



Whole School Attendance Policy

Reviewer: N Brearley

Reviewed: September 2016

**RATIFIED BY CURRICULUM &
STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON:**

19th October 2016

SIGNED:

(Chairman of Governors)

DATE:

INTRODUCTION

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The Government expects:

Schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and, act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.’

School attendance - Statutory guidance and departmental advice DfE

(October 2014)

Regular school attendance is essential if students are to achieve their full potential. Culcheth High School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Culcheth High School values all students. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

An OFSTED publication into school attendance stated that 17 days absence at Key Stage 4 is equal to a grade deficit in every subject for the student. This is why at Culcheth High School, attendance is key to being “The Best That We Can Be”.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. Students are expected to continue in education or training for a further two years until the age of 18.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & Amendment 2013, requires schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

AIMS

- To promote good attendance and punctuality to and within school amongst all students.
- To meet targets set by the LA regarding attendance.
- To enable all students to have full access to the curriculum through regular attendance.
- To enable students to return to school after a period of absence with any necessary support.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Culcheth High School believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, students and the wider school community.

GOVERNOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parent/carers
- Annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a governor committee to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure there is a named person to lead on attendance within the school
- Ensure the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- The school will enable all students to achieve their full potential through good teaching and learning experiences and expect regular attendance to best prepare them for life after school
- The school will actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers
- Ensure all students know their attendance
- Form Positive relationships with parents/carers and students
- The school will report to parents on an annual basis the child's attendance record.
- The school will inform parents in cases of known truancy.
- The school will endeavour to inform parents on the first day of absence.
- Analyse attendance data regularly to identify patterns and causes of absence
- In the case of absence due to prolonged illness the school will provide work in liaison with parents/carers.
- When a child's attendance falls below 97% our school internal monitoring system will be implemented. See appendix 1
- When the number or frequency of absences gives cause for concern or the attendance falls below 90% parents will be contacted by the school's Pastoral Support Officer/Progress Leader and the LA Attendance Team.
- Persistent lateness will be treated seriously and parents informed by the Pastoral Support Officer/Progress Leader of regular poor punctuality.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- Parents have a legal obligation to educate their children and can be prosecuted if they do not meet this obligation.
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child arrives to school promptly each day. (The school in loco-parentis is responsible for the child from the start of the school day)
- Parents/Carers must contact the school on the first day of absence if the school has not previously been informed between the hours of 7.00 a.m. and 8.45 a.m. on a special designated number (01925 768577) and maintain daily contact should the absence continue
- Parents must avoid taking holidays in school time and if they cannot do so must apply to the Headteacher for permission in advance
- Permission for absence due to holiday will only be granted in exceptional circumstances

We request that parents/carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make any medical or dental appointments outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school: take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home

MONITORING

Form Tutors will regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality/patterns for their tutor group and discuss any concerns with parents and students. Students will be given their attendance on a fortnightly basis. If attendance/punctuality continues to present a problem, they will involve the Pastoral Support Officer and the Progress Leader for the year group. Robust tracking systems are used to ensure student absence is quickly identified to enable staff to work closely with students and parent/carers to support effectively and efficiently. Through our monitoring systems there are review dates where progress leaders fully analyse the attendance and punctuality of their year group. At this time, students with attendance below 97% will be supported through our step by step guide in appendix A.

STUDENTS WITH ATTENDANCE / PUNCTUALITY CONCERNS

Students with poor records will be referred to the school's Pastoral Support Officer or Progress Leader who will work and liaise with the LA Attendance Team. It is the role of the attendance team to become involved with the family.

In the case of students with poor attendance/punctuality records the following strategies may be considered:

- Special report
- Change of Form Group
- Change of Curriculum
- Parental meetings

- Involvement of the Pastoral Support Officer
- Involvement of Mentors
- Involvement of Inclusion team
- Involvement of external services and providers.

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE

- **Authorised** – Parents have informed the school of the absence and the reason for it is seen as reasonable from the schools viewpoint
- Reasonable reasons are listed below:
 - Absence due to student illness for which a communication has been received from the parents
 - Other authorised circumstances, e.g. bereavement, serious family crisis, emergency school closures etc.
 - Any form of exclusion
 - Family holiday for which leave has been granted due to exceptional circumstances only
 - Medical (GP or hospital appointment or dental appointment for treatment) absent for the whole session only
 - Routine check-up appointments should be made for outside school hours wherever possible
 - Day of religious observance for the religious body to which the parents belong
 - Transport difficulty (if no alternative available)
- **Unauthorised** absence is recorded when parents have not contacted the school or where the reason for the absence is inappropriate and not acceptable to the school, i.e.
 - Siblings school is closed
 - Shopping
 - Holidays during term time that have not been granted permission for exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher
- **Approved Educational Activity off Site**
 - Receiving education off site or other than at the school where registered
 - Approved sporting activity
 - Work experience/placement
 - Educational visit or placement (including college-link courses)

HOLIDAYS

- There are thirteen weeks available for family holidays during the year and holidays in school time are only allowed in exceptional circumstances
- In the case of an unavoidable holiday in term time, parents must ask permission from the Headteacher two weeks in advance explaining the circumstances behind the request
- If the school gives permission this will appear as an authorised absence on the child's records
- If the school does not consider the reason to be acceptable or there are a number of requests then this would be recorded as an UNAUTHORISED absence on the child's

records. The parent/carer would be informed of this before the commencement of the holiday

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state;

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

If a student fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the student off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & Amendment 2013. This means that the child will lose their school place.

Only in exceptional circumstances will absence of more than 10 school days be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as children returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be authorised.

It must be understood that the permission would be given at the discretion of the Headteacher.

INTERNAL TRUANCY

Any subject teacher or form tutor is to report any suspicions to the member of staff who is First Response alongside the Progress Leader and the Pastoral Support Officer

Regular internal checks will be carried out during the year. Internal truancy will be sanctioned appropriately and proportionately.

STUDENTS OFF SITE

When students have to leave the site for any reason they should bring a letter (or use the allocated page in the planner) signed by the parent/carer. They must sign out at Student Services.

For all students on external work placements or curriculum placements, appropriate procedures and protocols will be in place to ensure attendance is reported and recorded in line with school policy.

PUNCTUALITY

It is important that students arrive promptly each day. Students arriving after 9.55 a.m. will be marked absent for the morning session.

All students should obtain a mark in the register when they are present in school. Students arriving after 8.45am on the staff computer will be marked late. When a student is marked late the student should be notified and a reason for the lateness supplied.

If they arrive late (after registration) they must sign in at the school reception and receive a blue slip which **MUST** then be taken to Student Services where they will be given another slip which **MUST** be given to the subject tutor.

Late arrival is registered on the system and the number of minutes late is recorded and totalled for information. Students who are late without an appropriate reason will be sanctioned on the same day.

The punctuality of students is monitored carefully by the Progress Leader and the PSSO. In cases where students are regularly late we will invite parents or carers into school to discuss how we can work together to improve the punctuality of the child.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

'Children missing education are children of a compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.' (Children Missing Education Statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016)

There are a variety of circumstances that can lead to a becoming missing from education such as

- a.) **CHILDREN AT RISK OF HARM OR NEGLECT**
Children may avoid attending school if they are experiencing abuse or neglect. Attendance can be an indicator or safeguarding concerns and therefore communication between the Form Tutor, Progress Leader, PSSO and the safeguarding team is crucial. Where there is any form of suspicion the schools safeguarding policy must be followed and referrals applied if appropriate.
- b.) **CHILDREN OF GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER (GRT) FAMILIES**
GRT children are disproportionately represented among children who do not attend regularly. As a school we will inform the local authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination. The Traveller Education Support Service or the CME officer from the LA will liaise with schools to improve attendance and achievement.
- c.) **CHILDREN OF SERVICE PERSONNEL**
Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently. Schools and local authorities will contact the MoD Children's Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure the continuity of education.
- d.) **MISSING CHILDREN AND RUNAWAYS**
Children who go missing or runaway present serious safeguarding concerns and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education. The safeguarding policy should be referred to in cases such as this.
- e.) **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUPERVISED BY THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM**
Children who have offended are at risk of disengaging from education. Schools and local authorities will work with the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in such cases.
- f.) **CHILDREN WHO CEASE TO ATTEND A SCHOOL**
There are reasons why a child may stop attending school. It could be through parental choice to home educate however the local authority will be contacted to ensure that the student is receiving suitable education.
- g.) **CHILDREN OF NEW MIGRANT FAMILIES**
Children of new migrant families may well not have a fixed address or may have arrived into the area without the authority being aware therefore increasing the risk of

the child missing education. The school will work with the family and the local authority in such cases.

Alongside the list above from the Children Missing Education Statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016 Children in Care are also a vulnerable group to missing education.

Warrington CME Officer – David Sampson, 01925 442261
dsampson@warrington.gov

CHILDREN IN CARE

The school will endeavour to ensure that these children achieve their academic potential, attend school regularly and are monitored closely. The school co-ordinator for Children in Care is the Inclusion Manager.

Culcheth High School will follow Warrington Borough Council's missing education protocol when a student's whereabouts is unknown.

PROCEDURES FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL

These will vary according to the length of and the reasons for the absence. The Progress Leader or PSSO will liaise with the parent and student regards re-integration

- ***Short Absences Of One Week Or Less***
Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. The student will be encouraged to copy up or photocopy work which has been missed.
- ***Longer Absences of More than One Week that are unavoidable***
Parents/Carers should liaise with the Progress Leader or PSSO so that when possible work can be completed at home. This is very much secondary to being in school, in lessons, in front of a teacher.

On return the situation will be dealt with sympathetically and parents/carers will be invited into school with the child to discuss reintegration with the Progress Leader or PSSO. In some cases they may follow a part-time timetable. Support from the Inclusion Department will be available as required.

In the case of a long term absence, home tuition may be considered through the deployment of the LA Home Tuition service in line with their criteria, procedures and protocols.

For students who have been excluded a special supportive programme will be provided.

REWARD SYSTEM

As a way of encouraging good attendance, each Progress Leader responsible for a year group, monitors those students who achieve 100% attendance each half-term. Those students who do maintain 100% attendance are invited to attend a celebratory Biscuits at Break event with members of the Senior Leadership Team, Progress Leader and PSSO. At

Key Stage 4 students with 100% attendance in each year group will be entered into raffle and 2 prizes of £10 vouchers will be drawn.

Alongside the rewards above we also have a fortnightly inter-form competition. This is called the POP chart (Promoting our Percentage). Each fortnight a certificate is awarded to the form with the following:

1. Highest percentage
2. Highest climber

This is monitored by the PSSO and every half term the form that wins the POP chart category gains a prize.

Students who have 100% attendance for the Academic Year will receive a certificate and recognition for their achievements.

All students will receive a certificate for their annual attendance according to their final attendance percentage.

- Bronze Attendance Award being (96-96.9% attendance)
- Silver Attendance Award being (97-97.9% attendance)
- Gold Attendance Award being (98-99.9% attendance)
- Platinum Attendance Award being 100% attendance

ADMISSIONS AND DELETIONS FROM THE REGISTER

In accordance with the Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & 2013 Amendment and Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance (September 2016) students will only be deleted from the register when one of the circumstances listed in Appendix B applies. As a school we will notify the local authority before we remove any pupil from the school admission register at non transitional points.

Schools must enter pupils on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed the pupil will attend. If the pupil fails to attend then the school should make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil and consider notifying the local authority. We will notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil to the admission register at non transitional points.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents/Carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/ separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Culcheth High School also recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and children in care.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents, carers and pupils
- Referrals to support agencies
- Time limited reduced timetables
- Reintegration support packages
- Reward systems
- Local Authority Attendance Interventions

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occur, Culcheth High School will consider the use of legal sanctions.

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES & GUIDANCE

This policy to be read in conjunction with these other school policies and guidance:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Registration Policy
- School attendance - Statutory guidance and departmental advice. (DfE September 2013)
- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance September 2016

APPENDIX A

Attendance Procedures Step by Step

Percentage/Colour	Step Name	Action	Monitoring Steps
All	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st and daily contact system • KKS text/email • Fortnightly data into planners • Individual and form rewards for consistency and improvement. 	
98 – 100% Dark Green	STEP A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See All Category Actions • 100% Entered into Key Stage draw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students remain in Step A through monthly monitoring if remain in the % boundaries • Students progress to Step B if attendance worsens in next months' figures
96 – 97.9% Light Green	STEP B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal chat with student • Tutor level monitoring and intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress to Step B through monthly monitoring and remain in Step B if remain in % boundaries • Students progress to Step C if attendance worsens in next months' figures • Students go back to Step A depending on % in next months' figures
94 – 95.9% Amber	STEP C/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance letter 1/1S – general concern and copy of attendance certificate • PSSO involvement • PL intervention – phone call recorded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress to Step C through monthly monitoring and remain in Step C if remain in % boundaries • Students progress to Step D if attendance worsens or remains the same in next months' figures • Students go back to Step B or Step A depending on % in next months' figures
92 – 93.9% RED At risk of PERSISTENT	STEP D/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance letter 2 – inviting parents/carers in for attendance meeting with PL/PSSO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress to Step D through monthly monitoring and remain in Step D if remain in % boundaries • Students progress to Step E if attendance worsens or remains the same in next months' figures

<p>ABSENCE</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance targets set and consequences discussed with review date set • If parents/carers cannot attend the meeting, meeting is held with student. Non-attendance letter sent to parents/carers with targets/notes from meeting. • MEDICAL EVIDENCE – all absences now unauthorised without this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students go back to Step C, B or Step A depending on % in next months' figures • If back to Step C the letter does not need to be sent but continual monitoring is needed
<p>90-91.9% LILAC At risk of PERSISTENT ABSENCE</p>	<p>STEP E/3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Letter 3 – Debbie Parlane parental meeting • SLT line manager involvement • PSSO supports Debbie Parlane in meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress to Step E through monthly monitoring and remain in Step E if remain in % boundaries • Students progress to Step F if attendance worsens or remains the same in next months' figures • Students go back to Step D,C, B or A depending on % in next months' figures • If back to Step D or C the letter does not need to be sent but continual monitoring is needed
<p>Below 90% ICE BLUE PERSISTANT ABSENCE</p>	<p>STEP F/4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Letter 4 – Debbie Parlane Fast Track Prosecution Meeting • SLT line manager awareness through LM meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students progress to Step F through monthly monitoring and remain in Step F if remain in % boundaries • Students go back to Step E, D,C, B or A depending on % in next months' figures • If back to Step E, D or C the letter does not need to be sent but continual monitoring is needed

All Letters sent will be recorded on the tracker

If at any point the student's attendance dips again then it automatically triggers the appropriate response at the next stage from the previous trigger action, though repeat letters should be avoided

At any point, bespoke interventions can be carried out. These too will be entered on the Tracker

Appendix B

Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

1 8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.

2 8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.

3 8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.

4 8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.

5 8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.

6 8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that —

- (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
- (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
- (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

7 8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

8 8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and

- (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
- (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
- (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

9 8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an

order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.

10 8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.

11 8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and—

(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or

(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.

12 8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.

13 8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.

14 8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.

15 8(1)(o) where—

(i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;

(ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and

(iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.