after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

A session is equivalent to half a day in school.

Elective Home Education

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child, CCHS will contact the parent and discuss their reasons in more detail, offering support to deal with any issues raised. If after this time the parent still wishes to home educate their child, the school will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register.

Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record. Prior to deciding to home educate, parents are requested to contact Staffordshire Elective Home Education department.

Summary

It is vital to a child's progress that they attend school as often as possible and that they are on time.

There are strong and proven links between student attendance and educational achievement. Just 17 days absent from school in a year could mean a drop in a GCSE grade within all subjects.

Impact of absence:

Missed number of days	Missed number of sessions	Missed number of weeks	Missed number of lessons
1	2	0	5
3	6	0.5	15
5	10	1	25
7.5	15	1.5	35
10	20	2	50
12.5	25	2.5	65
15	30	3	75
17.5	35	3.5	90

Impact of lateness:

Over a school year –

5 minutes late every day = 3 days absent

15 minutes late every day = 10 days absent

30 minutes late every day = 19 days absent

If parents have any concerns relating to attendance or lateness that they wish to discuss, they should contact their child's Head of Year in the first instance.

CCHS staff are committed to working with parents to ensure any problems are dealt with straight away in order for students to feel happy and safe at CCHS and achieve to the best of their ability. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school and are on time.

Appendix

Explanation of key terms

VIP Education	This is the external company we employ to support students and families in improving their attendance. The Educational welfare Officer who works for VIP education will also warn families of fines for non-attendance.
EduLink One	This is our web-based information system. All information about student's progress can be seen on this app which all parents are encouraged to download and keep informed about progress. Attendance is detailed on this app
PSHEE	Personal Social Health and Economic Education

SEND	Special educational Needs and Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
TA	Teaching Assistant