ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

THIS POLICY LINKS WITH:

- **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY**
- **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME & ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**
- **EXCLUSION POLICY**
- **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**
- **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Date of Latest Review:	September 2023
Next Review Date:	September 2024
Policy Available for Staff at:	Website
Policy Available for Parents at:	Website
Headteacher:	Ms M Roberts

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are consistently applied

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality.

The *DfE* Working together to improve school attendance guidance 2022 states that '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 decide to have their child registered at 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.

The guidance also states that it 'is essential for students to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS4, students not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4'

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- [The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)](#)
- [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Deputy Headteacher

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

3.4   The Inclusion Manager

The Inclusion Manager is responsible for

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- Deliver targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Leading the Inclusion team on attendance issues and interventions
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Ensuring that all attendance and punctuality concerns and interventions are recorded on CPOMS

3.5 The Attendance Officer

- Will monitor the school absence line and update the register accordingly
- Make first day contact with the parents or carers of absent students
- Meet regularly with the Inclusion Manager and Deputy Headteacher to monitor individual attendance concerns and patterns
- Update and amend the school register to reflect the correct code
- Monitors punctuality to school and issue the relevant intervention and sanctions
- Ensure that all attendance and punctuality concerns are passed onto Heads of Year and recorded on CPOMS

3.6 Pastoral Leaders

- Monitor individual students, year group attendance and attendance of key groups
- Monitor student's attendance that falls below 96%
- Respond to interventions as discussed at Inclusion meetings, in a timely manner
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Use tutor briefings to monitor student attendance with form tutors
- Ensure that all attendance and punctuality concerns and interventions are recorded on CPOMS

3.7 Form tutors

The register is a legal document and the Education Regulations 2016 apply

- Are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis on the school's information management system, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- Should refer students to their Head of Year if a problem with attendance and/or punctuality persists
- Will support the Head of Year with attendance and punctuality interventions as necessary
- Will communicate information to the PIP regarding planned absences from school, eg medical appointments
- Ensure that all attendance and punctuality concerns and interventions are recorded on CPOMS

3.8 Class teachers

The register is a legal document and the Education Regulations 2016 apply

- Are responsible for recording lesson attendance on the school's information management system, using the correct codes
- Should inform the PIP immediately if a student is unaccounted for
- To inform Head of Year if patterns of absence are a concern
- Apply sanctions in accordance with the behaviour policy to students who arrive late to lessons without a note of explanation

3.9 Parents

- Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.10 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry

- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment

- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am; students must be in their form room or assembly by this time. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school's absence line (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment:

- Parents can report medical absences on the school absence line
- Parents can notify the form tutor via the student's planner

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

• Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

• After the register has closed at 9.10am students will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Punctuality procedures:

- The attendance officer and Inclusion Assistant will monitor punctuality to school
- The Inclusion Assistant will issue a next day detention to students who have 3 late marks.
- students who have 3 next day detentions for lateness to school will be required to attend a Friday night detention, a letter will be sent home by the Deputy Headteacher, students will be notified via their planner.
- persistent issues with poor punctuality will be referred to the inclusion Manager and the Inclusion Team for individual interventions

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

• Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school will ensure correct safeguarding procedures are implemented

• Identify whether the absence is approved or not

• Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

• Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Percentage attendance will be recorded on a student's school report

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence may** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- Study leave

- Flexi-schooling / personalised timetables

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

- First day contact – parents must inform the absence line if a student is going to absent or late to school. Parents will be contacted if we do not receive notification of absence

- Form tutors will raise concerns at weekly tutor briefings with the relevant Head of Year. Students whose attendance falls below 95% will be spoken to in the first instance by their form tutor, Head of Year or the Inclusion Assistant and information recorded on CPOMS

- There will be a half termly attendance meeting to discuss students whose attendance falls below 90% and/or who are presenting as an attendance concern. Intervention will be agreed

- Pastoral leaders will discuss students who have been identified as an attendance concern at fortnightly Inclusion meetings. Head of Year will implement agreed intervention

Stages

Stage 1 - Phone call and/or letter of concern. Form tutor or Head of Year to meet with student to raise concern and information recorded on CPOMS

Stage 2 -If absence persists parents may be invited into school for an attendance clinic meeting by the Head of Year and information recorded on CPOMS

Stage 3 -Continued absence following a letter of concern will result in parents receiving an unauthorised absence letter stating that no further absence from school will be authorised and information recorded on CPOMS

Stage 4 -Home visit if required, this can happen at any stage where there is a concern and information recorded on CPOMS

Stage 5 -If absence persists following the above stages a penalty warning notice letter will be requested from the local authority and information recorded on CPOMS

<u>Stage 6</u> -Any further absence within a 20-day period following a letter from the local authority will result in a further fine being issued and information recorded on CPOMS

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

• The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

• One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

• Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

• Students who achieve 100% attendance in a term will receive a praise postcard and ten achievement points from their Head of Year in recognition

• Students who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the academic year will receive a letter from the Head teacher plus a reward

• To encourage whole school attendance, we will award a termly attendance shield to the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 form group with the highest attendance percentage per term.

• End of year attendance shield to the form group with the highest percentage attendance plus a reward

• Each year group will be issued with regular updates so they can monitor form group attendance in comparison to the rest of the year group

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The School will:

• Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level

• Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Inclusion Manager will

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutor, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Refer to section 5.2 Reducing persistent absence – stages

8. St Joseph's College KS5 attendance

The aims of sixth form attendance align with those of the main school:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including PA
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of concern
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are consistently applied

The method that we do this in KS5, whilst being similar to the main school in many ways, varies in ways highlighted below.

Working alongside the inclusion manager and pastoral leaders is the **KS5 attendance coordinator**. They will complete the following steps to drive forward the highest levels of KS5 attendance:

Individual attendance is monitored **and reported daily (unauthorised absences)**

- The attendance officer will follow the steps in 3.4 to ensure that the attendance line is monitored and the correct codes are added to registers
- The sixth form secretary will then produce a SAMs report daily
- From this SAMs report, daily text messages will be sent home on the day of absence to parents/guardians to ensure the safeguarding of our KS5 pupils and clarity of attendance with parents
- Escalation is in place for students that fail to complete their pay back sessions

Number of SAMs	Staff member	Action	Sanction
5	HOY/AHOY	Meeting with student and communication with parent – verbal warning followed by letter	Letter 1 First warning confirmation letter
8	DOSF	Meeting with student and parents followed by a final warning letter	Attendance contract Final warning letter
10	Headteacher	Meeting with student and parent	Removal of place at Sixth form for being in breach of student contract

Individual attendance figures are then reviewed every 15 school days (All absences)

- Students who have missed at least seven lessons (15%) during that period are highlighted for intervention
- This review will be conducted half termly

- Stats. generated in the penultimate week of each half term and shared with HOY/AHOYs

- Last Monday tutor briefing of each half term is dedicated to communication about absence

- Form tutors will be the first staff to contact home about 'catch up' intervention

- When reviewing attendance, we look at ALL absences from timetabled lessons including authorised (illness, medical appointments, driving tests) and unauthorised absences (truancy, holidays etc)
- Students are required to attend TWO hours of 'catch up' if they appear on this attendance list
- These interim sessions are put in place to support students so they're able to catch up with any missed classwork, coursework, homework, consolidate learning etc

- Discussion of KS5 attendance data will take place during inclusion meetings as in 3.5

How many days (equivalent) missed	Action	Catch up in final week of term (arranged with LMs)
3	Tutor to speak to student and make contact with home Must be recorded on CPOMS / spreadsheet	2 hours
5	HOY/AHOY to arrange a meeting and then meet with student and parent/s	2 hours
7	DOSF to contact home to arrange a meeting Option of attendance contract drawn up	2 hours

Monitoring of lateness

- Lateness will be reviewed twice per half term

- Sixth form attendance coordinator will monitor late marks to form, period 2 & period 4 specifically

- 4 lates generate a letter 1

- 8 lates generate a letter 2 – HOY/AHOY intervention

- 12 lates generates a letter 3 and a meeting with DOFS

Appendix 1: attendance pathway of concern

99-100% ☺	0-2 days off per year	**Excellent – students are accessing all learning opportunities**	**Form Tutor Intervention**
96-98% 😐	4-7.5 days off per year	**Good – very few learning opportunities missed**	
93-95% 🙁	9.5-13 days off per year	**Risk of under achievement**	**Head of Year Intervention**
91-92% 😮	15-17 days of per year	**High risk of under achievement**	
90% and below 🙁	19 + days off per year	**Severe to extreme risk of under achievement**	**Senior Leader Intervention**

Appendix 2: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)

O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day