



Attendance Policy 2024/25

Updated by Gayle Myers: October 2023

Reviewed and updated by Louise Crane November 2024

To be reviewed: October 2026

Attendance Policy

Rationale:

Chatsworth High School and Community College strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment of which each member of the school community feels a part of. We seek to ensure that all our students receive a high-quality education which maximises opportunities for each student to learn and realise his/her aspirations. We believe that regular school attendance is the key to achieving this. Regular attendance also ensures that students do not miss out on supporting therapies and social activities.

This policy aims to

- Support students, their parents/carers to enable students to be at school everyday
- Ensure parents/ carers are aware of their legal duties to ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.
- Give a framework for monitoring and responding to student absences

Legal Framework

This policy is guided by the legal requirements set out under the [Education Act 1996](#), [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#), [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#)

Contents

2. Rationale, legal framework
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Attendance monitoring and recording procedures
5. Persistent Absence
6. Severe Absence
7. Reporting Absence
 - 7.1. What to do if your child is ill:
 - 7.2. What to do if your child has an appointment
 - 7.3. Request a leave of absence
8. Appendix 1 - Legal Sanctions
9. Appendix 2 – Attendance support links

Roles and responsibilities

Attendance lead:

Establish a high profile and positive culture of regular attendance throughout the school, setting targets, and ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively.

Conduct a weekly overview of whole school attendance, identifying where attendance may have improved or may become a cause for concern, liaising with teachers and other staff who have concerns regarding attendance such as noticing patterns of absence.

Liaise with, parents, internal professionals such as senior leadership team members, safeguarding team, family support worker, school nurses/ health team and external professionals such as the LEA attendance support team, social care, learning disability team and other relevant professionals to identify how we can support our families to improve attendance.

Liaise with, and deliver regular attendance updates to the whole staff team, school governors, LEA attendance team and other key stakeholders.

Provide parents with a termly update regarding their child's attendance, offering support with any issues that families may be facing.

Recognise and celebrate good attendance throughout the school via a range of rewards including certificates and prizes.

Business support team:

Daily monitoring students' attendance and punctuality

Following up unexplained absences via SMS and telephone call

Maintaining attendance records, and reporting patterns of non-attendance to the school leadership.

Teachers and support staff:

Daily recording of students' attendance and punctuality using Arbor our digital register.

Following up absences via direct messages to parents,

Maintaining attendance records, and reporting patterns of non-attendance to the school leadership.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly.

Parents/Carers:

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, and are prepared for their school day.

Parents are required to inform the school about upcoming appointments and to report their child's absence in a timely and accurate manner either by telephoning the school reception and/or by informing the teacher directly via SeeSaw.

Where parents do not inform the school of the reason for an absence, or respond to the school's queries regarding the absence, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Attendance monitoring and recording procedures

We monitor pupil attendance closely using an electronic register, Arbor, to track student attendance.

Teachers complete registers daily, noting on the register any notes from parents about illnesses, appointments or any other factors which may be relevant to attendance such as cancelled buses. Teachers report any concerns to the attendance officer such as patterns of absence and where appropriate to the DSL.

In cases of an unexplained absence, the business support team will check to see if the teacher has received any communication directly from the parent, then contact the parent or carer on the first day of absence initially by SMS. If no reason for the absence is subsequently provided during the morning, one of the attendance team will call the family that day to ascertain the reason for the absence. If contact cannot be made with the family, and the student is felt to be at risk or if unexplained absences persist, further investigation/ action will be undertaken, which may include home welfare visits and consultation with external agencies such as social care to ensure the safeguarding of the student.

Attendance records are maintained electronically, with data regularly reviewed by the Attendance Officer and reported to the senior leadership team, the school governors, the Local Education Authority and other stakeholders.

Where a student's attendance reaches a concerning level, we will reach out to families either by letter, email or telephone to notify them of our concerns and to offer support and discuss ways in which we can work together in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

Persistent Absence

Persistent Absence is a term applied when a student's attendance falls under 90%. Persistent absence is a serious problem for students as the learning they miss whilst not in school cannot easily be made up. In the recent update [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#), the Government challenges all schools to do all they can to reduce persistent absence.

Over a year, 90% attendance would equal around 20 missed days of school or 120 missed lessons.

At Chatsworth we appreciate that many of our students have ongoing long term health conditions for which they will have regular medical appointments which may unavoidably be in school hours. Some of our students are also very susceptible to illness or may be off school for extended periods due to their conditions, operations or illness. Some students face a range of other barriers to school attendance. We ask that our families keep us informed of appointments, operations and other reasons why a student may be unable to attend so we can record these appropriately as authorised absences.

If a student's attendance becomes to be a concern, we may invite parents to a meeting in school to discuss their child's attendance. We work closely with our families to do all we can to reduce barriers to education and to support the family. We can often find workable solutions through both in house routes such as bespoke arrangements and also by engaging help for the family from other services. This may include, referrals to the attendance support service, a referral for Early Help, and or multiagency meetings with a range of professionals.

Severe Absence

Severe absence applies when a student’s attendance drops below 50%

At this point, the attendance officer is legally obliged to submit either a medical form for students with long term hospitalisation or illness, or an individual action plan to the LEA attendance team detailing the steps that have been taken so far, the support that has been offered and what barriers to education the family/ student is facing. At this point, families will be invited into school to discuss the help and support they need to improve attendance.

Where families do not engage with the support offered and attendance deteriorates further, particularly where there are severe absences made up of mainly unexplained or unauthorised absences, parents may be asked to come to school to meet with senior leadership and or representatives from the LEA attendance team who will offer further support. Parents may be asked to sign an attendance contract at this stage, and we would be expecting to see a rapid and marked improvement in attendance.

Ultimately, where unauthorised absence concerns remain ongoing, no improvement has been seen and the school has done everything reasonably possible to support the student and their family, we may contact the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. *See Appendix 1*

Termly Attendance				
Attendance	Days in	Days Missed	Weeks missed	Lessons Missed
100%	60	0	0	0
90%	54	6	1	30
80%	48	12	2	60
70%	42	18	3	90
60%	36	24	4	120
50%	30	30	6	180
40%	24	36	7	216
30%	18	42	8	252
20%	12	48	9	288
10%	6	54	10	324
0%	0	60	12	360

Annual Attendance				
Attendance	Days in	Days Missed	Weeks missed	Lessons Missed
100%	190	0	0	0
90%	170	20	4	120
80%	150	40	8	240
70%	130	60	12	360
60%	110	80	16	480
50%	90	100	20	600
40%	70	120	24	720
30%	50	150	28	840
20%	30	170	32	960
10%	10	180	36	1180
0%	0	190	38	1300

Reporting Absence

What to do if your child is ill:

If your child is too ill to attend, parents/carers should contact the school by telephone on 0161 921 1405 /1404.

If you are not sure if you should send your child to school or not please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

When contacting the school please give your child's name, the reason for the absence, and how long you expect the absence to last.

We ask that you contact us each day that your child is absent unless you have given us an indication of how long the absence will last.

If you do not contact us, we will send a reminder via SMS on the morning of the absence.

Where we have received no reason for an absence, a member of our School Business team will telephone you. Calls are made daily, even where your child has been absent due to illness on previous days. We cannot assume that your child is still ill unless you have notified us.

If we do not receive a response, we will record the absence as unauthorised.

If we are concerned about the welfare of an absent pupil, we will contact social care or the police in certain circumstances.

Some reasons for absence may still be recorded as unauthorised, for example, holidays during school time. *

If your child has suffered with diarrhoea and or vomiting, or has been sent home from school with these symptoms, they should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

What to do if your child has an appointment:

Please ensure that you have informed the school either by telephone on 0161 921 1405 /1404 and or via SeeSaw, prior to the date of the appointment. Please provide a copy of the appointment letter/card either physically or via SeeSaw.

Leave of Absence

Parents/carers should make any request well in advance and in writing (a form is available from the School office). Requests for absence for reasons such as compassionate leave, special family events, sporting or musical competitions, etc., should be made in the same way.

All requests are considered individually, considering the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be considered, such as:

- the time of year the student will be absent
- the attendance record of the student
- the number of previous requests for leave of absence

Parents will be notified of the school's decision either by telephone or in writing.

*N.B From 19th August 2024, schools are legally not able to authorise any leave of absence for holidays. Holidays are legally required to be recorded as unauthorised absence.

What to do if you need help to get your child to school

There is help available for parents who may be struggling to ensure their child is attending school. Please get in touch, we can often help reduce and remove barriers to attendance. Online help can also be found on [Salford's website](#). See also Appendix 2

Appendix 1

Legal Sanctions

Parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school regularly. The Chatsworth High School and Community College are required to make a referral to the Local Authority where parents/carers are failing in their legal duty.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) Regulations 2024, 2024 No. 210

Education Penalty Notices for Non-School attendance

New Legislation comes into force on 19th August 2024 regarding the issuing of penalty notices relating to none school attendance.

Schools are required to consider, on a case by case basis, whether to ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to a parent when their child's absence is unauthorised.

Working within a Code of Conduct, Salford Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 10-week period;

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence (O coded)
- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised holidays (G Coded)
- Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration (U coded)
- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absences (O, G and U coded)

You may receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance.

Within the new National Framework, there is a national limit to the amount of Fixed Penalty Notices that can be issued to any parent in respect of an individual child, within a three-year period. Each fixed penalty is issued on the basis of per parent/per child – therefore where a child has two parents, two fines may be issued.

The fixed penalty notice amount has increased to the following:

- Penalty Notice One - £160 discounted to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Penalty Notice Two - £160 with no discount offered.

Should a third absence be taken within the three-year period, a parent may be summonsed to the Magistrates Court for knowingly failing to secure good attendance at school (Section 444 (1A) of Education Act 1996).

Please note that from 19th August 2024, schools are not able to authorise any leave of absence for holidays.

The local authority and school are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact school and ask for support.

Appendix 2

Attendance support in Salford

Support in Salford is available for children and young people who experience emotional barriers to attendance and accessing education. We understand that attendance difficulties are stressful for the whole family and, following positive feedback, will be running parent/carer meetings again this year. We have also included information about other types of support for you and your child below.

Parent/Carer drop in meetings

An opportunity to meet other parents/ carers whose children experience barriers to attendance/ education. The sessions are run by members of the Educational Psychology Service and Salford Parent/Carer Forum, with input from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and the Primary Inclusion Team (PIT). It is an open forum for discussion and support, where information about support available for children and young people in Salford is shared.

We are offering a mix of in person and virtual meetings, monthly:

Wednesday 15 January 10am-12pm Community Room 3, Eccles Gateway

Wednesday 12 February 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams

Wednesday 12 March 10am-12pm Community Room 3, Eccles Gateway

Wednesday 2 April 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams

Wednesday 7 May 10am-12pm Community Room 3, Eccles Gateway

Wednesday 11 June 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams

Wednesday 9 July 10am-12pm Community Room 3, Eccles Gateway

To book a place please email EPS@salford.gov.uk

Early Help Hubs and Family Partnership Model

Early Help Practitioners are based at local family hubs and are there to support families. They use the evidence-based Salford Family Partnership Model. They work closely with other services and additional support can be offered with issues such as housing, finances, relationships, and wellbeing. Further information can be found on the Family Hubs children's centres page.

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-help-for-families/https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-help-for-families/>

Salford Parent Assembly

Salford Parent Assembly is an open forum for parents and carers of children and young people, aged 0-25, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who live in Salford. The purpose of the group is to capture the voice and lived experiences of parents and carers of children and young people with SEND, to ensure their voices are listened to and incorporated into decision-making. If you wish to attend the next meeting, please contact Steven Booth (SIASS Manager) at SIASS@salford.gov.uk

Online resources

[Salford Thrive Webpages and Directory](#) provide a single place for all local Emotional Health and Wellbeing related services.