



Attendance Policy

May 2025

Reviewed: May 2025
Next review: September 2026

ABSENCE AND REGISTRATION

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents have enrolled their child at Cokethorpe School, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. National statistics for both the independent and maintained sector show that pupils with the highest attainment at the age of 11 and 16 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment.

As a consequence and in reference to “Working together to improve school attendance 2024” published by the DfE Cokethorpe School takes attendance seriously and the Attendance Champion is Jonathan Stevens (Deputy Headmaster). The Attendance Champion can be contacted by phone on 01993 703921 or via email: jcs@cokethorpe.org

Registration

All pupils are registered twice a day at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Tutors record presence and absence via the iSAMS system. Registrations are legal requirements and must be treated as such. Prep School children leaving at 4.00pm are marked accordingly in the registers.

The school day begins at 8.40am when registration will be taken. Registration opens at 8.40am each morning and closes at 9am after which a child will be marked as absent until they sign in. Late sign in takes place in the Reprographics room for the Senior School and the Prep School Office for the Prep School. Attendance is monitored by our Attendance Officer (Mrs Sam Wadeson).

Registers are kept electronically and information is retained for six years from the date the data was entered.

Notification of Absence

If a pupil is away from School, parents are required to phone 01993 703921 or email seniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or juniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or contact the child's tutor directly to report their son or daughter's absence as early as possible, but notification must be received by 8.30am. In that communication parents must state the name and tutor group of the child as well as the reason for absence. If parents know that their child will be away for more than one day they can state this in one message, otherwise please contact the School each day that he or she is absent.

A list of all absent Senior School pupils is emailed to Senior School staff each day and a list of absent Prep School pupils is sent to the Head of Prep School daily.

In cases of extended absence, the School will provide work for the pupil to do at home whenever appropriate through liaison with parents.

Dealing with Absence

The School Attendance Officer will telephone if a pupil has not registered and no email or telephone call has been received. In their efforts to make contact they will make use of all contact information shown on our records. If it is not possible to make contact then the Attendance Champion will be informed. Parents must ensure that the School is made aware of any changes of address, email addresses and

telephone number. If the absence remains unexplained it will be marked as unauthorised and becomes a permanent part of the pupil's School record. Where absence is recorded as unexplained the correct code will be inputted as soon as it is ascertained and no later than five working days after the absence.

If a child is missing education through unauthorised or unexplained absence for a continuous period of ten school days, then this becomes a safeguarding concern. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will inform the Local Authority.

The School will provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs.

Promoting good attendance

We promote good attendance by using a combination of strategies that address various aspects of school life. These include:

1. **Engaging Curriculum:** We ensure that the curriculum is interesting and relevant to pupils' lives and future goals. When pupils find the material engaging, they're more likely to attend.
2. **Support:** We provide support for pupils facing challenges that might affect their attendance, such as counselling, support from tutor, or peer mentoring.
3. **Parental Involvement:** We encourage parents to be involved in their children's education and attendance. Regular communication between the school and parents can help address attendance issues early.
4. **Policy:** We have a clear attendance policy that is communicated to pupils and parents.
5. **Safe and Welcoming Environment:** We create a school environment that is safe and welcoming recognising that pupils are more likely to attend if they feel secure and valued.
6. **Monitoring and Intervention:** We regularly monitor attendance and intervene when patterns of absenteeism are detected.
7. **Extracurricular Activities:** We offer a variety of extracurricular activities that interest pupils. These can motivate pupils to attend school regularly to participate in these activities.
8. **Lesson attendance:** We register individual lessons in order to gain and communicate a clear awareness of the impact absence has on pupil performance.

A half termly review of attendance patterns forms part of the agenda in Housemaster and Housemistress meetings with a view to identifying and addressing particular trends.

In the event of concerns raised about the level of attendance of a particular pupil then the following actions will be taken:

- 1 3 days within a half term - Tutor to contact home
- 2 5 days within a half term – Housemaster or Housemistress to contact home and if appropriate, meeting to put in place strategies to improve attendance
- 3 10 days within a half term – Attendance champion to contact home and if appropriate, meeting to put in place strategies to improve attendance

Any of the above contacts may result in the school encouraging engagement with external agencies.

Additional needs

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance. It will also work with parents, and, where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.

Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The above interventions are superseded by the following thresholds:

- 10 days continuous unauthorised absence will result in a report being made by the Admissions Team to Oxfordshire County Council
- 15 days cumulative absence over the course of an academic year will result in a report being made to Oxfordshire County Council

Late Arrivals and Temporary Absence

If a pupil arrives late to School or misses afternoon registration for any reason, he or she should report in person to the Reprographics Office or Prep School Office to sign the late register. Parents are strongly encouraged to make any appointments (eg dentist, doctors, music exams) out of School hours but if this is not possible should email seniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or juniorattendance@cokethorpe.org. The register can be updated in advance. Before leaving the School site it is the responsibility of the pupil to sign out at the Reprographics Office having obtained a permission slip from their Housemaster or Housemistress. Prep School children go to the Prep School Office where they are signed out.

Long Term Absence

Long term absences, such as holidays during term time, are actively discouraged and should always be preceded by a letter or email from parents to the Housemaster or Housemistress requesting permission for their child to be away from School.

Occasionally, parents may want to ask permission to take their child out of School for an important event or family occasion. Any application for Leave of Absence is considered on an individual basis, with reasons for the request, the effect on the continuity of the child's learning, and his/her overall attendance taken into account. Parents are asked not to request absence for family holidays unless there is strong reason to do so (the increased cost of a family holiday during the school holidays is not a valid reason). Please make every effort to contact us well in advance where possible, especially before any holiday arrangements have been confirmed. All requests for Leave or Absence should be sent, with a brief letter or email of explanation, to the Housemaster or Housemistress.

If a Child Becomes Unwell

If a child is unwell during the day, they will be taken to our School Medical Centre. The School Nurse will contact their parents if the child needs to be collected. The child's parents must phone or email the School if the pupil is still unwell the next day.