

CHENDERIT SCHOOL



aim high

Attendance

September 2018 – July 2019

UPDATED MAY 2018

Whole School Attendance Target – 95%
Student Personal Attendance target – 100%

STUDENT ABSENCE LINE – 01295 711567 -
option 5

email - attendance@chenderit.northants.sch.uk

text - 07860 002634

A High Attendance Partnership

Regular attendance at school is vital

Without it the learning process becomes fragmented and unsatisfactory. It is a simple fact that students who do not attend do not achieve. This leaflet explains our attendance policy, how we monitor attendance, what we are required to record about your child's attendance, and how you can help. We explain what 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absences are, the procedure and regulations for absence from school in term time holidays, and where to find help if you are worried.

Registration and Attendance Procedures at Chenderit

- (a) The tutor group register is marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Students not present to answer their names will be marked absent. Students arriving late should sign the late book at Student Services. Registration is closed at 9.30am and 2.15pm. Any student not present by then is considered to be absent, whether or not he or she subsequently arrives. If your child is absent, please let the school know for each day your child is absent (safeguarding) – phone 01295 711567 – option 5 – or text or email to prevent first day calling.
- (b) Tutors monitor attendance daily, and record the reason for absence, provided that written explanation has been received from parents. If no written explanation is received we must try to obtain this; we start by reminding the student, then contacting parents directly. If we do not receive a written response, we must assume that the absence was unknown to parents, and therefore unauthorised. If this happens external agencies are likely to investigate.
- (c) If we are concerned about a student's absence and we have not heard from parents, we shall try to contact on contacts as provided by parents/carers. Contact will be made on the first day if a student is absent.
- (d) If we discover a pattern to absences or are concerned about the frequency or validity of absences, we shall contact parents. If we discover a school-based difficulty, we shall seek to remedy it. If there is an out-of-school problem, we shall offer support and access to other services as appropriate. In all cases we shall help the student to re-establish him/herself into the usual pattern of school life. This is important in terms of their success in school.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

It is the responsibility of the school, under The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016), to decide whether or not any given absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

Unauthorised Absence

We **cannot** authorise any requests for students to be taken out of school during term time for any reason. It is commonly believed that 'unauthorised' absence means truancy and although there are occasions when parents are unaware of their son/daughter's absence from school, there are a number of other reasons for absence which the school may not authorise: -

- i) staying at home to care for a sick relative (e.g. parent, brother or sister);
- ii) staying at home to await a tradesman or delivery;
- iii) shopping;
- iv) preparing for a holiday; and taking an annual family holiday (not long weekends etc) where this cannot be taken in school holiday time because of parents' leave restrictions;
- v) keeping a hairdressing or similar appointment;
- vi) a birthday or family celebration;
- vii) missing the bus;
- viii) not having school uniform;
- ix) family day visits out;

Authorised Absence

Only in exceptional circumstances will leave of absence from school be granted as Authorised absence. Some examples of 'authorised' absences are: -

- i) when a child is ill or receiving medical attention (appointment cards should be available); For absences of longer than 5 days a Doctor's Appointment note should be supplied
- ii) when a close family member has died;
- iii) when prior consent has been obtained from the Headteacher, for example for a music examination;
- iv) non-provision of school transport for students living beyond three miles in the school's preference area.

We do not wish to record unnecessarily absence as 'unauthorised'. Please help us to avoid doing this by providing signed absence notes, texts or emails quickly and by encouraging your son or daughter to recognise that good attendance is important: going to school is as important as going to work.

Leave of Absence from School in Term Time

As a result of Government legislation (**Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016**) we **cannot** authorise any requests for child/ren to be taken out of school **during term time for any reason**. However, in exceptional circumstances requests will be considered. We are not in a position to stop your child/ren being taken out of school **during term time**, however, it must be pointed out that all requests for **leave of absence from school** - if agreed - are as **Unauthorised** absences and are liable to Penalty Notice Fines or prosecution for non-attendance. Fines will be issued when children miss five consecutive school days or the equivalent of 5 days within a six-week period which are recorded as unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will **leave of absence from school** be granted as Authorised absence.

Request for 'Leave of Absence from School in Term Time' forms are available from Student Services and the school website.

DfE (Department for Education) guidance states that in the case of family holidays, each case will be considered on its merits and approval is not automatic. The South West Area Northamptonshire schools consistently oppose holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances, and normally all holidays are recorded as an **unauthorised absence – coded G**.

Absence in term time will be acknowledged and agreed only if:

- i) a written request is made, four weeks in advance, by the parent/carer with whom the student normally resides (this will be recorded **as unauthorised absence**);
- ii) the request is for absence for the family's main holiday, where this cannot be taken during school holiday time, for example because a parent cannot get time off work during school holidays (this will be recorded as **unauthorised absence**).

In normal circumstances no more than ten days in any one academic year will be acknowledged and agreed and normally all leave will be recorded as **unauthorised absence – coded G**.

Absence in term time **will not** normally be acknowledged and agreed:

- i) during years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, and prior to or during any examinations;
- ii) where a student has a poor record of attendance, ie below government guidelines of 95%;
- iii) if the reason for taking the absence at this time is the availability of a cheap holiday. (Some visits offer a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity: please consult the Headteacher in such cases and these may then be recorded as authorised.)

Absences outside these criteria will be recorded as **unauthorised** and may involve liaison with the NCC Education Inclusion and Partnership team (EIPT).

Reporting Attendance

Normally a student's attendance record is included as part of their school report in the form of the number of sessions attended, out of the possible number, and the number of sessions missed due to absence.

How Can You Help?

- i) Do not allow your son or daughter to stay away from school unless absolutely necessary – **attendance matters** – our school target is 95%.
- ii) Please let the school know by text or email of any absence, followed up by text or email each subsequent day of absence.
- iii) Late arrival (arrival after 9.30am/2.15pm) counts as absence - please send a note with students, text or email with the reason for late arrival. Students whose late arrival is due to school buses have to be counted as 'late', but we do not record such instances on reports etc.
- iv) Please try to avoid doctors, dentists and hospital appointments during school time.
- v) Please avoid any family holidays causing absence in term time.
- vi) If your son/daughter seems reluctant to come to school, and you suspect a problem at school, please contact us sooner rather than later. Please do not 'condone' an absence by providing an excuse which may be covering a problem. We are partners in your son/daughter's education and by sharing the problem, we may solve it. We do not consider any problem to be trivial: we shall try to act to solve a problem as soon as we know about it.
- vii) You may wish to discuss attendance difficulties with the Education Inclusion and Partnership team (EIPT) or the Parent Support Advisor. All of which can be contacted through the school at Student Services.

Contacting Parents/Carers over Absence

Any parent who has reason to check on his/her son/daughter's attendance record can do so by contacting his/her Tutor, Head of Learning or the Attendance Officer in Student Services.

We will contact parents by letter where cumulative attendance falls below 90%. Parents/carers will be invited to attend an attendance surgery with the attendance officer and the Designated Safeguarding Officer; the meeting will be an opportunity for the parent/carers to talk about any issues or obstacles preventing his/her son/daughter from attending regularly. This meeting may also involve external agencies being present and could begin the process of formal proceedings where student attendance falls below an acceptable target.

We will also contact parents by letter to report cumulative attendance below 95% on at least **SIX** occasions during the year – between September and July.

Under 90% attendance classes a student as a Persistent Absentee.

We will also issue congratulatory letters and certificates where termly attendance has been at 100% for the term.

We will also contact parents/carers using our text/e-mail alert/contact system and we would be grateful if parents/carers could advise us of any changes in their current contact information held at school – so that this information is kept up to date.

The school is also required to report attendance to the Local Education Authority, and to the DfE, so that data can be published. These records are reported as global figures and contain no individual data.

The school also has to make registers regularly available to the local authority's Education Inclusion and Partnership team (EIPT) who may contact parents to seek clarification or follow up matters of concern.