

**REVIEWED:**

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**ATTENDANCE  
POLICY**

**DUIHS**

## Introduction

*The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:*

*"The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 74*

*"One who treads a path in search of knowledge has his path to Paradise made easy by God..." - Riyadh us-Saleheen, 245*

*"A servant of Allah will remain standing on the Day of Judgment until he is questioned about his age (time on earth) and how he spent it; about his knowledge and how he utilized it; about his wealth and from where he acquired it and in what (activities) he spent it; and about his body and how he used it." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 148*

The school follows the Department for Education (DfE) regulations and guidance.

Regular school attendance is a legal responsibility on parents. The School is required by law to record absences and late arrivals on a pupil's annual report.

We expect our pupils to have an attendance percentage record of over 95%. Independent schools must notify the Local Education Authority if a pupil does not attend regularly. ***The School will notify the appropriate local authority if a pupil has a low attendance of 85% or below, or if they are absent continuously without the School's authorisation for ten or more school days (as per Birmingham Local Authority Safeguarding Guidance on Missing Children). The school will follow local authority guidance fully regarding this matter.***

## Authorised absence procedures

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards by parents as satisfactory justification. All other absences will be classified as unauthorised. Acceptable reasons for absence would normally be only illness or bereavement. Absences for interviews are authorised by the school only if advance notice is given and a letter of invitation shown.

Parents are asked **to telephone the School Office on every morning of absence**, between 8:10am and 9am. The Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact with you if we have not received a reason for the absence from you. If the Administrative Staff are unable to contact you by telephone, a text message will be sent. Absence will remain unauthorised until contact has been made.

Absences must be explained by a parent in a letter / Text / Email to the Attendance Officer on the day that the pupil returns to school. This must be signed by a parent and dated.

If a pupil is absent for ten days or more, the parent must provide the form tutor with a medical certificate from the GP or from the practitioner who is providing medical treatment. A risk assessment will be carried out for any pupil who returns after a prolonged period of absence.

If a pupil has been absent with an infectious illness that has to be notified to public health authorities, a parent should send in a medical certificate on his return. This should state the nature of the illness and certify freedom from infection. All cases of infectious illness in the home should be reported to the School immediately by telephone to allow school to make a decision on whether to inform other parents of the risk should there be more than three cases in school.

If a pupil arrives in school after 9:00am, they must bring a letter of explanation from a parent.

## Leave of absence for holidays

The School does not normally authorise absence for holidays in term-time and strongly discourages parents from making such requests.

Leave of absence will not be authorized if the pupil's attendance is low.

Leave of absence will not be authorised at any time for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Leave of absence will not be authorised for any pupils during the school examination period dates of which are shown in the school calendar issued in September.

Leave of absence will not be authorised in Year 10 during Work Experience fortnight.

Requests for leave of absence will only be considered on receipt of a completed holiday request form, which can be obtained from the school office.

Each request will be considered individually. Requests must be received by the Attendance Officer before bookings are made and at least two weeks (during term time) before the absence. Absence will always be classified as unauthorised if the holiday has not been agreed in advance or if less than two weeks' notice is given. If a pupil fails to return to school on the agreed date following leave of absence, the school reserves the right to remove his name from the register. All absences over the number of days requested will be classed as unauthorised.

## Unauthorised absence

The School is bound by DfE regulations. The DfE regards all absence which has not been authorised by the school as truancy.

Absence is classified as unauthorised in the following cases:-

- If the reason for absence is unacceptable to the School
- If the pupil does not bring a written explanation of absence from a parent
- If the pupil misses a lesson without the permission of the teacher
- If the pupil leaves the school site without the advance written permission of a parent, authorised by the relevant Head of Year or Form Tutor.
- If a pupils takes leave of absence without obtaining prior written permission
- If a pupil fails to return to school on the agreed date following an authorised leave of absence. – this includes unauthorised extension of authorised holidays.

Unauthorised absence is noted in a pupil's individual school record and may affect their sixth form applications. **Non-emergency medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours.** Appointment letters for specialist or hospital treatment should be presented in advance of the appointment. All pupils are expected to stay on the school premises during break and lunchtimes.

## Punctuality

Punctuality is regarded by the school as an important indicator that a pupil is learning self-discipline and good time management. We are frequently asked to comment on punctuality for employment, Further Education and Higher Education references. Pupils must make every effort to avoid lateness.

## Morning Registration

The first registration takes place at 8.30am. If a pupil arrives after the register has been taken, they will be marked 'late' in the register (SIMS).

If a pupil arrives after the end of the registration period, they should sign the "Late Book" at Reception and proceed quickly to his lesson. However, arrival after the close of the register is classed as absence by the DfE, and the pupil must bring a letter of explanation from a parent.

Pupils who are regularly late will be dealt with as follows:

On the first occasion they will be given a warning, each occasion subsequent to this they will be given a second warning which will ultimately lead to an after school detention. Parents of pupils who are persistently late will be invited in to discuss the reasons for their child's punctuality.

## PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

### a) First day contact

The purpose of first-contact is to:

- Provide a way in which parents can let the school know that a pupil is unable to come to school, the reasons for this and the expected date of return
- Enable the school to contact parents/carers to notify them their child has not arrived in school

A designated member of the office staff will be responsible for contacting parents on the first day of absence.

- Registers to be checked at 9.30am and pupils who are first day absent are identified
- The office member contacting parents by phone to query the absence (ensure correct phone/mobile number is used) If contact is not possible then a text message will be sent
- Records of all absence contacts made to parents must be kept
- A note is made for reason of absence
- A pupil will have their absence authorized once contact has been made with parent and suitable reason for absence has been given

### b) Following up absences

- Parents must send a written note / Text / Email to explain their child's absences on the first day they return back to school even if they phoned the school.
- If the pupil is absent for **two consecutive days** and the office failed to contact parents then on the third day of absence the **form tutor must inform the Attendance Officer**. On the **third day** of absence Attendance Officer will send a letter to parents urging them to notify the school of the reason for their child's absence. This letter must be handed to a member of the SMT who will ensure it is posted as recorded delivery.

- Within three school days of the date of the letter, if the parents have still not contacted the school, the Attendance Officer must contact the DCSF (attendance section) to seek advice. **All phone calls must be recorded.**
- Attendance monitor to check form registers on a weekly basis and act immediately upon any unjustified cause for concern absence. This information is passed to Attendance Officer who ensures that form tutors are using the correct code and that registers are fully completed.
- Attendance monitor reports directly to Attendance Officer any issues of absence that have not been corrected within 1 week of a pupil returning to school.
- Attendance monitor reports the Headteacher if the absences are still not followed up after 1 week – Attendance Officer must also be informed regularly
- Attendance monitor reports persistent punctuality to Attendance Officer so that it can be followed up

**c) Actions to be taken for pupils whom attendance is a cause for concern**

- Absence on a certain day on a regular basis, attendance monitor to inform Attendance Officer who will send a letter to parents to discuss their concern.
- Too many absences on a certain day due to medical appointments
- Pupils who fail to return to school at the end of an authorised leave of absence
- Pupils who go on holiday without gaining school permission:
  - recorded as 'N' in registers
  - Parents are contacted by Attendance Officer
- Pupils regularly attend school after registration is closed: pupils/parents should be reminded that punctuality is important and that attending once registration has been completed is marked as an unauthorised absence – pupils/parents reminded that this can affect their child's sixth form applications.
- If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% the parents are called in for a meeting with the Attendance Officer
- If a pupil's attendance does not improve once the parents have been brought in, the parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the school. This is at the Attendance Officer
- Any pupil who reaches 10 unauthorised absences can be excluded
- Any pupil who is consistently missing lessons can be excluded