



THE CHANTRY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE MATTERS: EVERY DAY

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few months, you may have noticed the increased number of pupils not attending school has often been in the headlines. Nationally, since the pandemic, there seems to be a surge of pupils taking unauthorised absence, particularly the older pupils. Fortunately, as a school, the majority of our pupils have very good attendance. However, through this newsletter we want to reinforce the importance of having excellent attendance, and how we can work together to ensure your child comes to school day in day out- as much as they can.

Like you, we want the best for your child, and not only do we want them to achieve their best in their GCSES when they reach Y11, but we want them to thrive and feel part of our community through forming strong relationships with both pupils and staff alike. We strongly believe, that this only usually happens if your child has excellent attendance.



Research suggests, excellent attendance results in:

- Improved and confident social skills
- Safer lifestyles
- Positive work ethic
- Academic success

THE IMPACT OF NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

Research and statistics tells us what is common sense: coming to school regularly is the single most impactful thing on a child's outcomes at school. The DfE national data shows that for... pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, **83.7%** achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to **35.6%** of pupils who were persistently absent.

This, of course, is before we consider the social and mental health benefits for a child to regularly be in school with their peers.

Our own GCSE and attendance data for the Year 11s who left in summer 2023 tells us there is a very clear link between attendance and attainment. Again, this shows that if a pupil comes to The Chantry School every day (or nearly every day), there is a significant positive impact on their attainment. Our data shows the following:

- For pupils who attend **>95%** of the year, the average GCSE grade was 5.3, and this is nearly **a whole grade above the average of their peers**
- For pupils who attend **90 – 95%** the average GCSE grade was 4.6, with achievement in line with the average of their peers
- For pupils who attend **80 – 90 %** the average GCSE was 4.3, with achievement about half a grade below their peers

To prove the point about attendance being important for a pupil achieving their full potential, just take a look at the chart indicating how many lessons are lost when days begin to accumulate over the school year.

Attendance during the school year	Equates to days absent in a school year	Which is approximately	The amount of lessons missed
97%	6 days	1 week	30 lessons
94%	10 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	145 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	190 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	240 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	285 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	335 lessons

It's easy to see how if pupils have only **90%** attendance – one day off every other week- then they will start to have gaps in their learning because they are missing nearly **4 weeks** worth of lessons! And if a pupil had only **90%** attendance over 5 years, they will have missed almost **6 months** of school.

Unavoidable absences

These may be authorised by the school. These include

- Illness, unless your child is classed as a persistent absentee
- Religious Festival or ceremony with family
- Emergency medical or dental appointment – that could not be made outside of school hours
- Being in hospital or receiving hospital treatment
- Attendance at a funeral with family
- Taking part in a public performance, sporting event or examination linked to the curriculum

Avoidable Absence

- Absences which we consider to be avoidable will not be authorised by the school. These include:
- Illnesses that do not need time away from school e.g., headache, cold symptoms, stomach-ache, other aches and pains etc.
- Looking after an ill relative
- Holidays in term time
- Looking after siblings
- Not getting on with others in school
- Being at an event the day or night before

What you can do to help

- You will know that as a parent/carer, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly as well as being punctual.
- We ask parents/carers not to keep their child off school unless the absence is absolutely unavoidable.
- If your child is feeling under the weather / poorly they should attend school as in the majority of cases pupils feel better over the course of the day. We always send home a child who is ill and not fit for school.
- Monitor and control access to social media, electronic devices and gaming after 9pm to avoid young people being distracted from their sleep.
- Plan to take holidays during the 14 weeks pupils are not expected in school.
- Make all routine dentist and doctor appointments outside of school hours.
- Family holidays should be taken during the official school holidays.
- For more non-routine medical appointments bring your child to school before and / or after the appointment.





If unavoidable and your child cannot come to school parents/carers must:

- Contact school on the first morning of absence by 9 a.m. to provide a reason for absence.
- You can email **attendance@chantryschool.com**
- stating your child's name, tutor group and reason for absence or report through Edulink. You can also phone the dedicated Attendance line on : **01886 887105**

- Contact the school each day of absence until your child returns to school.
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance.
- Provide medical verification for any absences exceeding 5 days (10 sessions) or more (unless attendance team have requested medical evidence).

At The Chantry School we will:

- Recognise and reward 100% attendance
- Recognise and reward excellent attendance
- Recognise and reward improving attendance
- Monitor every pupil's attendance and keep parents informed
- Be proactive in encouraging pupils to attend all the time
- Support parents and pupils to overcome the barriers that prevent attendance
- Involve outside agencies where necessary
- Only authorise non-medical absences in exceptional circumstances.
- Encourage pupils to catch up on missed class work and homework.



Support available



- Pupils who develop a poor pattern of attendance and punctuality will be monitored by the pastoral team, and we will utilise a range of support strategies. This may include:
- conversations with your child to explore what the obstacles are and set interim targets
- letters home to you and/or you may be invited into school for a meeting to establish an improved Attendance Plan (IAP).
- regular home visits should it prove difficult to get your son/daughter into school, or there is no improvement in attendance.
- Where necessary, referral to outside agencies to offer bespoke support to help remove barriers to attendance and, if necessary and where parents / carers are at fault, to Worcestershire Children First to enforce attendance

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent young adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child's attendance and punctuality is the very best it can be to give them the very chances in school and beyond.

If you would like to talk further about Attendance, please contact Nicola Clear on nclear@chantryschool.com or Mrs Pearce at apearce@chantryschool.com.



Thank you for reading