



Clacton County High School

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations

Attendance Policy 2021-22

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Clacton County High School

Attendance Policy for Parents

Mission Statement

Clacton County High School aims to provide a caring environment where individuals develop their full potential and their achievement is celebrated. It is our expectation that all students attend school every day when the school is open.

What the Law Says

- All children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education. The school leaving age is the last Friday in June of the same academic year in which the child reaches their 16th birthday, or 17th Birthday, if born after September 1996, or 18th Birthday, if born after September 1997 (*Education Act 1996*).
- The parent/carer is legally responsible for ensuring that their child receives a suitable education. (*Education Act 1996*)
- Local Education Authorities are required by law to enforce school attendance. They usually do so through the Education Welfare Service, or as it is known now, the Attendance Compliance team.
- Failure to ensure that your child attends school, may lead to legal action being taken against the parent. This could result in **each** parent/carer receiving a fine of up to £2,500 for each time, or up to 3 months' imprisonment.
- According to the Education Act (1996), Section 444A and Section 444B, authorised personnel are able to issue penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution under Section 444 and this enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction by paying a penalty. The current penalty prescribed for each parent is £60, if paid within a 21-day period on receipt of the notice, rising to £120, if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period the Attendance Compliance team will either prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. This will be a joint decision between Essex Attendance Compliance and the school.
- In line with the current code of conduct 2017, Penalty notices may be issued where there have been at least ten unauthorised sessions of absences, during a period of ten school weeks. Attendance Compliance will also issue penalty notices for unauthorised term time holidays of 5 days (10 sessions) or more, and a penalty notice may be issued if there are 6 or more unauthorised sessions, due to holiday taken during the first two weeks of September. (Essex Code of Conduct 2017 October 1st)
- Attendance Compliance officers, can also use court proceedings to seek an Education Supervision Order or Attendance Order on the child.
- During these court proceedings, the magistrates may consider issuing a Parenting Order, which would include parents attending parenting skills sessions.
- By law, only the school can approve absence, not the parent, once the school has received a reason from the parent and in some cases, this may require medical evidence.
- The absence of a student without an established acceptable reason, or where no reason has been provided by the parent/carer, should be recorded as unauthorised.

What the Local Authority Compliance Team (Essex County Council) states

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress.

'Having a good education will help give your child the best possible start in life. If your child does not attend school, he/she will not be able to keep up with the work. Employers will want to be sure that the people they are thinking of taking on are reliable. Therefore, children who have not attended their school for no good reason are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse. They may also be drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour.'

What the DFE says as part of the reopening of schools March 2021 and updates September 2021

Attendance will be mandatory from 8th March 2021 and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil.
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.
- The ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.
- The duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education.
- Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19 September 2021 updates from DFE.

This category will be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).
- Prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19.

This category will only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above.

It will not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) sets out when students should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows:

- Students who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19.

- Students who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.
- If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- Students who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19
- Students who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- Students who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.
- As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.
- Students who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised.
- Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable students should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.
- If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then students who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as code X.
- Students who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, students with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage students to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

What CCHS says for **September 2021**

- Attendance at CCHS is a whole school responsibility and it is our expectation that children attend school every day when the school is open.
- Children are expected to attend school, arrive on time and attend all lessons.
- If your child is ill, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact the school on the first day of absence and each day after, as long as the absence continues. (*Telephone the school before 8.45am, if possible, on the 'Student Absence Line' on 01255 424266.*)
- The school will attempt to contact the parent/carer of any student whose absence has not been established by previous contact via the 'Student Absence Line'.
- When a child returns to school following a period of absence, he/she must provide the Attendance Team with written confirmation of the reasons for the absence, signed by their parent/carer, even after a telephone call. Medical evidence may be required in certain circumstances.
- If your child starts missing school, help the school to put things right. Make sure your child understands that you do not approve!
- Medical or similar appointments for your child should, wherever possible be made outside of school hours. If this is impossible, written notification must be sent into the Attendance Team, who will make arrangements for your child to sign out at the Attendance Office and provide a green 'Permission to be Out of School' slip. He/she must sign back into school at the same office, upon return. This is vital in the event of an evacuation.

~~For some students attendance in March 2020 will be difficult, for example, if they are having to self-isolate, have had a positive test result, or because they are in close contact with someone who has coronavirus (COVID 19). For these students, a bespoke programme will be discussed with parents/carers based on needs.~~

~~CCHS understands that there will be concerns for students, parents and households, who may be reluctant or anxious about returning in the spring term, in light of the Covid Pandemic. For example, this may include students who have themselves been shielding previously, but have been advised that this is no longer necessary; those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable; or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID 19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds; or for those who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes. If parents of students with significant risk factors are concerned, parents/carers need to discuss their concerns with the relevant Year Leader/pastoral team, or the attendance team and the school will provide support, but the message is equally applied and will be based on government guidance that students of compulsory school age, must be in school,~~

unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the student has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

Contacts

Attendance Contacts:

Absence Line: - 01255 424266

Miss E Clay - Attendance Officer

Miss N Nundy- Attendance Administrator

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

- Parents or carers are expected to phone the school on the first day of their child's absence on the Student Absence Line 01255 424266.
- In cases where a student's attendance rate falls and parents are involved in a school Attendance *support* Meeting (SAM) or school Attendance Meeting/phone call (SAMP), parents are expected to provide medical evidence in order for the school to authorise absences. If this is not provided, absences are unauthorised, which could lead to further attendance actions.
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed, in order to help identify patterns, set targets and support students.
- Our Attendance Team, together with Year Leaders/Pastoral Leaders, will monitor and review these targets on a regular basis.
- Students who are absent through sickness for a long period of time and have valid medical evidence, may have work sent home for them and will be re-integrated back into school on their return. Please contact the **Year Manager** to organise this.
- Pastoral Hub staff/Year Leaders will, when appropriate, liaise with outside agencies – Education Psychology Service, Social Care and any others – who may serve to support and assist students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- **Year Managers** meet weekly with the Attendance Officers, in order to identify and support those students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- The Attendance Officer may visit/contact parents, to support them in trying to improve attendance when required.
- Year Leader/Attendance Officer may speak with students without informing parents/carers, who are experiencing difficulties attending school, during the school day, as part of a SAP (school Attendance Plan), to create a support plan in order to improve attendance.
- Attendance Solutions Essex Ltd, are a private company used by the school to help raise attainment. They, and/or the Attendance Officer, will intervene if no improvement is made following a SAP and will run a SAM, a SAMP, carry out home visits and have the legal power to issue Penalty Notices for Essex County Council.
- The school also use the Local Authority Education Compliance team for certain cases and they may contact parents/carers, and/or make home visits.
- The Attendance Compliance Team, or Attendance Solutions Essex Ltd, in conjunction with the school, may on selected days, visit the homes of students when no reason has been provided to

the school for a child's absence.

- Punctuality is regarded as very important and if a student arrives at school after the registers close at 9am, they can be marked as an unauthorised late, which is treated the same as an unauthorised absence. Students that are continually late may be referred to the Local Authority Compliance team.
- Ultimately, the Local Authority may take parents to court for the non-attendance of their children at school.

Punctuality

Punctuality is key and compulsory; students must be at their bases at the beginning of registration or in assembly and in classrooms ready to learn at the beginning of their lessons.

- If students are late to form between 8.45am -8.50am, students will be given a 'late' on the register and then logged as a C2 on Class Charts.
- Any student arriving more than 5 minutes late to form or lessons will be issued with a C3. The students will serve a C3 in the Hall the next day. There will be some students who have legitimate reasons for being late to form or other lessons throughout the day and these students need to sign in at the attendance office if at the beginning of the day and will be given a green slip to excuse their lateness. No sanctions will result if the lateness has been corroborated by parents/medical slips/pastoral team. If students arrive with a green slip and it has been validated, a present mark is put into the register.
- Any student who arrives after 9.00am, should go to Attendance first to collect a green slip and the attendance team will tick whether the lateness is genuine on the green slip and class teacher simply marks them present when they arrive. If it is not, the student will be issued with a C3 by the attendance team. **Any student that does not sign in with attendance after 9.00am will be sanctioned with a C380 and issued with this by the end of the day by the attendance team.**
- Lates to form and lessons are monitored and if students are late for more than 3 times in a week, students will receive a C3 after school on a Tuesday.
- If students don't turn up for lessons but are in school, students will be deemed as truanting and a RESET will be set for the following day.

DAILY: Lessons 1-4 All students should arrive promptly and if students do not, a C2 will be issued. If, there have been no further consequences, a C2 will be served at the end of the lesson. If further behaviour concerns occur the C2 for being late will be upgraded as per the BFL.

Persistent Absence Plan

- Students with persistent absence, will be intervened through a variety of the above actions and follow the flowchart at the end of this document, but there will be targeted intervention depending on what the school knows about these students, in terms of their previous attendance and family circumstances. Some of the students who are regular non-attenders each year, will not start at the beginning of this flowchart, but will often be contacted early in the year by the attendance team and meetings will be set up with parents. Each half term, the school will target a number of students who are considered to be in danger of being in the 'persistent absence category'. Each week form tutors and Year Leaders/Attendance officer will target these students

through mentoring. For example, in Half Term 6, the focus will start on those between 28-32 sessions of absence, as the threshold for Persistent Absence (PA) at the end of the school year is 37 sessions.

Attendance Rewards

- Students will be provided with termly prizes, alongside the PROUD classroom reward system that is new September 2020 and there will also be recognition for those students who have made significant improvements from one term to the next.
- Students with 100% attendance for each term will be entered on a roll of honour, to be published in the school's Weekly News and will also be celebrated in year assemblies.
- Students with 100% attendance for the year will be entered on a roll of honour, to be published in the first newsletter of the following academic year.
- Each week there is a draw from all 100% attendees, picked at random, for a £5 reward.
- There is also a chance to win the Golden Ticket each week, whereby a student is able to 'jump the queue' to go to the front, in Clouds, with a friend.
- The form group within each year group, with the highest number of students with 100% attendance for each month, will receive a 'hamper' reward.
- The Attendance Officer will present monthly attendance percentages for each form and publish league tables.
- Alongside the Student Attendance Prize, the Attendance team also provide regular PROUD points for 100% attendance each week, through a draw system. (One person from each form will receive these points.)

Monitoring Attendance

- The Form Tutor will discuss any developing attendance problems with the student.
- The Form Tutor will monitor any developing attendance situations and discuss the issues with the Pastoral Team/Attendance team.
- The Attendance Officer will provide percentage attendance information to Form Tutors and the Pastoral Team on a weekly basis, with identification of students who are likely to fall into the 'Persistent Absentees' category. There will be weekly mentoring of these students throughout the year.
- The Attendance Manager will discuss strategies with Form Tutors and the Pastoral Hub to support students with attendance difficulties, with a particular focus on those who are likely to be in the 'Persistent Absentees' category.
- If appropriate, letters, visits, or phone calls, will be made to the parents/carers of students who are experiencing attendance difficulties, informing them of the attendance record of their child.
- A school Attendance Plan may be discussed with the student in a meeting.
- A school Attendance Meeting (SAM)/(SAMP) with Attendance Solutions and Attendance Officers may be arranged.

- When a student is absent from school and parents have not contacted the school Sick Line, a text message will automatically be generated to alert parents/carers. The text will request parents to contact the school urgently regarding their child's absence.
- Where parents/carers have not contacted the school within 5 days of a student's absence, the Local Authority will be informed, who may decide to take further action.

Children Missing from Education, and Deletions from Roll

If a child is absent from school without reason and we are unable to contact parents, or establish your child's whereabouts, the school will contact the police after 5 days and they will carry out checks. After 10 days, the Local Authority will be informed – this is called a 'Child Missing from Education' (CME). The Local Authority will then carry out checks, including with the Police and Social Care where appropriate, to determine the wellbeing and safety of the child. In certain circumstances, the school may remove the child's name from the roll, for example, if the child is enrolled with another school or if the local authority has no contact with either a parent or guardian within 10 days. The school will always attempt to make contact prior to this happening and will act only within the legal guidelines set out regarding these processes. It is therefore important that parents inform the school if they know that their child will not be returning to the school and provide the school with details such as a new address, the name of the child's new school, the date of the move and so on.

Leave of Absence

- Leave of absence should only be taken in term time in 'exceptional circumstances', as outlined by the DfE and the Attendance Compliance team, on behalf of Essex Local Authority, e.g. where a parent is classed as Forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting.
- In exceptional circumstances and if it is absolutely necessary to take your child out of school during term time, parents/carers must request a 'Leave of Absence Form' from the school.
- A request must be made in advance using the school's application form, which can be obtained from the Attendance Office. When completed and returned to the school, it should be accompanied by a letter of explanation.
- Where the school/head of school considers that the application has not justified 'Exceptional Circumstances', approval will not be given. This is a school decision.
- If the holiday is then taken with disregard to the outcome of the application, the school may seek to apply for a Penalty Notice in accordance with Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2004.

Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. Unacceptable reasons for absence may include:

- Visiting relatives
- Haircuts
- Shopping
- Transport difficulties
- Birthdays
- Sleeping late
- Looking after siblings
- Minding the house
- Truancy
- Unapproved holidays
- Arriving at school too late to get a mark

Note: the school authorises or does not authorise any absence – not the parent/carer. An absence remains unauthorised, until the school receives information about the reasons for the absence and a decision is made as to whether this is authorised.

How Non-Attendance Can Affect Your Child's Education

If you raise a child's attendance, you raise their academic chances:

- 90% attendance = half a day missed every week.
- One school year at 90% attendance = four whole weeks of lessons missed.
- 90% attendance over five years of secondary school = half a school year *missed!!*

What is the impact?

- Research suggests that seventeen *missed school days a year* = a GCSE grade DROP in achievement.
- If your child's attendance improves by 1%, they will see a 5% improvement in attainment.
- The greater the attendance, the greater the achievement.

ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART

