



Chesterton Community College

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

September 2024

Approved by LGB	23 May 2024
Review cycle	Annual- Due- May 2025

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Document Control2

Document Control

New Version Number	Key changes from previous version	Date of ratification
v1.1	Changes highlighted in yellow throughout the document- p15 change in fine, p17 attendance contract	23/05/24

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Contents:

1. Introduction	4
2. Legislation and guidance	5
3. Roles and responsibilities	6
4. Recording attendance	9
5. What is an acceptable attendance rate?	12
6. Authorised absences	13
7. Unauthorised absences	14
8. Strategies for promoting attendance	16

1. Introduction

- 1.1.** This policy applies to all students of compulsory school age at Chesterton Community College and will be used to inform attendance practices within Chesterton Sixth Form.
- 1.2.** Key Principles:
- Students at Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form have the right to education that is 'excellence as standard'.
 - For students to access the best possible education, a high level of attendance is essential.
 - To ensure all students understand the importance of attendance. Students' ability to stay and feel safe, enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution may be jeopardised by poor attendance. For Chesterton Sixth Form students, future life choices may be jeopardised by poor attendance. This includes application to further and higher educational establishments and future employment opportunities.
- 1.3.** Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form endeavour to provide a safe learning environment in which students can enjoy and achieve. We acknowledge the proven correlation between high level attendance and student outcomes. This Attendance and Punctuality Policy emphasises positive strategies and a range of interventions to ensure the highest levels of attendance. However, when normal School and Sixth Form procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures, including legal action, must be considered.
- 1.4.** Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form aim to:
- Ensure that every student has access to the education to which they are entitled;
 - Emphasise the importance, to all students, of maximum attendance at school as an essential pre-requisite for making full use of all educational opportunities and to maximise individual achievement;
 - Make explicit to all relevant parties (teachers, parents/carers and students) the School's and Sixth Form's expectations on attendance levels;
 - Promote a consistent approach across the school and sixth form towards all matters relating to attendance;
 - Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance;
 - Communicate to all relevant parties the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised";
 - Act early to address patterns of absence, including persistent absence and promote good attendance;
 - Stress the need for home and school/sixth form to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1. 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:

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

2.2. It is a legal requirement that students of compulsory school age receive a full-time education and this, with the exception of those educated at home or elsewhere, means regular attendance at school. Irregular attendance leads to students missing important lessons and therefore not fulfilling their true potential; it also places children at risk and may result in them being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour. **Therefore, we take the issue of attendance very seriously and do all we can to obtain very high attendance from all our students.**

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The Local Governing Body are responsible for:

- Reviewing and challenging attendance data/figures for the school and sixth form on at least a termly basis.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy within the school and sixth form
- Monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

3.3. The Deputy Headteacher, with responsibility for attendance, is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy and leading on attendance across the whole school and sixth form
- Decisions regarding attendance coding
- Monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors
- Analysing data to celebrate success and identify concerns
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance and punctuality strategies
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families, which may include working with external agencies
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Determining whether legal actions (penalty notice or prosecution) are required
- Working with parents/carers and external agencies in supporting students with medical needs in accordance with relevant LA medical needs guidance.

3.4. The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Overseeing administration of the register systems across the whole school and sixth form
- Contacting parents and carers regarding non-attendance or attendance concerns and informing parents of unexplained absences before they become unauthorised absences
- Monitoring and analysing attendance and punctuality data across the whole school and sixth form, at an individual student level
- Working closely with the Deputy Headteacher to administer attendance and punctuality procedures including: punctuality letters; stage letters and meetings; parent contract meetings; fixed penalty notices; reporting children missing from education (CME) and reporting elective home education cases (EHE)
- Providing attendance and punctuality data to the Heads of House, Directors of Sixth Form and the Deputy Headteacher
- Reporting concerns regarding attendance to the Heads of House, Directors of Sixth Form, Deputy Headteacher and DSL
- Monitoring and responding to leave of absence requests

3.5. Pastoral Leaders (Heads of House and Directors of Sixth Form) are responsible for:

- Giving attendance a high profile during assemblies and school events and celebrating outstanding attendance
- Monitoring attendance targets and implementing systems of rewards and sanctions

- Meeting with parents/carers to discuss attendance concerns as soon as they are identified
- Meeting regularly with the Attendance Officer to analyse attendance concerns for their students
- Working with the Deputy Headteacher, SENCO and Locality Team to create individual packages and reintegration plans, where appropriate
- Ensuring work is provided for suspended students and long-term absentees
- Looking for patterns of absence and consider the impact of curriculum upon attendance alongside other possible causes
- Leading on strategies to improve attendance of students who are identified as being a concern through meetings with students and parents/carers
- Identifying which students should receive letters as part of the three step warning system
- Supporting form tutors on issues of non-attendance and with internal truancy, remedying causes and applying sanctions
- Working with parents/carers to support students with identified factors affecting their attendance to school

3.6. Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes
- Giving attendance a high profile, taking prompt action when students are late or absent without reason, updating the register and referring concerns to the Heads of House or Director of Sixth Form
- Liaising with the Heads of House or Directors of Sixth Form when absence is causing concern
- Making contact with parents/carers regarding attendance, when appropriate

3.7. Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance within the first 5 minutes of every lesson, using the correct codes
- Giving attendance a high profile, taking prompt action when students are late or absent without reason, updating the register and referring concerns to the Heads of House or Director of Sixth Form
- Informing relevant staff of any student missing from lesson that had previously been marked present

3.8. Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school and sixth form on time every day except where a statutory reason for absence applies
- Contact the school to report their child's reason for absence before 8:30am on the day of the absence and on every subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school or sixth form with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, any doctors or dentist appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. It is expected that students should only be absent from school for the time needed to attend the appointment and they should not, when possible, be absent for the entire school day
- Provide a written explanation for their child's absences from school, including medical evidence if requested
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so at least two weeks in advance of the requested absence
- Get in touch with the school or sixth form at an early stage regarding any concerns they may have about their child's attitude to school and/or attendance concerns

- Proactively engage with support and advice offered by the school and sixth form and seek additional support for their child if needed
- Monitor their child's attendance on Edulink

3.9. Students are expected to:

- Arrive on time to school everyday. This means arriving to school no later than 8:45am so that they can get to their tutor room ready for registration at 8:50am
- Attend every timetabled lesson on time, this includes session taking place before school and during period 7
- Sign in at the main reception or sixth form reception if they are late arriving to school/sixth form and provide a valid reason for being late
- Sign out at the main reception if they have been given permission to leave school before the end of the school day. Year 7 students are not permitted to leave the school site unaccompanied and therefore will need to be collected from reception. Students in Years 8-11 may leave unaccompanied however consent must be emailed to the school confirming that they have permission to leave by themselves.
- Tell their form tutor or Heads of House if they are having any problems attending school
- Monitor their own attendance on Edulink and strive to maintain outstanding attendance of 98%+

4. Recording attendance

4.1. Attendance registers

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment
- (See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- 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.

Students must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:25pm and will be kept open until 1:55pm.

4.2. Unplanned absence

We understand that there are occasionally legitimate reasons why your child may not be able to attend school/sixth form, such as due to illness. If your child is unable to attend school/sixth form, please inform us by 8:30am each morning your child is absent, using one of the following methods:

- Edulink - e-mail via Edulink, the school's secure communication portal (this is our preferred method of contact)
- Email: attendance@ccc.tela.org.uk
- Absence line: 01223 712648 (please leave a voicemail)

If a student is absent and a notification of absence has not been received from the parent/carer, the school/sixth form will record an unauthorised absence.

When reporting an absence, please ensure that you provide:

- Your child's name
- Their year group and tutor group
- The reason for the absence
- Expected date of return, if known

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school/sixth form has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or if the students overall attendance to date is a cause for concern. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, we may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical

evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school/sixth form is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, or if the overall attendance to date is a cause for concern, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3. Planned absence for medical reasons

It is expected that absences for medical and dental appointments will, where possible, be arranged for outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and we expect students to attend for part of the day.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as an authorised absence as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school/sixth form in advance of the appointment and request that we are informed at least 48 hours in advance of the appointment, where possible. We will only authorise half a day of absence for standard medical/dental appointments.

Absence for medical or dental appointments should be requested on Edulink or by emailing attendance@ccc.tela.org.uk and be accompanied by appropriate evidence, such as an appointment letter or card, email or SMS reminder. This evidence is required to authorise the absence. Parental consent is also required where the student will need leave the school premises, for their appointment, during the school day (this is not required for sixth form students).

Year 7 students are not permitted to leave the school unaccompanied during the school day and therefore will need to be collected from reception. Students in Years 8 – 11 may leave unaccompanied however parents/carers are required to confirm, within their Edulink/email notification, that they have given permission for their child to leave by themselves and that they take full responsibility for the safeguarding of their child once they have left the school premises. If we do not receive permission for them to leave unaccompanied, we will assume that the parent/carer will be collecting them from school reception. All students must 'sign out' (at reception) before leaving the school premises so that we have a record of them being off-site in the event of a fire evacuation or other emergency. The student must 'sign in' (at reception) upon their return.

4.4. Extended absence due to medical conditions

At Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form we recognise that occasionally a child may suffer from a medical condition, affecting their physical or mental health, that makes it impossible for them to attend school for an extended period; specifically, their attendance will fall below the 90% minimum attendance threshold, and is unlikely to improve. In these cases the school requires medical evidence, in the form of a written letter from an appropriate healthcare professional

- Outlining the cause of the absence;
- Stating that at this current time the child is medically not fit to either access full-time education or attend school;
- Providing guidance for the school/sixth form on what duration of education the child may be able to cope with (e.g. one lesson a day or half days);
- Stating the anticipated duration of the absence and when the case will be reviewed.

The letter does not need to offer a diagnosis; it simply offers a medical judgement that the child is not fit to attend full-time education. The school can offer support in requesting such evidence if required.

The school will not be able to authorise the absence unless this evidence is provided. In these circumstances the school and the family would need to work closely together in partnership to

formulate an Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP) to support the student with their recovery and to support them returning to full time education.

4.5. Lateness and punctuality

It is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good time keeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption. If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's attendance or punctuality please get in touch with their Heads of House or the Directors of Sixth Form and appropriate support can be put in place.

Statutory registration starts at 8:50am and 1:25pm and closes after 30 minutes. A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code 'L'. This does not count as an absence however, punctuality procedures will be followed and sanctions will be put in place in line with the behaviour policy.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code 'U'. This counts as an unauthorised absence and code 'U' will be used if a valid reason is not provided.

Where students are persistently late and punctuality is a cause for concern the school/sixth form punctuality procedures will be implemented. This is an escalating scale and includes:

- A conversation with the Heads of House or Directors of Sixth Form
- Letter one – notifying parents that we are monitoring their child's punctuality
- Punctuality report
- Letter 2 – notifying parents/carers that we will not authorise any further late arrivals
- Letter 3 – formal meeting with parents/carers and the student

(See Appendix 3 Punctuality procedure flow chart)

4.6. Following up unexplained absences

Where a student does not attend the school or sixth form, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Contact the student's parent/carer on the morning of their first day of unexplained absence to check that they are aware of the absence and request the reason for the absence. If a vulnerable student, or student with an identified need, the parent/carer of these students will be contacted first as a priority. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may implement further measures such as conducting a home visit or contacting the police.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised
- Input the correct attendance code as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session. If a legitimate reason for absence is provided after more than 5 working days, it will remain recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken, where necessary. If absence continues or regular patterns of absence are identified, the school may consider this a safeguarding concern and will consider implementing safeguarding procedures, such as conducting home visits, notifying external agencies where they are working with families or contacting the police.

4.7. Reporting to parents/carers

Up to date attendance data is provided on Edulink and parents/carers are expected to check this regularly to ensure they are informed regarding their child's attendance figure. Attendance percentages may also be included on student reports, where appropriate.

5. What is an acceptable attendance rate?

- 5.1.** Attendance is a national priority; national data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement and examination performance. In addition, all schools must submit data electronically every term. It is a key indicator of an effective school and, as such, will be scrutinised by Ofsted. Research shows that student attendance of less than 95% can impact on student attainment by as much as a whole GCSE grade.
- 5.2.** Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form expect attendance to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. The vast majority of our students achieve the school's target of maintaining good to outstanding attendance (96-100%). Regular attendance is a minimum of 96%; this is equivalent to students attending school for 182 of the 190 days possible. This would mean having no more than 8 days of absence in an academic year. This is what we expect from all of our students as a minimum and attendance which falls below this target will be challenged.
- 5.3.** We understand that occasionally a student may be legitimately absent from school due to illness. However, illness comes usually in a block of time over a continuous period. What we look for are unbroken weeks (i.e. those where the student is marked present for all ten half-day sessions). Students should **not** have more than one or two broken weeks in the course of an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for serious concern and will be followed up by the school, and triggers the implementation of the three stage monitoring process (described in section 8.5)
- 5.4.** If mitigating circumstances have not been identified and a student's attendance continues to fall and drops below 90% this means the student falls into the category of persistent absence. At 90% a student will have been absent for 19 school days within an academic year, which is the equivalent of four school weeks. At this point, the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. If this pattern were to continue throughout a student's secondary education this would mean they would miss the equivalent of half a year at school.

6. Authorised absences

- 6.1.** The Headteacher cannot authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education (DfE) have issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences:
- A child is ill or receiving medical attention
 - Days of religious observance, notified in advance
 - Absence due to family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, serious illness).
- 6.2.** There are other absences, such as approved sporting activities, that can be authorised; and there will be events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school/sixth form. Professional discretion will need to be used by the school in these cases as to whether the absence can be authorised. However, the DfE guidelines make it clear that:
- It is the school who judges whether an absence is authorised or not. A note from home therefore does not automatically make an absence authorised.
 - Only truly exceptional occasions should be classified as authorised.
- 6.3.** Where parents/carers feel it is absolutely unavoidable to take their child/children out of school/sixth form during term time due to very exceptional circumstances, an application form must be completed. Where exceptional circumstances are being applied for an **Application for Term Time Leave of Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances form** (see Appendix 2) must be completed and submitted to the Headteacher for approval.
- 6.4.** Any requests should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The forms are available on our website and from our Attendance Officer (attendance@ccc.tela.org.uk). A leave of absence will not be authorised retrospectively.

7. Unauthorised absences

- 7.1.** An absence is unauthorised if:
- No correspondence or acceptable explanation is provided by parents/carers
 - The reason for the absence does not fall into one of the categories of authorised absence
 - Medical evidence for the absence is not provided for a student who is at stage 2 of the attendance monitoring process
- 7.2.** DfE guidelines state that the following activities would be classified as unauthorised:
- Minding the house
 - Caring for relatives
 - Awaiting repair people
 - Shopping
 - A birthday or family celebration.
- 7.3.** There are clearly some grey areas. The DfE guidelines look at the area of special occasions and make clear that only truly exceptional occasions should be classified as authorised; for example, absence resulting from a student attending the wedding of a parent could be counted as authorised; a birthday treat to a theme park would not.
- 7.4.** Reasons for unforeseen absences must be provided to the school within 5 school days otherwise they will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This follows the guidance in section 31 of 'Working together to improve school attendance' from the DfE.

7.5. Holidays during term time

In line with Government guidelines, schools may not grant leaves of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances, and even under these circumstances schools are advised not to authorise any absence of 3 days or more in duration. Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form upholds these regulations, and applications for term time holidays **will not** be authorised. To avoid difficulty or disappointment, parents are asked to refrain from such requests. We strongly discourage holidays from being taken during term time as learning is disrupted and the lost time is detrimental to the educational progress of the child. **Penalty notices will be issued for any unauthorised term time holidays taken.**

7.6. Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO)

The Local Authority attendance service is a statutory service and a legal requirement. Their involvement is triggered by an unacceptable level of:

- Unauthorised absence
- Persistent absence
- Lateness

At Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form the Attendance Officer monitors attendance at a whole school level and specifically targets the students whose attendance falls below acceptable levels, following liaising with the Heads of House or Directors of Sixth Form.

7.7. Legal Action

All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school/sixth form on a regular and punctual basis. Should any student's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be subject to a Local Authority investigation. Where necessary the school will recommend legal action. The school and Cambridgeshire Local Authority work together in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

- **Penalty Notice:** A Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. The penalty is a **£80** fine, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to **£160** if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 28 day period, a prosecution will be sought.
- **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 Chesterton Community College. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

8.1. Rewarding good attendance (96% or above)

To promote good attendance and to emphasise its importance the school offers the following:

- Above and Beyond Points, issued on a half termly basis for good and outstanding attendance and punctuality
- Celebrating good attendance during tutor time and assemblies with tutor group and house awards presented at the end of each term by the Heads of House
- Attendance certificates
- Letters of congratulations from the Headteacher for long term exceptional attendance. These will become part of the student's records and make a meaningful contribution to their reference for further education or the world of work. Prospective employers, Sixth Form Colleges and Colleges of Further Education view attendance and punctuality as important indicators of motivation/attitude and our records and references are very valuable evidence of reliability. The majority of Cambridgeshire Sixth Form or Further Education providers expect at least 96% attendance when offering places.

8.2. Sanctions for poor attendance and punctuality

The school reserves the right to sanction students who fail to meet school attendance requirements, with any of the following:

- 1 hour after school detention for being late to school without a good reason
- Attendance and/or punctuality report
- Other, more serious sanctions, for repeated defiance of school attendance rules
- Poor attendance or punctuality may lead to students having an extended day to catch up on work missed. This may involve compulsory period 7 sessions being added to the student's timetable.

8.3. Home/School or Sixth Form Partnership

Securing a high level of attendance requires the school/sixth form and home to work closely together. To this end, we ask parents to:

- Do all they can to ensure their child arrives on time for morning and afternoon school sessions; morning registration begins at 8:50am and afternoon registration is at 1:25pm. We will monitor persistent late comers and action will be taken: **parents can be prosecuted if their child persistently arrives late**
- If their child is ill, notify the school on every day of absence by 8.30am
- Get in touch at an early stage about concerns you have about your child's attitude towards school.

In return the Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form will:

- Contact home on each day of absence if no message has been received from home
- Contact home regarding any unexplained absences
- Follow up promptly any concerns parents pass on to us that may be affecting their child's attitude to, or feeling of wellbeing, in school/sixth form
- Involve the Attendance Officer, Heads of House or Directors of Sixth Form or the Deputy Headteacher to support students to re-integrate into school/sixth form after illness or other individual circumstances
- Regularly and consistently remind students of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Reward outstanding and good attendance or improving attendance via our above and beyond points system and action any concerns promptly.

8.4. Support for students and parents

Chesterton Community College and Chesterton Sixth Form provides support for parents/carers and students if students are struggling to attend school. Measures include following:

- Attendance reports
- Attendance interviews and regular reviews with Heads of House or Directors of Sixth Form
- Referrals to relevant agencies to provide support for children and their parents/carers
- Coordinated support, where appropriate, from external agencies and attendance at Team Around the Family meetings (TAFs)
- Re-integration programme arranged between students, parents/carers and relevant staff (Heads of House, Directors of Sixth Form, SLT and SENCO) after long-term absence
- Individualised curriculum where appropriate. An Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP) would be completed and in put in place for a short amount of time to support re-integration.

8.5. Three stage monitoring process

The three stage system is intended to enable schools to continuously and consistently monitor and address poor school attendance. The system targets non-attendance methodically and progressively up to and including the point at which a referral to the Local Authority for legal intervention may be necessary. The system is designed to identify patterns of absence, either authorised or unauthorised, which are beginning to cause concern.

To maintain 'good' attendance of 96% a student would need to miss no more than 8 whole school days (16 sessions) within an academic year. Beyond this point attendance becomes a cause for concern and the following system would be implemented:

- Stage One: Letter. A stage one letter would be issued notifying parents of our concerns. Our expectation at this point is that there are no further absences.
- Stage Two: Telephone Call and Letter. If attendance continues to fall then parents will be contacted to discuss concerns and to identify any support needed. Notes will be taken during the phone call to log the conversation and any concerns raised. A stage two letter will also be issued at this point. Our expectation at this point is that there are no further absences but if there are medical evidence will be required (see point 4.2) otherwise the absences will be unauthorised.
- Stage Three: Letter and Attendance Contract Meeting. If, following the stage two conversation, there again is no improvement and attendance continues to fall then a stage three letter will be issued. A meeting will be called with parents to draw up an attendance contract where attendance will be monitored over an 8 week period. If at any point during this period attendance does not improve then a referral will be made to the Legal Panel for legal intervention. It is important to note that the 8 week monitoring period is consecutive school weeks but does not include school holidays. Therefore, if monitoring begins in July of the summer term then the monitoring will continue into the next academic year.

Appendix 1: DfE Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Application for Term Time Leave of Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances form

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

APPLICATION FOR TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

I understand that you wish to apply for leave of absence for your child(ren).

The law stipulates that 'Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'

Headteachers may, *in exceptional circumstances*, grant leave of absence in a school year in accordance with the school policy but parents/carers should not expect such leave to be granted as of right. Indeed, following clarification from the Government recently, it is likely that in most cases headteachers will be unable to authorise leave. I would ask you to consider the following:

- parents/carers do not have a legal entitlement to remove their children from school for family holidays and they cannot themselves authorise absence
- each application is considered individually bearing in mind the age of the child, the nature of the exceptional circumstance, the child's attendance record, any school activities that occur during the period of absence (e.g. examinations), that parents have given at least 2 weeks notice.
- if the school does not agree to the absence and the parent still takes the child out of school the absence must, by law, be regarded as unauthorised
- if the child is absent for longer than the agreed time the extra absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- a pupil who fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date may lose their place at the school unless there is a good reason for the continued absence

Absence from school during term time can seriously disrupt a child's education on a day-to-day basis and students are less prepared, upon their return, for lessons that build on the work they have missed. Your child(ren) may well be expected to attend an after school catch-up club if this is felt necessary by the school.

If you would like to proceed with your application, please complete all sections on the form overleaf and ensure that it is signed by **all** parents/carers who have parental responsibility for the child(ren) and return it to the Attendance and Admissions Officer as soon as possible. We will advise you as soon as we can of the outcome of your application. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Yours sincerely



Miss C Lehane
Deputy Head

Please see application form overleaf

Application for Leave of Absence During Term Time

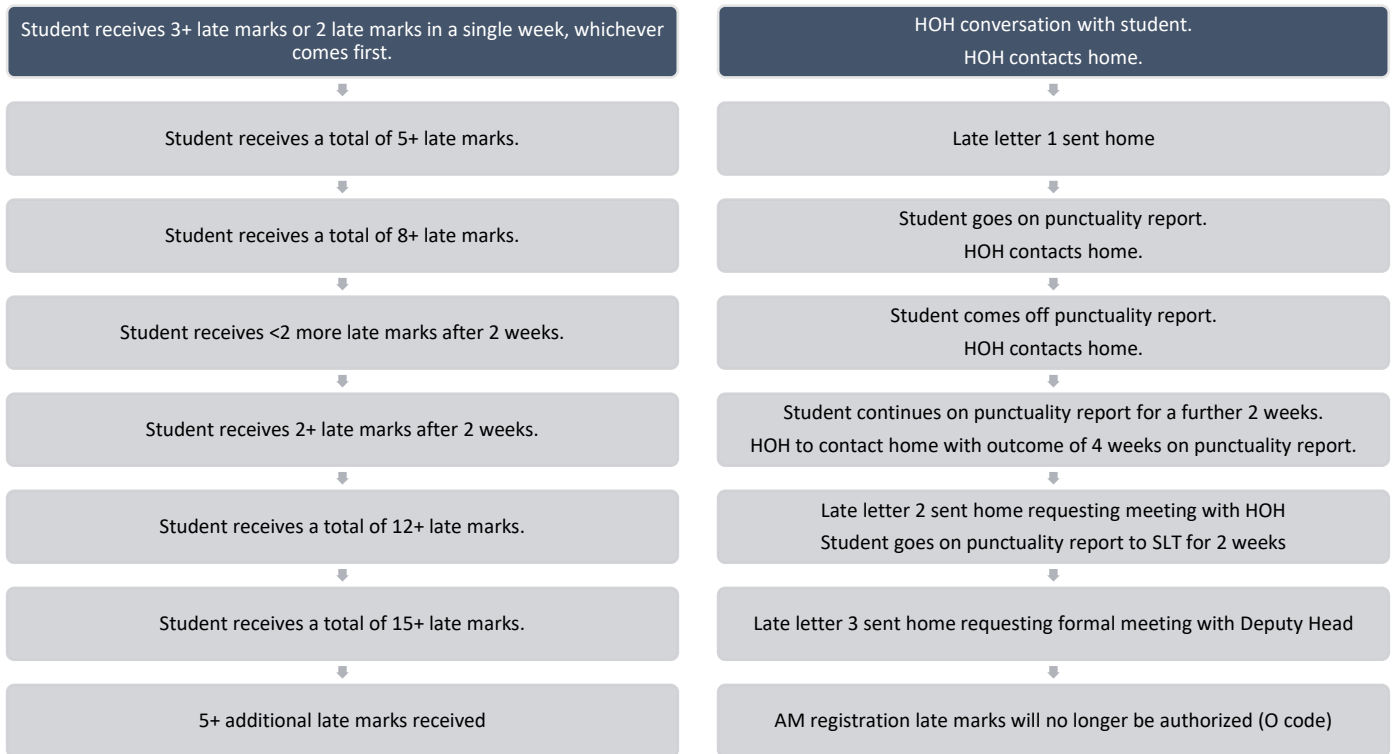
I have read the letter overleaf and I understand and accept the points contained therein. In particular, I understand that leave of absence may not be granted and that if it is, it will be for no longer than 10 school days. I also understand that any unauthorised absences will be recorded and referred to the Education Welfare Service. I will ensure that my child completes any work missed during the period of absence.

Name of Pupil	Form	Year
Dates of absence for which permission sought:		
Start Date		End Date
Total Number of days		
Please present your case for taking your child(ren) out of school during term time. (Please provide sufficient information / detail to enable us to make an informed decision. Continue on a separate sheet where necessary.)		
**Signed	Name	Relationship to Child
Date:		
**Signed	Name	Relationship to Child
Date:		

** This form needs to be signed by **all** parents/carers who have parental responsibility for the child(ren)

Appendix 3: Punctuality procedure flow charts

Chesterton Community College (process for Years 7-11)



Chesterton Sixth Form procedure flow chart

