



CHANNING SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

**This policy applies to the whole School including
the EYFS**

Updated	Review Date	Version
July 2023	September 2024	23.1

Reviewed by: Sheila Pyke (Senior School Secretary) and Kamara Bodell (Junior School Secretary)

Approved by: Freddie Meier (Deputy Head), Dina Hamalis (Head of the Junior School) and Lindsey Hughes (Headmistress)

Signed by: Board of Governors

Attendance Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures including Children Absent from Education regulations and the Admissions Policy

Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to realise their full potential.

At Channing, we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

At Channing, we aim to provide exceptional and inspirational teaching across a broad and intellectually stimulating environment and to offer excellent pastoral care in a school that is safe, healthy, secure and environmentally aware.

At Channing, we value all pupils and we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance to try to resolve any difficulties or issues.

Legal Framework

Channing recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement and takes into account our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

School attendance management at Channing is based on a wide range of principles such as their right to full-time and efficient education and their specific needs and barriers to attendance.

This policy is applicable to every pupil of compulsory school age. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 18.

Under the Education Acts, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 requires schools to take an

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attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Timings at which attendance registers are taken at Channing are as follow:

Junior School

Morning

8:30 to 9:00

Afternoon

Early Years and KS1 - 12:30 to 13:00

KS2 - 13:30 to 14:00

Senior School

Morning

8:25 to 8:55

Afternoon

13:40 to 14:10

Reporting, Requesting and Categorising Absences

REPORTING AND REQUESTING ABSENCE

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the Headmistress, Heads of Year or Head of the Junior School and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

For unexpected absences e.g. through illness, parents should advise the School by telephone for the Junior School and by email for the Senior School on the first day of absence and provide an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note or email from the parent/carer ideally before 8:30, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

The contact details for reporting absences are as follow:

Junior School

jsoffice@channing.co.uk

020 8342 9862

Senior School

Head of Year, cc to absences@channing.co.uk

020 8340 2328

Parents wishing to take their child out of school for one day or more during term time, including for attendance at family events or to go on holiday, must send a written request to the Headmistress or the Head of the Junior School before holiday arrangements are made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being

categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed absence;
- Age of the pupil;
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record;
- Proximity of internal and public examinations;
- Pupil's ability to catch up the work missed;
- Pupil's educational needs;
- General welfare of the pupil;
- Circumstances of the request;
- Purpose of the leave;
- Previous term time absences;
- When the request was made.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- The expected date of return;
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur;
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family does not return as expected.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the School's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child could potentially lose their place at the School.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil is still absent, the absence will be **unauthorised**. In such cases the School may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Only in **exceptional circumstances** will an absence of more than 10 school days be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as minority ethnic pupils returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the absence needs to be taken during term time.

At Channing, we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling Sixth Formers to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Good and prompt attendance is expected at morning and afternoon registration not only throughout the working week but also during the course of the academic year. In the Sixth Form, requests to attend University Open Days must be made in writing to the Head of Sixth Form and are limited to 2 per year.

The School has nominated Freddie Meier (Deputy Head) for the Senior School and Dina Hamalis (Head of the Junior School) for the Junior School for the strategic approach to attendance in School. They can be contacted on 020 8340 2328 and 020 8342 9862 respectively.

CATEGORISING AUTHORISED ABSENCES

Illness (code I): See reporting procedure above. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, etc.

Medical/Dental Appointment (code M): Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the School day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should use the reporting procedure above and may be asked to show the appointment card to school. A minimum notice period of 48 hours should be given to the School, unless this is an emergency appointment.

Leave of absence granted by the School (code C): This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or part-time timetable.

Excluded but no alternative provision made (code E): Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence.

Leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the School (code H): Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year. However, up to 10 school days leave in any one school year **may** be granted at the discretion of the Headmistress or Head of the Junior School. Requests for absence should be made using the procedure above.

Religious Observance (code R): Channing acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body.

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. All parents are contacted by the Headmistress in the beginning of the year to remind them of these arrangements.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the School parents are asked to limit absences due to religious observances/festivals and the Headmistress and the Head of the Junior School reserves the right to stop authorising further absences if deemed necessary.

Study Leave (code S): Study leave may be granted for Year 10, 11 and Sixth Form pupils approaching examinations. The School will offer in-school study programmes during this period.

Interview at another educational establishment or prospective employers (code J): This may include Sixth Formers attending university Open Days or students attending interview at other schools or colleges.

Educational visit or trip (code V): This code will be used when a pupil attends an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the School or a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the School.

Founders' Day and Carol Concert: All pupils and staff are expected to attend both these School occasions. The Founders' Day Holiday on the following Monday will be recorded as authorised (code C). Requests for absence from either event must be made to the Headmistress in writing at least 3 weeks in advance.

LATENESS AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

Late Arrival before the register is closed (code L): Registration begins at 8.30am at the Junior School and at 8:25am at the Senior School. Registers are opened for 30 minutes and pupils are expected to arrive at school before registration. Pupils arriving during the registration period will be recorded as late.

Absent without authorisation (code O): The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil arrives after the close of registers and will count as an absence for that school session.

Upon arriving after the closing of the registration, pupils must immediately report to the School Office or sign the Late Book, for Senior School pupils, to ensure that the School can be responsible for their health and safety.

Senior School: Attendance will be monitored through the weekly attendance statistics that are issued to Heads of Year and the Deputy Head. Repeated lateness will be investigated by the Head of Year, who may liaise with the Deputy Head depending on the reason for the repeated lateness. Parents may be contacted to ensure a resolution. Other options include pastoral support and sanctions as appropriate.

Junior School: The pupil's Form Teacher and Head of Key Stage monitor absences and contact parents as appropriate.

The School Secretaries of the Junior and Senior School monitor this policy regularly. It is reviewed at least annually. 5

Some examples of when absence will be recorded as unauthorised are as follows:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday;
- Shopping for uniforms;
- Having their hair cut;
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes;
- "Couldn't get up";
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school;
- Holidays taken without the authorisation from the School.

Deletion from the Admissions Register, Archiving and Records Amendment

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age;
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed;
- Death of a pupil;
- Transfer between schools;
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system;
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil;
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age;
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team);
- Left the school but not known where they have gone after both the School and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.

Attendance reports are legal records that are archived on the Schoolbase platform and kept for at least three years from the last date of entry in line with *Working together to improve school attendance 2022* guidance. An attendance report can be produced upon request for each pupil enrolled or recently enrolled at the School. The pupils are automatically deleted from the Attendance registers when deletion occurs from the Admissions Register.

Additionally, as the attendance register is a record of the pupils presence at the time it is taken, the register will only be amended by a trained member of staff when the reason for absence could not be established at the time it was taken and subsequently becomes necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, the member of staff responsible for this amendment will keep the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment is made, their name and job title.

Roles and Responsibilities

The School Secretaries of the Junior and Senior School monitor this policy regularly. It is reviewed at least annually. 6

Channing believes that improving School attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the School staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents;
- Annually review the School's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters;
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with;
- Monitor the School's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings;
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance;
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site;
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

The Senior Management Team in the Junior School/ Senior Pastoral Management Team in the Senior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents;
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents;
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues, especially School Secretaries, Heads of Year and Form Tutors, Heads of Key Stages and Form Teachers;
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with;
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource;
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a termly basis to the lead governor for attendance;
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including

- those who are educated off-site are implemented;
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families;
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Form Tutors and Heads of Years for the Senior School/ Form Teachers and Heads of Key Stage for the Junior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents;
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents;
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, (England, 2006) and other attendance related legislation;
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site;
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions;
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

Parents will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there;
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress;
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment;
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations;
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible;
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours;
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties;
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance;
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home;
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before;

- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family;
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, send a written leave request to the Headmistress or Head of the Junior School in advance of booking the holiday.

Absences Management and Using Attendance Data

At Senior School, an absence report is sent to the Headmistress, members of Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Year and saved in the Staff Shared Area every day by 10:30. At Junior School an absence report is sent every day by 10:30 to the Head of the Junior School and Senior Management Team.

School Secretaries will make initial contact with parents if, by 10:30 at the latest, no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence. If no contact can be made, this will subsequently be chased-up by Heads of Year at Senior School and Form teachers at Junior School. Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session, after which such an absence will be coded O.

Patterns of pupils' attendance will otherwise be monitored on a termly basis by Heads of Year at Senior School and Heads of Key Stage at Junior School.

At the Senior School any immediate concern will be shared with the Deputy Head and Heads of Year through the weekly attendance statistics that are issued to them. At the Junior School any immediate concern will be discussed with the Deputy Head and Heads of Key Stage through the weekly attendance statistics that are issued to them.

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment. Channing will share attendance data with the Department for Education as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with Data Protection.

Support Systems

The School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a pupil's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the School identify any additional support that may be required.

Channing also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain

good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational, physical or mental health needs, migrants, refugees and looked after children.

The School will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils;
- Attendance panels;
- Parenting contracts;
- Referrals to support agencies;
- Peer Mentors;
- Friendship groups;
- PSHE;
- Reward systems;
- Time limited part-time timetables;
- Additional learning support;
- Behaviour support;
- Reintegration support packages.

Support offered to families will be child centered, planned and agreed with both parents and pupils.

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absences occur, the Governing Body will consider the use of legal sanctions.