

Attendance Policy

Applies to	All students in college and boarding
Approved by	I certify I have reviewed this policy and verify that to the best of my knowledge it reflects current legislation and is in accordance with the wishes of the Governors Dr Martin Meenagh (Principal)
Annual Review	Reviewed: November 2018 Next review: August 2019

Introduction

Regular attendance at College is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable students to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all students is monitored, with the College seeking to work actively with parents and the Boarding House to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We encourage students to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards College and learning.

Regular attendance is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their reliability and commitment to their own learning.

Every student is expected to attend every timetabled lesson.

Aims of Attendance Policy

1. To maximise student attendance in order to promote student achievement
2. To provide accurate daily information on attendance through efficient use of registration systems.
3. To facilitate monitoring of patterns of absence.

4. To comply with the ISI guidelines on school attendance and ensure accurate reporting to parents and the Executive Committee.
5. To comply with the UK Visas and Immigration's requirements for Tier 4 and other UK visas.

Academic success is clearly dependent on attending all classes, and students who miss classes without a valid reason are dealt with using the college's attendance procedures. Students are registered for every lesson, and the Attendance Officer will get in touch immediately with any student who is not in a timetabled class. Parents are contacted in cases of unexplained absence.

Every three weeks, an **attendance report** will be run. All absences will be questioned during the personal tutor sessions, but when unauthorised absence is greater than 5% during a 3-week period, the college's attendance procedures come into force. Students will be given '**absence points**' if they have missed lessons without authorisation, based on the following criteria:

- **5-9.9%** unauthorised absence: **1** absence point
- **10-14%** unauthorised absence: **2** absence points
- **15% or more** unauthorised absence: **3** absence points

Immediately a letter will be sent home (see appendix 1, page 7) informing parents of their child's absence record. These points will remain on the student's record for the full academic year, and if attendance does not improve, more points will be added as appropriate every three week period.

If a student reaches **3 attendance points**, they will have a meeting with their Head of Year;

If a student reaches **5 absence points**, they will have a meeting with the Vice Principal.

If a student reaches **8 absence points**, they will have a meeting with the Principal and parents / guardians;

If a student reaches **10 absence points**, they are at risk of permanent exclusion from the college.

The College can 'authorise' absence and not all reasons supplied by parents will be assessed as 'valid'.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the College acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what

intervention strategies to apply. In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents keep the College fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance; they are reminded of this duty in the College's pastoral handbook.

Arrival and Registration

All Students should be in the College ready to register at the beginning of each lesson, each day. The register is taken at the beginning of every lesson. If a student arrives after the beginning of a lesson, they will be marked in as 'late' by their teacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- To provide the governing body with information on attendance, including students with low attendance/high levels of unauthorised absence and the action taken to address this.

Vice Principal

- To ensure that the College's aims for attendance are shared regularly with staff, parents and guardians via the pastoral handbook
- To convey attendance concerns between the college and the boarding house

Heads of Year

- To monitor the attendance, levels of unauthorised absence and punctuality of students in their year group and report on the latter at regular pastoral meetings.
- To work in partnership with key staff if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- To arrange meetings with parents/guardians to discuss support and set targets for those students failing to meet attendance requirements.
- To prepare and disseminate summative 3-weekly attendance reports drawn from the SIMS Attendance Manager System to Personal Tutors.

Personal Tutor

- To monitor and discuss with their tutees their attendance, levels of unauthorised absence and punctuality on a weekly basis.
- To write to parents/guardians regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers in SIMS.

- To organise work to be sent home for students in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.
- To escalate ongoing attendance concerns to the Head of Year

Subject Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each student in their class using SIMS within the first 5 minutes of every lesson.
- Inform all staff via email in advance of any educational visits.
- Inform Personal Tutors, HoYs and Faculty Leaders of any patterns of absence to their lesson.
- Arrive promptly to start the lesson and supervise students' entry to the classroom.

House Parents

- To ensure CSA students are chaperoned to and from college each day
- To report any overnight student sickness to the Nurse by 8am.
- To report any other reason why students are late or absent from college to the Attendance Officer.

Nurse

- To authorise/not authorise sick boarding students and inform House Parents and college Attendance Officer of such decisions.

Attendance Officer

- To monitor the Attendance level of students and to contact by telephone and/or email those who are absent on a lesson by lesson basis
- To contact any parent who has not informed the College as to why their child is absent on each day of absence
- To make a judgment in conjunction with the Vice Principal and/or Nurse whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each student at the end of each day
- To record the reasons for absence given to them in SIMS.

Parents/Guardians of day students

- To telephone or email the College by 9am if their child is ill. When a student returns from a period of absence of longer than 3 days due to a sickness, a doctor's letter must be provided and a brief meeting with the Nurse may be held if appropriate.

Administration

The College uses SIMS information management system to record and monitor attendance, ensuring compliance with legal responsibilities. Staff are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register with 5 minutes of the beginning of all lessons. Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a legal record of a student's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the College vulnerable to complaints from parents or guardians and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

Unexplained Absence Policy

A Compulsory School Age (CSA) student's absence will be prioritised and the boarding house or family contacted within the first 20 minutes of non-attendance. If the whereabouts of a CSA cannot be verified within half an hour, then the Missing Student Policy will be actioned.

Attendance Officer contacts by phone and/or email the family/boarding house when a student's reason for absence is unknown.

Monitoring of Student Attendance

Attendance data will be analysed on a 3-week basis to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include students with lateness and periods of extended absence. If concerns are raised by this analysis, parent/guardian discussions will occur, either through telephone calls and/or formal letters stating the attendance of the child and that there is an issue.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, contact will be made with home asking the parent to explain the lateness or to ensure that punctuality is maintained. In rare circumstances where the College is made aware of a situation, an arrangement allowing a degree of flexibility could be agreed with the Principal.

Requests for Planned Leave

There are occasions where students need to be away from College e.g. when visiting University open days or sometimes in cases of extreme personal circumstances.

Parents are required to request leave by emailing their request to the Principal giving as much notice as possible. The Principal will consider all reasonable requests and will take into account the student's attendance and will consult with teachers before granting or denying

permission. If a request is denied and the decision is ignored, the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised' and may count against an international student's Visa retention requirements.

On their return from leave, boarding students will be checked in by accommodation staff and if they are not present the Missing Student Policy protocols will come into action.

Attendance and Visa Retention Requirements for International Students

Chelsea Independent College demands that all students have an attendance of >95%. An attendance record under 85% may not mean the student entered for exams as they are likely to fail.

UKVI regulations state that students' attendance, or lack thereof, must be reported once students have missed 10 expected contact points. Students may lose their Visa if they do not attend College.

Detailed below is an explanation of how points are accrued and show Chelsea Independent College's pastoral procedures for managing students who have attendance issues:

1 contact point = 1 full day

3 unauthorised absence missed contact points = first warning:

- Attendance officer sends a letter to parents and agents (appendix 2, page 8) about a first warning having been issued. Head of year is notified.

6 unauthorised absence missed contact points = second warning:

- Attendance officer issues second warning to student (appendix 3, page 9) and warns of consequences of further absenteeism. Vice Principal is notified.

9 unauthorised absence missed contact points = third warning:

- Attendance officer issues third warning to student, warning that UKVI will be informed and the student's attendance reported and that the visa could be revoked should 10 points be accrued.

10 unauthorised absence contact points = student reported to UKVI

The College reserves the right to invoke the process outlined above in the event that there are reasonable grounds to doubt the veracity of absences that have been authorised by a parent or guardian.

All international students are regularly made aware of the fact that their attendance is vital to the retention of their visa and to their academic success. Students must be made to understand that their visa status is not final and will be jeopardised by any absenteeism. In the worst-case scenario their visa may be revoked and students are made aware of this.

APPENDIX 1 – Absence points letter

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Unauthorised studentabsence

I am writing to inform you that [student name] has been issued with [number] absence points for the 3- week period from [DATE] to [DATE]. The reason for this is that their unauthorised absence was [number] % during this period.

Attendance is taken very seriously here at Chelsea Independent College, as academic success is clearly dependent on attending all classes. We expect students to have at least 95% attendance, and we monitor this very closely; 'absence points' are allocated when a student has missed lessons in a 3-week period without authorisation, based on the following criteria:

- 5-9.9% unauthorised absence = 1 absence point
- 10-14.9% unauthorised absence = 2 absence points
- 15% or more unauthorised absence = 3 absence points

These points remain on a student's record for the full academic year, and if attendance does not improve, more points will accrue as appropriate every 3-week period. Once a student reaches 10 absence points, they are at risk of permanent exclusion from the college.

To date, [student name] has accrued [number] absence point[s]. These have accrued as follows:

Block 1: [Date] – [Date]: [number]% unauthorised absence – **[number] absence point[s]**

We will continue to support and work with [student name] to help [him/her] make the most of [his/her] time with us, and we will keep you informed of any further attendance issues. If you have any questions please contact [student name]'s Personal Tutor, [PT name], at [PT email].

Yours sincerely,



Dershna Patel
Vice Principal

APPENDIX 2 – 3 missed contact points letter

[Date]

Dear [Student name]

RE: Unauthorised Absence

It has come to my attention that you have been absent without any communication with the College.

As per the College's Attendance Policy and your current Tier 4 Visa conditions you have missed three days of college which amounts to three contact points to date.

I would ask that you make contact with me immediately to explain your absence in more detail. If this is due to medical reasons, please ensure that you bring medical documentation with you so that I can update your attendance accordingly.

If I do not hear from you, I will discuss this with the Vice Principal to take further action.

Yours sincerely,

Natasha Ketter

Attendance Officer

cc. [Parent name]

cc. [Agent]

APPENDIX 3 – 6 missed contact points letter

[Date]

Dear [student name]

RE: Unauthorised Absence

It has come to my attention that you have been absent without any communication with the College.

As per the College's Attendance Policy and your current Tier 4 Visa conditions, you have missed six days of college which amounts to six contact points to date.

I would ask that you make contact with me immediately to explain your absence in more detail. If this is due to medical reasons, please ensure that you bring medical documentation with you so that I can update your attendance accordingly.

However, if you are unable to provide any valid explanation for your absence, your attendance will remain unauthorised and you will be reported to UKVI and your sponsorship will be withdrawn.

If I do not hear from you by XXXXX, I will discuss the matter with the Principal to take further action.

Yours sincerely,

Natasha Ketter
Attendance Officer

cc. [Parent name]

cc. [Agent]