
Charters School

Attendance Policy

Updated: November 2010

Attendance Policy

Approved on 05.04.2011 Minute number 200/11

Review Date April 2012

Statutory or recommended? Statutory

Clerk to Governors to indicate where information is to be displayed

Website ✓ First Class ✓ Folder ✓

Approved by Curriculum Committee

INTRODUCTION

Charters School sets out to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for every student to realise their true potential. The school will strive to create a supportive, friendly and hard working atmosphere, where all members of the community are valued equally and encouraged to develop their talents in an environment of mutual respect and support.

The school will work with students and their families to ensure that each student attends school regularly and punctually.

AIM OF THE POLICY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school and to reduce the percentage of Persistent Absence (PA).
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, guidance and advice to parents and students on attendance issues through positive communication between home and school.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions related to attendance and punctuality.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other External Agencies.
- To develop support plans for the reintegration of students after significant periods of absence.

LINK BETWEEN ATTENDANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT

Attending school regularly is a legal requirement. DCSF Research suggests that every 17 days absence from school can lead to a drop in one GCSE grade.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

Absences are entered in the register as authorised or unauthorised. If the school has been contacted regarding illness this absence will be marked as authorised. If contact has not been made this absence will be marked as unauthorised. Absences may also be entered as unauthorised if the explanation provided is considered unsatisfactory. Lateness will be treated as an unauthorised absence if pupils arrive after registers have closed, and no explanation is given.

EXPECTATIONS

Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student absence will disrupt teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. It is a parent/carer's legal responsibility to ensure that their child maintains a regular attendance at school.

At Charters School we expect that all students will:

- Achieve 95% or more attendance to allow them to achieve their potential.
- Attend school regularly.

- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their Tutor, Head of Year, Senior Staff or Head of Learning Support any problems that deter them from attending school.
- Bring a letter from home on their return to explain any absences.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- Telephone the school on the first day of their child's absence by 8.30am and every other subsequent morning of absence;
- Ensure that they contact the school in advance whenever their child is unable to attend school for medical or other reasons;
- It is expected that they will make every effort to arrange absences such as students' medical treatment, leave of absence, etc outside school hours so that the disruption to their learning is kept to a minimum.
- Be aware that they do not have a legal right to take their children out of school on holiday. The Co-Headteachers have the discretion to grant up to 10 days authorised absence in a school year. Each application is considered individually, taking into account factors like the timing of the holiday and the child's attendance record.
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.

We expect that school staff will:

- Organise the first day response home via text message, made by the Attendance Officer, by 11.30am, when a student fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Monitor students' attendance at registration and in all subject lessons through lesson monitor.
- Encourage good attendance through tutor group and year group reward processes.
- Provide appropriate opportunities to discuss the importance of good attendance in tutor time.
- Follow up all unexplained absences within one week either by obtaining a letter to explain the absence or by checking the weekly printout sheet supplied to tutors;
- Make initial enquires of parents/carers of students who are not attending regularly, express concern and clarify expectations with regard to regular school attendance.
- Provide support for parents/carers where necessary.
- Use weekly attendance analysis data for each tutor group/year group to identify students who have a falling attendance rate.
- Conduct regular fortnightly meetings with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss attendance issues.
- Develop an attendance plan to support persistent absence students.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Charters School uses the Lesson Monitor SIMS package. All staff are trained in the effective use of the software and training forms part of the induction process for all new staff.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

A persistent absentee is a student who misses at least a fifth of the available sessions in a school for any reason or combination of reasons (whether authorised or unauthorised).

The School adheres to the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and National targets set for secondary persistent absence.

All PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through the pastoral system. Where absence affects attainment this is combined with academic mentoring. All PA students and their parents/carers are automatically made aware to the EWO.

COLLATING AND ANALYSING ATTENDANCE DATA – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Co-Headteachers will:

- Draw student and parents/carers attention to the expectations outlined in this policy to reinforce the importance of regular attendance.
- With the assistance of the Senior Leadership Team maintain responsibility for the form and content of this policy, and its implementation to encourage a school ethos of positive attendance.
- Set annual targets for overall attendance and persistent absence.
- Provide reports to Governors regarding Persistent Absence and Absence Rates.
- Maintain the final say on all matters relating to the management of attendance in school.

The Senior Leadership Team through their links will:

- Ensure that staff are aware of the policy and carry out their responsibilities as listed.
- Remain aware of students on the vulnerable register when dealing with incidents of low attendance at a leadership level.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the Attendance Policy through the analysis of attendance statistics.
- Liaise with Heads of Year and Attendance Officer in matters relating to attendance.
- Support HOY and EWO in consultation with parents/carers.
- Draw student attention to the expectations outlined in this policy to reinforce the importance of regular attendance.
- Maintain responsibility for the form and content of this policy, and its implementation to encourage a school ethos of positive attendance.

The Head of Year will:

- Rigorously monitor the registration/punctuality process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually by tutors.
- Meet weekly with the Assistant Head of Year on attendance issues.
- Remain aware of students on the vulnerable register when dealing with incidents of low attendance.
- Support Assistant Head of Year and EWO in consultation with parents/carers.
- Reinforce good practice at year group meetings.

The Assistant Head of Year will:

- Meet weekly with the Head of Year on attendance issues.
- Meet with the Education Welfare Service fortnightly to analyse and monitor attendance data and discuss any concerns.
- Liaise with Heads of Year on sending intervention letters on attendance to parents.
- Where appropriate and in consultation with Head of Year, develop an Attendance Support Plan for PA students through meetings with student and parent/carers.
- Contribute to the attendance award scheme.

The Tutor will:

- Complete registers accurately by 8.40am on lesson monitor.
- Follow up any unexplained non-attendance/lateness highlighted either on the Unexplained Absence Report or Pupils Late Report generated by the Attendance Officer.
- Inform the Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year of attendance concerns.
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection, which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Head of Year.

Subject Teachers will:

- Keep an accurate subject register for every class on lesson monitor.
- Complete lesson monitor in the first 15 minutes of lesson.
- Follow up unexplained non-attendance to lesson.
- Impose sanctions for lateness to lessons, in line with Behaviour Policy.
- Keep Subject Leader/Head of Year informed of concerns.
- Provide work for authorised absentees, as requested by Head of Year.

The Attendance Officer will:

- Coordinate First Day Response text message by 11.30am to parents of absent students and update Lesson Monitor.
- Consult Assistant Head of Year with any attendance concerns that arise from Unexplained Absence Report.
- Provide Assistant Head of Year with weekly Official Register.
- Prepare weekly Unexplained Absence Reports for Tutors.
- Contact parents via letter or phone call if no explanation provided on the Unexplained Absence Report received back from Tutors.
- Provide Heads of Year with attendance overview every month.
- Provide tutors with a weekly Pupils Late Report.

The Education Welfare Officer will:

- Meet with Assistants Head of Year every two weeks to monitor students with attendance below 85% and discuss any concerns.
- Meet with parents to establish issues surrounding poor attendance.
- Coordinate legal proceedings in attendance matters.

Governors will:

- Continue to work with other members of the school community to review and, if necessary, revise the principles underpinning this policy.
- Monitor persistent absences and overall absence for the school.

Parents and carers will:

- Take responsibility for their child's attendance inside and outside of school.
- Respond to and maintain contact with the school in relation to matters concerning attendance.
- Attend appointments related to their child's attendance as and when requested.

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

Any student with a broken pattern of attendance in a term will be identified by Assistant Heads of Year, Tutors, Heads of Year. Those individuals identified will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer by the Assistant Head of Year.

Charters School will follow the intervention and monitoring system outlined in the roles and responsibilities section of this policy.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. Charters School does not permit any term time holidays as according to DfE requirements. The Co-Headteachers will decide whether or not to authorise absences in extenuating circumstances. Parents must write in and request a leave of absence at least 14 days prior to requested dates.

CHANGING SCHOOLS/HOME EDUCATED

Any parent who decides to home educate their child or send them to a different school must put it in writing to the Co-Headteacher. The school will then notify the Education Welfare Service.