Colne Valley High School Attendance Policy 2023-24

Contents

Aims of the Policy

This policy is intended to outline the expectations, procedures and key staff in relation to attendance as well as the strategy and support in place to ensure students maximise their attendance at school.

We envisage that this policy will act as a 'user manual' for students, families and staff when it comes to attendance at school and will keep it under annual review. We will use our stakeholder voice mechanisms (e.g. student surveys, parent forum etc.) in order to ensure that feedback around this policy is taken on board when the policy is reviewed.

This policy will be published on the Colne Valley High School website and will be recirculated to parents / carers at the start of each academic year and when it is updated at any other point.

In conjunction with the policy the Attendance strategy highlights how individual attendance is tracked and monitored.

Introduction

At Colne Valley High School, we strive to help our students to become the best that they can be. We believe that working in partnership with families is the best way to maximise attendance at school in order to achieve these priorities.

We know that regular attendance at school is vitally important in helping students to reach their academic potential, to grow socially and emotionally and to develop a range of life skills which will support them as they enter the world of work or higher education at the end of their compulsory education.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular school attendance and educational progress and attainment. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind and they are likely to have fewer GCSEs at lower grades, which can impact on their ability to access further education and/or employment.

Children who have less than 90% attendance are regarded as 'persistent absentees' from school by government standards. This is equivalent to one day off per fortnight or 95 hours of learning missed across a year. It is our expectation that our students should only miss school when it is absolutely necessary and should aim for a minimum of 97% attendance over the course of each year.

Strong school attendance for every child is in everyone's best interests and it is the responsibility of us all. We are determined to work together with students and their families to make this happen.

Key Staff

This section of the policy details key staff and their responsibilities in relation to different aspects of the attendance policy.

Staff Member	Job Title	Role
Mrs L McManamin lmcmanamin@thecvhs.co.uk	Assistant Principal	Strategic leadership of whole school attendance strategy including policy development, staff training and data analysis.
attendance@thecvhs.co.uk	Attendance Officer	Operational leadership of attendance including direct work with families, home visits and liaison with Education Welfare around any legal proceedings/fixed penalty notices
Mr K Wilson kwilson@thecvhs.co.uk	Year Leader- 7	To support the students in Year 7 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mrs H Chappel hchappel@thecvhs.co.uk	Year Leader -8	To support the students in Year 8 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Miss R Fields rfields@thecvhs.co.uk Mr J Brambles jbrambles@thecvhs.co.uk	Year Leader -9	To support the students in Year 9 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mr S Mowbray smowbray@thecvhs.co.uk	Year Lead -10	To support the students in Year 10 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Mrs E Wink ewink@thecvhs.co.uk	Year Leader -11	To support the students in Year 11 with maintaining excellent attendance by working directly with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance as part of the whole school strategy.
Form Tutors	Form Tutors	To support the students in their form in maintaining excellent attendance through praise, encouragement, intervention and mentoring.
Admin Team office@thecvhs.co.uk	Admin	To support with the daily attendance and absence procedures including updating registers and contacting parents via text message, email and phone call.

Daily Attendance Routines

This section of the policy outlines how the school day operates in practice.

The timings of the school day are outlined below:

Movement 8.30	Movement Bell – students to be onsite and heading to tutorial. Students are late from 8.40am				
Tutorial 8.40-9.15	Tutorial				
Period 1 9.15-10.15	Period 1				
Period 2 10.15-11.30	Break (Y11) 10.15 – 10.30	Break (Y7) 10.30 – 10.45	Period 2 10.15 – 11.30	Period 2 10.15 – 11.30	Period 2 10.15 – 11.30
	Period 2 10.30 – 11.30	Period 2 10.15 – 11.30	Break (Y9) 10.45 – 11.00	Break (Y10) 11.00 – 11.15	Break (Y8) 11.15 – 11.30
Movement 11.30	Movement Bell				
Period 3 11.30-12.30	Period 3				
Period 4 12.30 – 2.10	Lunch (Y11) 12.30 – 1.05	Lunch (Y9) 12.30. – 1.05	Period 4 12.30 - 2.15	Period 4 12.30 – 2.10	Period 4 12.30 – 2.10
	Period 4 1.05 - 2.10	Period 4 1.05 – 2.10	Lunch (Y7) 1.05 – 1.40	Lunch (Y10) 1.35-2.10	Lunch (Y8) 1.35-2.10
Movement 2.10	Movement Bell				
Period 5 2.10-3.10	Period 5				

Colne Valley High School is open to students from 8:00am and they will be welcomed by staff on the door to support them in being prepared for the day. Please note that due to safeguarding reasons, students will not be permitted to leave the school site after they arrive.

Before the day begins, students will be supervised in the restaurant. Other areas of school will be out of bounds during this time as they are not supervised. Breakfast is available for students to buy from 8:00am to 8:25am.

We expect all students to be on school site by 8:30am at the latest so that they have time to organise themselves and get to Tutorial punctually. This will enable their school day to begin in a calm and positive manner rather than having to rush.

The school day begins with Tutorial where the official morning register is taken at 8:40 am so it is vital that all students are punctual to this lesson.

Form Tutors are a key member of staff for every student and parents, as they may be the only member of staff who sees the student every day. Tutorial is a key part of the day as the following occur during this time:

- Key information and messages are communicated to students around items such as room changes, school reports, trips etc.
- Students are supported with addressing any uniform or equipment issues to ensure that they are prepared for the school day.
- Planners are checked and monitored for communication between home and school.
- The achievements of students linked to the school values are celebrated. The Form Tutor will also provide advice and guidance to students who have not demonstrated these values so that they can improve.
- Topics linked to the Personal, Social, Health and RS are taught, helping students to learn about issues such as how to manage their mental health, drugs/alcohol and relationships.
- Each year group has an assembly one day per week during this time presented by senior leaders, other staff members.

The official morning register closes at 9am. Students arriving between 8:40am and 9am will be given a late register code (the 'L' mark). This does count as a present mark towards their attendance as they have arrived before the official closing time of the morning register.

Where a student arrives after 9:15am, they will be given an unauthorised late register code (the 'U' mark). This counts as an absence mark towards their attendance as they have arrived after the official closing time of the morning register.

Students arriving late to school can expect to receive a consequence in line with the behaviour policy. If students need support with their punctuality, we would encourage them or their parents to get in contact with an appropriate member of staff in school (see Key Staff section).

The official afternoon register is taken during a student's Period 3 lesson. Registers are also taken in every lesson for safeguarding reasons but it is the official morning register mark and official afternoon register mark which make up a student's attendance percentage.

Daily Absence Procedures

This section of the policy outlines the procedures that parents should follow to report their child absent from school and the systems in place within school to follow this up.

For safeguarding reasons, it is vital that school and families work in partnership so that we know why each child is absent from school on any given occasion.

With this in mind, when their child is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents should inform us at the earliest opportunity, and certainly by 8:00am, by either:

- Phone call to Colne Valley High School absence line 01484 848680 is manned by the Attendance Officer or a member of the admin team and has the facility to leave a message if the phone is busy.
- Email to attendance@thecvhs.co.uk

It is important that parents are specific in the reasons that their child is absent from school (e.g. 'vomiting' or 'fever' rather than 'unwell' or 'a bit under the weather') as this enables us to track patterns of absence more effectively with individuals and particular groups of students, therefore enabling more effective support (see section on Tracking and Monitoring of Attendance Data).

This information will be processed by the admin team and the Attendance Officer so that registers are accurately recorded for the day for any child who is absent from school (see section on Attendance Register Codes for more details).

After the official morning registers have been taken in Tutor Time, we will add any late arrivals to these so we have an accurate picture of which students are present in school.

This will enable us to quickly identify any students who are not in school and whose parents have not informed us of the reason why. From here, the following actions will be taken in order to ascertain a reason why and ensure the safety of the child:

- Text message sent to parent/carer contacts on school system requesting a response. We endeavour to send this within an hour of the school day starting aside from in exceptional circumstances which may impact this (e.g. significant travel disruption).
- If no response is received, we will make phone calls to all contacts on the school system throughout the morning.
- Where there is no response, we will conduct home visits and engage with external agencies such as the Police and Children's Social Care if we are concerned that a child is at risk.
- Where a student is absent from school for five consecutive days and no reason has been provided, this will result in a referral to Kirklees attendance and pupil support for further support as they could be deemed as a Child Missing in Education according to local authority procedures.

In any cases where a student has been marked present earlier in the day but then does not arrive in a lesson, the teacher will report their absence on the register using N code. This will be picked up by the attendance team supported by the pastoral team who will attempt to locate the student.

If the student cannot be found, a safeguarding call will be made as a priority to the parents/carers to inform them of the absence (truancy). We do not hold mobile phone numbers for students so parents are best placed to contact them.

If parents/carers cannot be contacted, staff will attempt to contact other emergency contacts held on the school system to inform them and request their support. If this is unsuccessful, a risk assessment will be undertaken and the Police may be informed.

Students are not allowed to leave the school site during the day. On the rare occasions when this may be necessary (e.g. they have become severely unwell at school or have an emergency appointment), the following will apply:

- Students are only allowed to leave the site with parental/carers knowledge and written permission.
- Where a student is unwell or there are potential safeguarding concerns, students will not be allowed to leave unless accompanied by an adult.

- Students are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from school. If a student does this, they will be regarded as truanting from school.
- Whenever possible, parents / carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time. Only urgent appointments should be attended during the school day and students should return to school after them.
- Students must be signed out by the admin team on leaving school and signed back in on their return.
- Where a student is being collected from the academy, parents / carers should report to reception before the student is permitted to leave the site.

These measures are taken in order to promote the safety and welfare of our students. It is vital that we have at least two contacts on the school system for every student so that we are able do this effectively. Please email office@thecvhs.co.uk if you would like to add any additional contacts for your child.

We appreciate the support of parents in informing us in a timely manner of any absences of their children so that we can ensure that all of our students are safe.

Leave of Absence Requests

This section of the policy details the procedure in relation to leave of absence requests which will only be authorised in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Colne Valley High School term times and school holiday dates are published a year in advance and are published on the academy website.

Training days are published as soon as we have agreed these but may be subject to change.
Any changes will be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity.

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for students to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. In line with the government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Some examples may include compassionate leave, a religious observance or sporting/musical competitions.

Parents/carers should make any such request at least three weeks in advance and in writing by email at office@thecvhs.co.uk or letter addressed to the Attendance Officer.

All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be taken into account including:

• The time of year the student will be absent (e.g. a Year 11 student missing a GCSE examination would be extremely detrimental to them)
• The attendance record of the student
• The number of previous requests for leave of absence

Parents will be notified of a decision either by telephone or email. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 where a child has ten or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a term.

Attendance Register Codes

This section of the policy outlines some of the common attendance codes that are used on the register. This is not an exhaustive list and further information can be found in the 'DFE School Attendance Guidance' which is linked in the 'Links with Guidance and Other Polices' section.

The attendance register is a compulsory legal document which must be accurately maintained by schools using these attendance codes.

Present Codes
These are used when a student is present in school or is at an approved off-site educational activity and they count positively towards their attendance. They include:

- / = Morning present mark
- \ = Afternoon present mark
- L = Arrived late but before register closed
- B = Present at an approved off-site educational activity (e.g. at alternative provision)
- J = Attending an interview (e.g. a Y11 student at a Post-16 college)
- P = Approved sporting activity (e.g. a student who plays for Leeds United Academy)
- V = Educational visit (e.g. where students are out on a Geography field trip)
- W = Work experience (e.g. where a Y10/11 student is accessing an approved work experience placement)

Authorised Absence Codes
These are used when a student is absent from school but we have authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a student's attendance but do not count against parents when considerations are made around any legal proceedings. They include:

- I = Absent due to illness
- M = Absent due to medical appointment (please try to make these outside of school hours wherever possible)
- C = Other authorised absence (e.g. to attend a funeral)
- E = Absent due to being issued with a suspension from school
- R = Absent due to religious observance

Unauthorised Absence Codes
These are used when a student is absent from school but we have not authorised the absence. These marks count negatively against a student's attendance and may inform any legal proceedings against parents (see section on Legal Proceedings for more details). They include:

- N = Absent without a reason being provided. As detailed above, we will make all efforts to contact parents to find out why their child is absent. If we are unable to do so, 'N' marks will be changed to 'O' marks (see below) after five working days.
- O = Absent from school without authorisation. Some examples that would fall into this category include:
    - No reason being provided for an absence
    - The child is refusing to come to school
    - Truancy
    - Oversleeping/missing the bus
    - School uniform not clean
    - Birthday treats
    - Looking after younger siblings
- G = Absent due to holiday in term time
- U = Arrival after the closing time of the official morning register.

Punctuality

This section of the policy outlines the expectations of students in relation to their punctuality to school and throughout the school day.

Good punctuality on a morning and to each lesson is crucial. Lateness to a lesson causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other students in the class as it leaves teachers having to repeat instructions and breaks the flow of a lesson. It is, therefore, a collective responsibility of all students to ensure they are punctual throughout the day.

We expect all students to be on school site by 8:30am at the latest so that they have time to organise themselves and get to Tutorial by 8:40am when the school day begins and the morning register is taken. This will enable their school day to begin in a calm and positive manner rather than having to rush.

We then expect all students to arrive punctually to all their lessons. Whilst we appreciate that it takes time to move around the school building (consideration is given to this), it is not acceptable for students to arrive late for lessons after social times or significantly after the rest of their classmates. All students must make their way punctually to lessons during changeover periods. As detailed above, this has a negative impact on learning and is not fair on the other students in the class.

Students who are persistently late will be sanctioned through the detention system.

Students with Medical Conditions, SEND and Social Workers

This section of the policy outlines the considerations that will be made for students with medical needs, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

At Colne Valley High School we hold the same level of aspiration and high expectations for all of our students. We recognise, however, that some students may have additional needs or vulnerabilities that impact upon their attendance at school.

For example, some students may have diagnosed medical conditions which require them to attend regular hospital appointments during school hours, or complex situations at home with which Children's Social Care are supporting.

In these circumstances, we will work together with families and other professionals involved to ensure that any necessary reasonable adjustments to this policy are made.

How Parents can Support their Child's Attendance at School

This section of the policy provides advice and guidance to parents as to how they can support their children in ensuring excellent attendance at school.

Excellent attendance at school is the aspect of their child's education that parents / carers have the most impact upon. This is why Parental Responsibility Measures are clear that it is a parent's

responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. The following are some ways in which parents can do this:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school regularly
- Ensure that their child arrives to school punctually every day
- Reinforce to their children the importance of education and how attending regularly leads to higher achievement
- Contact school in a timely manner (before 8:00am) in the event that their child is going to be absent that day
- Ensure that any medical appointments are booked outside of school hours wherever possible
- Ensure that any leave of absence request is only made in the most exceptional of circumstances
- Support their child's attendance (and therefore achievement) by not taking holidays during term time
- Notify school immediately if there are any changes to details of named contacts for their child
- Work in partnership with school staff when there are concerns about their child's attendance
- Support the school with any consequences that are implemented as a result of their child truanting or being late to school or lessons

Formalising Support

This section of the policy outlines the more intense and formal support that will be implemented when more informal measures have been exhausted without success.

In their 2022 report, 'Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence', Ofsted advise schools to take an approach where they, 'listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate'.

This means that where a student's attendance is an ongoing concern, we will work with families and make referrals to external agencies in order to secure support in removing barriers to attendance and establishing strong attendance routines. These include:

- Parenting Contract – a voluntary agreement between parents and governors
- Penalty Notices – a fine issued by the local authority where a student has repeated unauthorised absence
- Education Supervision Order – where a court mandates the local authority to supervise a child's education for a period of time
- Parenting Order – where a court places a mandatory order on parents to attend guidance sessions and improve their child's attendance at school
- Prosecution – where a court prosecutes a parent who has failed to ensure their child attends school regularly under the Education Act 1996

These formal mechanisms are a last resort once more informal support has been exhausted, however, we feel it is important to be transparent in stating that we will not shy away from using them where necessary in order to help every student access their education.

Children Missing in Education

The school recognises that children missing education are at risk of underachieving and may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. We follow the LA guidelines in monitoring such children. If a child is apparently "missing", we endeavour to find that child as soon as possible, working with partner agencies, including the Police and Social Care if necessary. Our Attendance Officer, Year Leaders and Tutors, work with families to support good attendance. Where there are serious concerns, we work closely with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that children are safely in school. Where a child goes missing, we make every attempt to contact the family by phone, letter and home visits. Children missing for more than 10 days MUST be referred to the LA (or earlier where there are existing safeguarding concerns), who will attempt to trace the family. Children who do not attend for more than 20 days without notification are removed from the school roll.

Links with Guidance and Other Policies

Colne Valley High School Attendance Policy has due regard to the related statutory legislation on areas including**:**

- Parental Responsibility Measures
- Children Missing Education
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School
- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Alternative Provision
- Safeguarding
- DFE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance
- DFE Summary Table of Responsibilities to Improve School Attendance
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The SEND Code of Practice
- The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following Colne Valley High School policies:
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Attendance Strategy