

Attendance Policy

Introduction

The College, working with the LA, firmly believes that regular school attendance is key to achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and education progress and attainment. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Encouraging Attendance

The College encourages regular attendance in the following ways:-

- by providing a caring and welcoming environment
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns
- by marking registers accurately and punctually
- by providing regular attendance statistics
- by celebrating good attendance
- by monitoring students informing parents in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings if necessary and referring the family to The Education Welfare Service if the irregular attendance continues.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with College staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance. The College will encourage and value high attendance rates. The College will recognise the external factors which influence student attendance and will work in partnership with parents, the Education Welfare Officer and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The College will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements. The College will maintain accurate attendance records.

Expectations

We expect that all students will:-

- attend College regularly
- attend College punctually
- attend College appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their Form Tutor or Performance Manager any problems that deter them from attending College
- bring evidence of any appointments that require them to leave College during the day
- remind parents to telephone College in the event of absence

We expect that all parents who have day to day responsibility for a College student will:-

- encourage regular attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that children in their care arrive at College punctually fully prepared for the day
- ensure that they contact the College whenever a child is unable to attend
- contact the College on the first day of a child's absence, by telephoning and leaving a message or sending a note to the Attendance Officer with a sibling
- contact the College again if absence extends beyond 3 school days
- contact the College promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep a child away from College
- notify the College immediately of any changes to contact details

We expect form tutors to:-

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance at each registration session
- encourage good attendance and punctuality
- monitor students' attendance and punctuality and alert the Performance Manager of any concerns
- pass on to the Attendance Office any absence notes received

We expect subject teachers to:-

- take a register during every lesson
- inform the 'on call' member of staff of any student suspected of truancy

We expect Performance Mangers to:-

- monitor attendance on a regular basis, setting targets for improvement as appropriate
- promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, rewards systems etc
- meet with the Education Welfare Officer regularly in order to discuss students whose attendance is of concern
- ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attenders and to implement appropriate strategies to improve attendance rates

Attendance Officer

The College attendance officer will:-

- monitor the computerised attendance system and enter known student absences
- investigate unauthorised absences and operate 'Truancy Call'
- liaise with the College pastoral team and Education Welfare Officer with regards to the attendance of individual students monitor and collate data relating to attendance of individual and groups of students

Registration and Punctuality

- punctuality to College is essential as lateness causes a disruption to learning
- registration begins at 8.40am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Students who arrive after 8.40am on those days will be recorded as late.
- Students who arrive after 9am (when registers close) will be recorded as a U code.
- on Thursdays registration is at 9am. Students who arrive after 9am will be recorded as late. Students who arrive after 9am (when registers close) on Thursdays will be recorded as a U.
- lateness by a student will be dealt with through the College behavioural system and may be referred to Education Welfare
- afternoon registration will occur during the afternoon registration period held between 1.05pm and 1.50pm. Students who are five minutes or more late after the start of afternoon registration session will be recorded as late
- non attendance at afternoon registration will be recorded as an unauthorised absence

Students Leaving During the College Day

- students are not permitted to leave the College premises without prior permission from the College
- whenever possible, parents should arrange medical and other appointments outside of College time
- parents are requested to confirm in writing the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected time of return and whether the student is being collected or making their own way to their destination
- students must sign out at student reception and sign back in upon their return
- where a student is being collected from College, parents are requested to meet them at student reception
- if a student leaves the College site without permission their parents will be contacted

Responding to Non Attendance

When a student does not attend College and a reason has not been previously provided, steps will be taken to ascertain why the student is absent:-

- on the first day of absence if no note or telephone call is received from the parent, the College will activate 'Truancy Call' to make parents aware that their child is not registered in College
- failure to comply with the expectation set by the Education Welfare Service may result in further action, including communication by letter, intervention by the Education Welfare Officer, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution.

Holidays

The College holiday dates are published in advance and we strongly advise parents to book their family holidays during the College holidays. If a family holiday in term time is unavoidable, **parents should apply** to the College using the 'Application for Leave of Absence' application form; however it is not policy to authorise absences due to holiday taken during term time. Some exceptional circumstances may be considered when appropriate. However no leave of absence will be granted for over 20 school days and may result in a child being removed from the College roll. Where a child is taken out of College for a holiday during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the Head teacher, each parent may be liable to receive a penalty notice for each child.

Penalty Notices

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £50 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £100 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officer.

Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the Head Teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised. Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Late arrival after the close of registration on 5 occasions during a half term where the pupil's attendance falls below 85%. The lateness will be recorded in accordance with the 'Registration and Lateness' section of this policy.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £50 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £100 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Detentions for Lateness:

The College day starts at 8.40am (9am on Thursdays). If a student arrives after this time a detention will be given.

The student will spend the same amount of time that they were late for College in detention and the detention will take place after College on the following Thursday. A detention slip will be given to the student to take home for their parents

Reporting Absences:

If your child is unable to attend College, it is vital that you call the absence line, **01276 705502**, no later than 9.30am. Leave a clear message detailing your child's name, tutor group and reason for absence.