

Policy:

Attendance Policy

Approval:

Headteacher

Date:

September 2022



Mission Statement

At Cheltenham Bournside School we believe that a child's attendance is one of the most important factors in their education and is the foundation for successful learning and outcomes. Creating a culture of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility. This is led by the senior leader with overall responsibility for attendance who works with a dedicated attendance team. At Cheltenham Bournside School, we expect students to attend every day that the school is open.

Aims of the policy

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- o Promoting good attendance: Our aim is to encourage and support all students to maintain 100% attendance and certainly not drop below our school target of 96%.
- o Reducing absence, including persistent (below 90%) and severe absence (below 50%).
- o Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- o Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- o Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.
- o Promote and support good punctuality to lessons.



Being late for school reduces learning time.

5 minutes late every day = **3 days** of learning missed per year.



15 minutes late every day = **9 days** of learning missed per year.



Arriving late can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class.

Source – [here](#)

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- o Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- o Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- o Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- o [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- o [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Cheltenham Bournside School fulfils its legal responsibility. We collect a morning and afternoon session registration; we are open to students for the required 380 session, or 190 school days (unless prevented by exceptional circumstance) and we use the nationally recognised [attendance codes](#).

By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. The parent of any child of compulsory school age has a legal duty to ensure regular attendance of their child at their registered school. Failure to secure the regular attendance at school is a criminal offence which can lead to prosecution.

In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence, the Headteacher may request that the local authority issue a fixed penalty notice without further warning to the parent. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increase to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If the penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.

Prosecution for unauthorised absence: It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered student at Bournside. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. This can result in a criminal record.

1.1 Definition of parent

'Parent' is defined as the following in the Education Act 1996, Section 576:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

1.2 What is compulsory school age?

A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the day following their 5th birthday. An individual is no longer of compulsory school age after the last Friday in June if they turn 16 by the end of the summer holidays. However, the government requires all young people to be in education, employment or training until their 18th birthday.

1.3 Sixth Form

By law, all students of non-compulsory school age adopt legal responsibility for their own attendance in school and this no longer lies with their parents.

As such there is no legal requirement for sixth forms to use the DfE's attendance codes, but a school reserves the right to use these codes if they wish. As a measure to safeguard our sixth form students, and to track and monitor their progress effectively, Cheltenham Bournside School chooses to use the nationally recognised attendance codes and register its sixth form students' attendance in every lesson. In doing so this further supports us in ensuring we comply with EFSA funding guidance for 16-19 provision.

Recording Attendance

Statutory registration is carried out twice a day, using our school Management Information System. Registers are marked using a [National attendance codes](#). A high standard of marking is essential for school safeguarding procedures. Every teacher is required to take a register within the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Sixth form students are expected to self-register for all private study sessions within the same timeframe. A safeguarding referral will be called if any students (who has previously been marked present) is absent after 10 minutes of the lesson starting.

Registers will mark whether every student is:

- o Present
- o Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- o Absent
- o Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- o The original entry
- o The amended entry
- o The reason for the amendment
- o The date on which the amendment was made
- o The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- o Whether the absence is authorised or not
- o The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- o The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

2.1 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- o Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- o After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

We expect all students to arrive to school, tutor time and all lessons on time. A student is late if they arrive to school after 8.40am. Any student who has not arrived through their allocated school gate by 8:40am will have to sign in via a single point of entry, known as the 'late gate'. The late gate will remain open until 9.00am. Any student who is late after this point must sign in via student reception.

If a student is late more than once in a term, they will receive a 30-minute same day detention. A 30-minute detention will be issued for every subsequent incident lateness for the remainder of that term.

If a regular pattern of lateness occurs, this may result in further investigation and sanction. Persistent lateness (U codes) may result in a penalty notice being issued.

2.2 Unplanned absence

It is vital that a parent contacts the attendance team by 8:30am on the first day of absence (and each subsequent day) to provide a reason for a student's absence. This should be done via the My Child at School will App (MCAS) or by calling the attendance phonenumber on 01242 235555.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent to provide medical evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified.

2.2 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time as is possible.

The student's parent must apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Any legitimate requests for term time absence must be sent to the school attendance officer. The school will consider all requests individually and inform the parent of their request in writing. This must be completed in advance with at least 7 school days' notice of the requested absence.

No holiday requests will be authorised during term time, and for students of compulsory school age an unauthorised holiday may result in a penalty notice.

We recognise the additional and unique pressures that sixth form students face and ask that if they need to attend an appointment during school hours. They arrange it in their private study time and speak to the Head of Sixth Form to grant them permission to leave.

A parent wishing to apply for compassionate leave for a student should apply in writing to the Headteacher. A decision to grant compassionate leave is at the Headteacher's discretion.

2.3 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 7 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form (which can be requested from our attendance officer). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- o Illness and medical appointments
- o Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parents belong.
- o Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes
- o To attend a family wedding or funeral

2.4 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- o Contact the student’s parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student’s emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit or seek the support of other agencies to make contact.
- o Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- o Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer and local authority
- o If a child has not been seen for 10 sessions (5 days) without parental contact the school will conduct a home visit

Reporting to parents

To support parents in meeting their legal requirements we seek to keep parents informed of their child’s attendance and to actively involve them with attendance issues:

Our strategies to achieve this include:

- First day absence calling/messaging
- The inclusion of attendance information on a student's reports which are issued termly
- Notification of rewards issued to celebrate good levels of attendance
- Active communication and involvement by pastoral staff, House tutors and our attendance team
- Letters generated and sent home to celebrate high attendance or to inform them when attendance becomes a concern
- Home visits (when appropriate)
- Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIMs) (when appropriate)

Attendance monitoring and intervention

Cheltenham Bournside School will:

- o Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- o Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

4.1 Analysing attendance

Cheltenham Bournside School will:

- o Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- o Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

4.2 Using data to improve attendance

Cheltenham Bournside School will:

- o Provide regular attendance reports to teaching staff, tutors and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- o Use data to identify students who would benefit from our 'what a difference a day makes' (WADADM) intervention
- o Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

4.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

Cheltenham Bournside School will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Conduct for AIMS with key personnel in the school
- Use data to inform decision about an adapted curriculum or flexi-schooling
- Conduct home visits where necessary
- Use attendance data to begin the Graduated Pathway in order to access wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

4.4 Positive reinforcement

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective success and/or improvement, Cheltenham Bournside School uses a range of rewards. These may include:

- Sharing of individual student attendance with parents
- Inclusion of attendance percentages in the 'House Heroes' programme
- Awarding of House points for meeting or exceeding the school attendance target
- Positive reinforcement through letters/certificates home
- Sharing of good news stories via House assemblies and virtual briefings
- Termly attendance draws for prizes
- Awarding of ballot tickets for the overall annual school attendance prize
- Positive inclusion on their UCAS or leaver's reference

Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

5.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mike Stratford and can be contacted via ms@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

5.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Quality assuring the completion of school registers
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Contact parents over student absence when appropriate
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- o Working with House welfare leads and the local authority inclusion team to tackle persistent absence
- o Liaise with House Leaders to conduct home visits when appropriate
- o Initiate the AIMS process
- o Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- o Issue penalty notices and commence prosecution for unauthorised holidays and persistent absence, as directed by the Headteacher

The attendance officer is Ros Chance and can be contacted via attendance@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

5.5 The attendance administrators

The attendance administrators will:

- o Monitor absence communication from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school MIS
- o Monitor the attendance patterns of their respective House links
- o Provide administrative support to the attendance officer to ensure communication to parents and key stake holders if efficient and timely
- o Provide administrative support for AIMS meetings for their respective House.

5.6 The House leaders:

The House Leaders comprise of the Heads of House, Assistant Heads of House and House Welfare Leads. They are responsible for:

- Rewarding good attendance in their House
- Monitoring and intervention of students with attendance concerns in their House
- Contribute to AIMS for students in their House
- Liaise with the attendance officer to conduct home visits when appropriate
- Ensure that tutors have access to attendance data/ statistics weekly to inform early intervention
- Oversee the training of tutors in attendance data/statistics and policy

5.7 The House tutors:

The House tutors will:

- Monitor the attendance patterns of students in their tutor group
- Praise good attendance
- Monitoring and intervention of students with attendance concerns in their tutor group
- Communicate with parents for students with attendance between 90-96%
- Contribute to AIMS when necessary

5.8: Class teachers and House tutors

Class teachers and House tutors are responsible for recording attendance in lessons using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school management information system (MIS) every lesson of each day.

5.9 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- o Make sure their child attends every day on time
- o Report their child's absence before 8:30am on the day of the absence, and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- o Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- o Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- o Not to book any holidays or visits during term.

5.10: Students

Students are expected to:

- o Attend school every day and arrive every timetabled session on time

6.0: Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

7.0: Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- o [Child protection and safeguarding policy](#)
- o [Behaviour policy](#)