

Attendance Policy

The school takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and on time. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential in order for pupils to maximise their chances of success.

It is our aim that pupils should achieve 100% attendance, that punctuality is at a high level and that the number of unauthorised absences be kept to the absolute minimum.

A high level of attendance and punctuality is essential if pupils are to benefit from the educational opportunities available to them, maintain progress and continuity in their learning and achieve their full potential. Good attendance and punctuality help prepare pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and for the work place.

Accordingly the school will:

1. Register all pupils during each school session in accordance with the law, noting both authorised and unauthorised absence. Subject teachers will register their classes at the start of each lesson.
2. Monitor regularly the pattern of attendance and absence of all pupils and work closely with pupils, parents, the Educational Welfare Officer and other agencies in cases of unsatisfactory attendance.
3. Try to ensure that the curriculum is stimulating, exciting and appropriate so that pupils wish to attend school regularly. Where any difficulties over attendance arise for an individual pupil, the pastoral staff will review the pupil's curriculum in order to ensure that it meets these criteria.
4. Always try to be flexible and constructive in dealing with pupils who have attendance problems over a long period, in order to ensure their return to regular full-time attendance.
5. Monitor each day the punctuality of pupils and take appropriate action in the case of those who show a pattern of late arrival at school.

School Procedures

- Form Tutors register their tutor groups each morning at 8:40am and then during afternoon tutor time at 1.00pm for KS4/5 or 1.40pm for KS3.
- All staff are expected to take a register each lesson coding either present or absent. Any students who are not in a lesson but have been previously marked present during that day will be reported to the office and if necessary a phone call made to home.
- Parents are asked to telephone school as soon as possible in the morning to notify us of a child's absence.
- Authorised absence, e.g. illness, must be supported by a letter or a phone call from the parents explaining the reason for the absence. Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours.
- Pupils who wish to leave the premises during the school day will be expected to bring a letter from their parents notifying the Head of Year of the reason - this will need to be signed by the Head of Year before they can leave the school.
- Pupils arriving at school after registration should sign in at the Office giving a reason for their lateness.
- If parents fail to make contact providing a reason for absence, school will endeavour to contact them using SIMs Intouch.
- A series of graded letters is available for use by HOY to keep parents informed about attendance issues and encourage good attendance.
- A first day contact system is used in the school to help promote good attendance and to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.
- Where necessary, the school will co-operate with officers of the Local Education Authority in the prosecution of parents who fail to send their children to school.

Leave of absence during term time

- Holidays must not be taken during term time. The Government has recently made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013. The amendment states Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should apply to the Headteacher. The exceptional reason should be outlined in detail and evidenced. Wanting to take advantage of off-peak holiday prices is not an exceptional circumstance.
- Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absence for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored. Parents will also be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Monitoring attendance

- Our Education Welfare Officer will meet with Heads of Year on a regular basis to review attendance and for persistent attendance concerns to be referred.
- Attendance panels will be carried out in school termly to discuss strategies with parents to improve attendance.
- Heads of Year and the Behaviour and Safety Lead will have a formal termly meeting to review individual cases. At this meeting, future strategies will be developed.
- Pupils will be rewarded for excellent attendance via the school's rewards system every half term.
- School tracking and reports will show your child's level of attendance and punctuality record. We will clearly indicate if it is a cause for concern.
- Attendance will be celebrated through our newsletter and at our annual awards ceremonies.
- Governors Teaching and Learning Committee will receive reports on attendance.

Approved and ratified by the governing body 12 December 2019

Appendix

How parents can work to encourage excellent attendance

Illness

We understand that on occasions students may have to miss school due to ill health. We ask that parents:

Only keep students off school when it is absolutely necessary.

Contact school by telephone on 01244981600 on the first day of absence by 8.30am indicating expected date of return.

4) In cases of persistent or prolonged absence school may require medical evidence e.g. doctors note to explain the absence.

Medical appointments

Medical/dental appointments should be made out of school hours to prevent disruption to learning. Where this is not possible please write to your son/daughter's form tutor with the appropriate evidence e.g. letter / appointment card.

Other requests for absences

Requests for absence for engagements resulting from personal sporting or other commitments/interests should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered individually taking into account the impact the absence will have on their progress.

Religious observation

Any requests should be made in writing in advance to the Headteacher.

Unauthorised Absence

In addition to holidays taken in term time, penalty fines can also be issued to parent/carers of students who have a series of 10 or more unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

Good punctuality is also essential for students' progress. Students who are late for school miss learning and develop bad habits resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work. Students who are late for school will receive a detention. If their lateness becomes habitual we will ask parents to attend meeting to develop a support plan. We understand that school buses are sometimes late. This will be taken into consideration when issuing punishments.