Day School and Sixth Form Attendance Policy

Contents

1. AIMS

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/madeIt also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the School records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the School works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the School's policies and ethos
- Making sure the School's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the School has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the School's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs

- Where the School is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    o The importance of good attendance
    o That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    o The School's legal requirements for keeping registers
    o The School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The dedicated Governor with responsibility for Attendance is Farida Mannan farida.mannan@artsed.co.uk

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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 pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the School's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance

The Designated Senior Leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the School
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with School Attendance Support Officer to tackle persistent absence

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance is Claire Parker-Wood and can be contacted via cparker-wood@artsed.co.uk.

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the DSL responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher

The Attendance Officer is Gabriella Duda and can be contacted via pupils@artsed.co.uk

3.5 Form Tutors and Class Tutors

In the Day School, Tutors are responsible for recording attendance via iSAMS for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1)

In the Sixth Form, Tutors are responsible for recording attendance via iSAMS for morning sessions and class teachers are responsible for recording registration afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1).

In addition, all teachers must take a class register at the beginning of every lesson- students who are unaccounted should be named on Microsoft teams- so that they can be located. If after an extensive search of the building/ CCTV etc. pupils remains unaccounted for then a Critical Incident meeting will occur which will include the Headteacher/DSL and other appropriate staff.

3.6 School administrative staff

School administrative staff will:

- Take calls /emails from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the School's system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Heads of Key Stage where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Send an email to all staff by 10.00am informing them of who is absent for the day and the reason for it.
- Follow up unaccounted for absences ringing home and visiting classrooms once the attendance registers have closed in the mornings. This will be done by 9.30am in the morning. If parents/carers do not respond to telephone calls, emails are sent home to all parents/carers

3.7 Parents

Parents are expected to promote excellent levels of attendance and punctuality for their child. On rare occasions a pupil may be reluctant to attend school. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

It is the parent's responsibility to follow school procedures relating to all aspects concerning attendance, absence and punctuality as outlined within the School policy. Parents are expected to support the School and attend meetings to discuss and resolve any issues related to attendance and punctuality.

Parents are expected to support staff within the School in regard to any reasonable sanction given relating to poor attendance and poor punctuality.

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day and arrives on time
- Call or email the School to report their child's absence before 8.30am 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
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Tony Pattar, Hounslow School Attendance Support Officer via tony.pattar@hounslow.gov.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Day School- Attend school every day, on time
- Sixth Form - Attend every timetabled session, on time

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance register

Registration is taken at 08.25am and 12.55pm every day (Day School) and beginning of period 4 1.00pm (Sixth Form). Class registers are taken on We will keep an electronic attendance register iSAMS and are considered legal documents and are treated as such. The form/tutor class teacher will ensure that the registration period is orderly and calm, and that the registers are called promptly and accurately every morning and every afternoon. Registration should be taken at the same time to ensure consistency in identifying latecomers. Failure of staff to take registers will be considered a failure to meet teacher standards and is a key safeguarding issue, and this could result in disciplinary procedures where this becomes a persistent issue.

During registration we will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil 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 also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

- The School day starts at 8.20am and ends at 4.15pm
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.15am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.55pm and will be kept open until 1.20pm

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the School of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling/contacting the administrative school staff, who can be contacted via 02089876666 or pupils@artsed.co.uk (Day School) absent@artsed.co.uk (Sixth Form)

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the School has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are concerns about the illness, then the School will ask for 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance, and the DSL responsible for Absence will be informed.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the School in advance of the appointment. All requests for leaves of absence should be emailed to pupils@artsed.co.uk (Day School) absent@artsed.co.uk (Sixth Form) **and** the pupils Form Tutor.

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

The pupil's parent 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 pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The School's Senior leader responsible for attendance will also monitor and regularly review punctuality data working with key staff at implementing improvement efforts where necessary.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the School cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the School may contact Hounslow School Attendance Support Officer Tony Pattar.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not if there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the School will contact the police or the relevant Local Authority as required.
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the School will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the School will issue a note to improve via email.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents are able to access up to date attendance and punctuality statistics via the Parent Portal on ISAMs. Parents also received information regarding attendance on via termly reports.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the pastoral team will conduct half termly attendance reports communicating any concerns to parents via email.

5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the School site for certain educational activities, professional work or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- **Engagement in professional work – see below**
- 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. 'Exceptional circumstances' may involve : as a close family member's death or serious illness, attending a funeral, attending a parent's wedding.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The School considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background 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 if the student is of compulsory school, the School must receive the request from all parents with parental responsibility. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the School will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Parent(s) 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

- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the School may allow a pupil to be absent from the School site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the School
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the School premises are closed

5.2 Engagement in professional work

ArtsEd has a clear procedure (INSERT) for the request and approval of absence due to pupils' engagement in professional work. Ziggie Carter is the Industry & Professional Work Liaison staff member who oversees all requests. To be able to consider any absence requests for professional work or auditions, a "one-off" professional declaration form needs to be completed by a parent/carer, or sixth formers may complete this themselves: https://forms.office.com/e/EHpAfp9pNR

For all new professional absence request (auditions/recalls/screen tests/professional jobs etc) parents/carers/sixth formers are required to complete the following form https://forms.office.com/e/fqg1eqFYE1

Day School absence requests: ~The Industry & Professional Work Liaison staff member will contact relevant subject teachers by email with the Form Tutor and Head of Key Stage cc'd, to check for concerns/conflicts. Day School students are encouraged to inform/remind their teachers also.

Sixth Form absence requests- The Industry & Professional Work Liaison staff member will check with course leads (including A-Level course leads) if there are any concerns or conflicts , in addition it is then student are expected to communicate their upcoming absence/s to their form tutor and any affected teachers.

In all cases the designated senior leader responsible for attendance will check the specific pupil's attendance. All upcoming absences will be logged in iSAMs and will be recorded as an authorised absence.

6. PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM

The School has a responsibility to reduce the number of pupils whose attendance is below 95% over the school year.

Pupils with attendance below 90% fall into the 'Persistent Absentee' category as defined in Working Together to Improve School Attendance. This is particularly relevant if any of the child's absences are unauthorised.

When a pupil's attendance falls below 90% their attendance will be tracked on a half termly basis. The School will contact parents to discuss the attendance concerns and formalise an Attendance Action Plan to secure an improvement in attendance.

The Department for Education produces 'statutory policy' which schools must follow to support pupils' attendance. This is called 'Working together to improve school attendance'. There are several changes to the policy this year that came into effect August 2024.

The changes are a mixture of clarification on existing guidance and updates to reflect changes in the law, including the upcoming School attendance (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2024. As it is a statutory policy, it is coming into effect throughout the country. Two of the key changes can be seen below. Schools will now only be able grant leaves of absence for specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the 2024 attendance regulations.

Although penalty notices cannot be issued by independent schools, parents can be prosecuted for their child's non-attendance at school and these can be issued by a local authority office or the police.

7. SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO ARE ABSENT OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Where pupils are returning to school after being absent due to complex barriers to attendance, lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and/or mental or physical ill health or SEND the School will work closely with families, making any appropriate adjustments and providing additional support.

Where a pupil has an education health and care plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the School becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the School will inform the local authority.

As part of promoting a culture high attendance the School will recognise students and families for good or improved attendance via emails home, certificates celebrating good attendance in assemblies and through informal conversations with tutors where pupils are praised for high or improved attendance.

8. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The School will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the School and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

The School will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board via termly reports to the DSSF subcommittee

8.2 Analysing attendance

The School will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The School will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and head of Key Stage to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the Governing Board and school leaders (including SENDCOs and DSLs)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with local authority agencies and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the School's strategy for improving attendance.

The School will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the School (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  o Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  o Explain the help that is available
  o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  o Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the School will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

9. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Claire Parker-Wood At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- Institutional Safeguarding policy

- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanction policy

- Educational Visits Policy

- Missing Pupil Policy

- Supervision of Pupils

Review of Day School &Sixth Form Attendance Policy

Document Title	Attendance Policy
Maintained By	Claire Parker-Wood
Owned By	DSSF
Approving Committee / Ratifying Body	Board of Trustees
Last Reviewed on	November 2024
Review on	November 2025
Current Version	Version 1
Location of master document	
Web location	

Circulated to the Governing body and teaching staff. This policy will be made available to parents and prospective parents on the website and on request.

Appendix 2: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the School		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

		Administrative codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays