



# 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 every day 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.

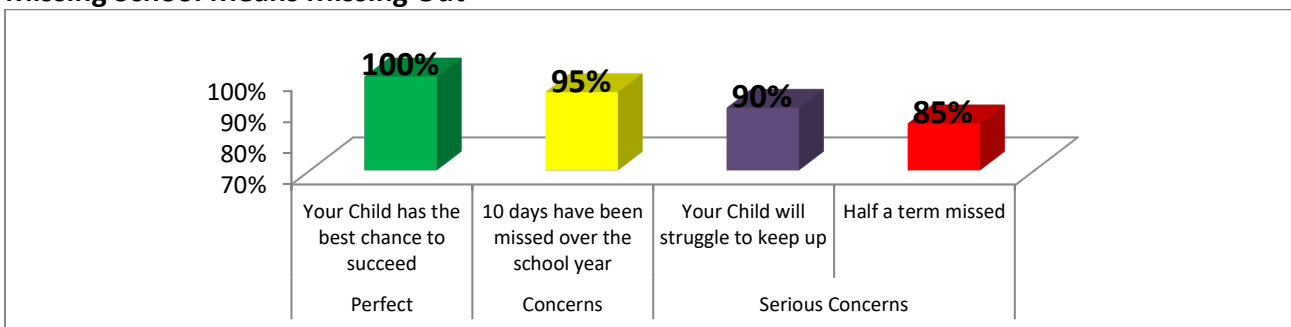
Setting good patterns of attendance is vital. An attendance rate of 90% may sound impressive in the first instance, but it means that a student only attends school for 4.5 days out of every five. This, over a five-year span, equates to a child missing out on an entire half a year of their education.

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. Good attendance is 'everyone's business' (Working together to improve school attendance, August 2024). The Senior Attendance Champion in school is the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes).

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 before 8.30 am) whenever their child is unable to attend school;
- Ensure the school receives a daily notification regarding their absence;
- 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 (contact details/preferred) or the Class Charts app notification service. 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 ten sessions of unauthorised absence (the equivalent of five school days) in any rolling period of ten school weeks, the school will initiate a procedure to introduce an attendance contract. This may then be referred to the Local Authority where all avenues of support have been exhausted or there is no engagement.

Tutors and the pastoral team 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. The school will also notify any social workers or Youth Offending Team workers of any unexplained absences where required.

All parties should work together to ensure the following:

- **Expect** that students attend.
- **Monitor** to ensure that students do attend.
- **Listen and understand** any barriers to attendance
- **Facilitate support** if required
- **Formalise support** where necessary
- **Enforce** where the school cannot pursue any further avenues.

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

Students are expected to be in school in their tutor room for 8:45am. Students who arrive later than 8.55am are expected to sign in using the InVentry system in Reception giving reasons for their lateness. A Pastoral Manager is based in Reception each morning to ensure that students are spoken to regarding a reason for their lateness, with home contacted on a regular basis regarding lateness.

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 (through the Class Charts App) and sign out at Reception using the InVentry System at the relevant time. Students will not be allowed to leave the site without prior notification from the parent/carer.

If students arrive after 8:55am 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 10-week period, then a Penalty Notice for unauthorised lates will be issued.

The school day finishes at 3:20pm (2:50pm on a Friday), except in circumstances where a student has an after-school detention or a Period 6 lesson. Period 6 lessons finish at 4:20pm, with detentions on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday finishing at 3:40pm or 4:00pm depending on the detention type. Detentions on a Friday finish at 3:50pm.

### **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. Following this letter, where there are 10 unauthorised sessions (am session and pm sessions count as one session each, i.e. 10 sessions could be 5 am sessions and 5 pm sessions which equals 5 full days absent from school - these days do not need to be consecutive), the school will initiate an attendance contract with the parent/carer and the child. Should this attendance contract not be successful, the school will notify the Local Authority. The Local Authority will then initiate a 'Notice to improve' letter, which is the final opportunity for a student to improve their attendance. Should this 'Notice to improve' not be successful, the Local Authority may then take further steps, which could result in the parents/carers receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s444. A second letter (see Appendix 6 – Attendance Letter 2) will be sent informing parents/carers of our requirement to notify the Local Authority of the continued absence.

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**.

A penalty notice is £160 per child per parent/carer. If paid within twenty-one days, the penalty notice reduces to £80. If, after 28 days of the date of issue the £160 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. Only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a three-year rolling period. Should this limit be exhausted, the Local Authority may choose to pursue further legal action.

### **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 (not holiday)

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)/carer(s) 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), will be subject to a Penalty Notice as detailed above. This is in line with Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct. Cannock Chase High School submits all leave of unauthorised absence requests for holidays to the Local Authority, who will, therefore, issue a Penalty Notice where required.

No absence requests for holidays will be authorised, with the school referring holiday requests into the Local Authority.

## 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).

<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 Sent	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
Attendance Monitoring	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
<b>89.99% and Below, up to 10 Unauthorised sessions</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Attendance Letter Sent	Attendance Officer	Half Termly
Attendance Monitoring and Tracking to consider formal referral	DOY, Attendance Team or Leadership Team	Half Termly
Attendance Contract meeting to discuss Attendance Concerns	DOY, Attendance Team or Leadership Team	Half Termly
Medical Evidence to be provided for each absence	Parent / Carer	Each absence
<b>89.99% and Below and/or 10 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.	Senior Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Pastoral Team, Leadership 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	DOY, Attendance Team or Leadership 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/working-together-to-improve-school-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
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence due to part-time timetable
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family Holiday not agreed
H	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Illness
J1	Interview
K	Attending educational provision arranged by the local authority
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.  
Working together to improve school attendance 2024

Parents/Carers of

My Ref: ATT1

Your Ref: Attendance Letter 1

Date: 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Concerns about your child's 'School Attendance'**

Concerns have been brought to my attention regarding your child's school attendance which currently falls below our overall school attendance target. Attendance below 95% is a cause for concern.

- **Studies show there is a direct correlation between good attendance and good exam results.**
- **Absence can cause problems with friendship groups and self-confidence.**
- **Holidays should not be taken in term time and will be unauthorised.**
- **If your child is often absent due to illness we may be able to give you extra support and advice.**

Good attendance matters and the aim should always be 100%. With an attendance figure of -- % 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 so please contact us if you have any attendance concerns sooner rather than later. If your child's attendance falls further you may be asked to attend a meeting in school and we will require medical evidence to authorise any further absences. The Local Authority's Educational Welfare Officers may also be informed.

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

More information about School Attendance and the Law can also be found at: -

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

Yours sincerely

Mrs C E Mills  
Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes)

PARENT NAME

Address

Postcode

Date

Dear PARENT NAME

**RE: Attendance concern to be referred to the Local Authority**

It has come to my attention that Student Name has recently had ?? sessions of unauthorised absence between ??? and ???. As a parent of Student Name, under section 7 Education Act 1996, you have a duty to ensure your child receives a suitable education by regular attendance at school.

Unfortunately, the support we have offered you has not improved your child's attendance. This support remains open to you, and though we would urge you to engage with us and this offer, we are now required under the new national framework for improving school attendance to notify the County Council, education welfare officer of the unauthorised absence.

The education welfare officer will now consider issuing a Notice to Improve letter which is intended as a final opportunity for you as a parent to engage in support and improve your child's attendance before a penalty notice is issued.

As a school we are required to report continued unauthorised absence to the county council, but it is our hope that as parents you will work with us to ensure STUDENT NAME attends school every day.

The education welfare officer will write to you shortly with their decision and if appropriate the details of the notice to improve.

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.)**

**Holiday: Yes/No**

**One-off Circumstances: Yes/No**

.....

.....

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/carer ..... Print Full Name .....

Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> parent/carer ..... 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 ..... Headteacher Date .....

Date parent/carer notified of decision .....