

Policy: **Attendance**



Approved: **17th September 2019 (FGB)**

Introduction

Good attendance at school is essential for the welfare and progress of students. The College has developed a system to record and monitor pupil attendance and strategies designed to improve attendance. The College works in partnership with the Educational Welfare Service to address attendance issues and makes use of other support services such as a parent support advisor.

It is the policy of our College to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful career. Our College will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

Our College will give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be used whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the College

Pupil Registration

The College is required to maintain two registers:

- an admission register (known as the school roll and containing a list of all students at the College)
- an attendance register

The Principal is required to ensure that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each student, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the student is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school. The College uses attendance and absence codes agreed with the Local Authority.

Authorised or unauthorised absence

Authorised absence is absence with permission from the Principal or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory



explanation has been provided (e.g. illness).

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the Principal or other authorised representative of the school. This includes unexplained or unjustified absences. The categories of authorised and unauthorised absence are explained as follows:

Authorised absence

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents

Unauthorised absence

- Any type of shopping
- Looking after siblings or unwell parents
- Minding the house
- Birthdays
- Resting after a late night
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Holidays (without the agreement of the Principal)

Parents/carers have the responsibility for ensuring that registered students of compulsory school age attend school regularly. We will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a student is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the College community and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive regular reminders about Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

Information will be made available to parents/carers and students informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence will promote the importance of full attendance. Regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by Senior Managers and the College governors will take place.

Attendance will be an important feature of the College Improvement Plan.

College Procedures

This element of the policy is developed by College staff so that there is a sense of ownership and responsibility which will ensure maximum engagement in promoting attendance.

The College operates an electronic system of registration, which enables trends in attendance and absence to be monitored. The data collected is shared with the designated Educational Welfare Officers.

We ask parents/carers:

- to notify us in advance of known absences;
- to contact the College by telephone/e-mail on the first day of absence and to explain the



absence with a note when the pupil returns to school.

The College:

- publish clear start and finishing times of registration
- provide guidance to staff on the accurate completion of registers
- Stress the importance of punctuality and the response to lateness
- Promote first day contact between parents and College
- Provide clear guidance on authorised and unauthorised absence
- Develop referral routes with roles and responsibilities for students with emerging attendance problems
- Provide consistent reward/celebration schemes to acknowledge good or improving attendance
- Engage in the target setting process in partnership with the Education Welfare Service
- Inform parents if their child is in danger of becoming Persistently Absent or is Persistently Absent and report these figures to the EWS as required
- Monitor progress towards targets
- Provide governors with information relating to specific pieces of work eg: truancy sweeps, prosecutions and related legal action
- Work with other agencies i.e: Education Welfare Officers, Connexions personal advisors and alert the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) when a pupil's attendance causes concern
- Notify the EWO if a pupil is, or is likely to be, away from school due to medical needs for more than 10 working days
- Have a named person (Head of House for the student) responsible for dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs
- Ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs are kept informed about school social events, are able to participate, for example, in homework clubs, study support and other activities
- Encourage and facilitate liaison with peers, for example, through visits and videos
- Supply the appropriate education provider with information about a pupil's capabilities, educational progress, and programmes of work
- Be active in the monitoring of progress and in the reintegration into school, liaising with other agencies, as necessary
- Include attendance information in the College documentation e.g.: the prospectus, reports, home/school agreement
- Record absence figures according to DfES regulations and submit an annual return indicating the number of half days missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to maintain high standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole College community.

Punctuality - Encouraging Student Punctuality

Understanding the importance of being on time: Students who are always on time are the students who earn the best grades, win scholarships, and get into the top universities. In the working world, employees who are consistently on time are more likely to be considered for promotions. Encouraging good punctuality gets students into the habit of doing things on time!

Students are expected to arrive at College in good time and to be in their tutor room ready for registration at 8.50am. If they arrive after this but before 8.55am (second bell) the tutor will record "L" on the register. The student will spend however long they were late with their tutor at break time. For example a student arriving at 8.54am will spend 4 minutes with their tutor at first break. To help with intervention during the detention explore the reasons behind the lateness and offer any advice or strategies that may be needed. If the student does not attend the break time detention, the tutor



will record this as a C1 and inform both the student and Head of House. The tutor will enforce a 20 minute detention. If the student fails to attend the detention, the HOH will record a C2 and a lunchtime detention will be issued with HOH.

For students arriving between 8.55am and 9.00am. They will register in **Room 65 or on the gate** with the Duty Leader for that day and be given a mark in the late register (the attendance officer monitors this and uses colour coding to highlight repeat offenders and issues a C1). Any late students will be expected to find the **duty leaders** at break time for a minimum of a 5 minute detention. If they do not attend this they will lose 25 mins of their lunchtime on duty with the leader on that day. If they do not attend this detention a C3 will be recorded and an SLT detention will be issued. Parents will also be contacted.

For students arriving after 9.00am. They will register at the **front office**. Tutors should not register them but send them to the Front Office. This late will be recorded as "U". The parent will be contacted by the attendance officer and the lateness recorded on SIMS as a C2. The student will be informed that they have the responsibility to be on time and if three late marks occur in a half term they will attend and SLT after college detention. The HOH will be aware of this lateness on their SIMS home page.

Students who are **late on 3 occasions** will be given an SLT detention. The HOH Admin Assistant will issue the 'Late Detention' list each Monday and send an email to HOH and tutors for checking.

It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

A register is also taken at the start of all subject lessons by the subject teacher, and any unexplained absences reported back to the school office. If a student is late to the lesson this will be recorded on the register.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action.

Attendance Targets

The College sets annual targets for student attendance. The targets are monitored in partnership with the Educational Welfare Service and governors.

The attendance target for the College for 2018/19 was set at achieving 95.4%.



ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES- an integral part of Safeguarding at Sidmouth College

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Reporting Absence

Attendance is checked on a daily basis. If a student is absent without a given reason the college (Attendance Coordinator) calls the parents/carers. Parents can inform the college of absence in 3 ways;

1. Send a note in the student planner
2. Call the college **01395 514823**, select the option to report an absence and leave a message
3. Call the college **01395 514823**, select the option to report an absence and speak to our attendance coordinator

Where there are concerns

If a student's absence falls below 97% the college will be seeking ways to support an improvement. The Attendance Coordinator meets H of H weekly to discuss attendance issues and any requests for absence.

- **Stage 1 Personal Tutorial**

Letter 1 sent if required. The tutor discusses reasons for absence with the student and suggests strategies for improvement.

- **Stage 2 Attendance Coordinator involvement**

Letter 2 sent if required. Parents will be informed by letter. A response is requested from home.

- **Stage 3 Parental interview with HoH, Attendance Coordinator and Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)**

Letter 3 sent. Parents are invited to meet the Attendance Coordinator or Head of House and Educational Welfare Officer (Devon County) to discuss the problem and see if the college can support an improvement in attendance. The EWO makes contact by official letter or telephone and an appointment is made to meet the student with the parent and Head of House/Attendance Coordinator in college

- **Stage 4 Legal Sanctions**



The EWO exercises the LEA's obligation to enforce legal sanctions.

