STAFFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prep 3-11 | Senior 11-16 | Sixth Form 16-19

Attendance and Register Policy

Policy Review

Date of Review	Reason for Review	Reviewer	Checked & approved	Date of approval	Next review
26.08.26	Annual review	Deputy Head: Academic	Headteacher & Full Board of Governors	07.10.26	01.09.27

This policy should read in conjunction with the latest DFE statutory Guidance: Working together to improve school attendance

Senior Attendance Champion: Dr. P. A. Johnson - f.johnson@staffordgrammar.co.uk

In the Senior School pupils and parents should contact **Mrs Handford** or **Mrs Darley** about attendance on a day-to-day basis on absence@staffordgrammar.co.uk or 01785 249752.

In the Prep School pupils and parents should contact **Mrs Adams** about attendance on a day-to-day basis on absence@staffordgrammar.co.uk or 01785 249752.

Aim of this policy

To support excellent levels of attendance to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

The School recognises its responsibility to identify persistently absent pupils and children missing education and is alert to the possibility of such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Key Principles

- High levels of attendance and punctuality are key to pupil success
- It is the responsibility of everybody in the School to improve attendance and punctuality
- Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The School will:

- Work with pupils and their families to support high levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Investigate unexplained absence or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate;
- Work with the local authority and, where required, make appropriate referrals;
- Regularly review and analyse attendance levels;
- Ensure that the Governing Body and SLT work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy;
- Ensure that all relevant legislation and guidance are complied with;
- Have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance;
- Support pupils who are returning to education following long-term absence;
- Ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment;
- Promote the importance of regular attendance at home;
- Follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child;
- Avoid unnecessary absences;
- Keep the School informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance;
- Not take their child out of education for holidays during term time;
- Inform the School in advance of any proposed change of address and contact details, along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.

We expect pupils to:

- Attend School regularly and on time;
- Be punctual to all lessons;
- Follow the correct procedure if they arrive at school late.

Attendance at school

Regulations for attendance in school are set by the Department for Education.

All pupils are expected to be in school during the normal school day throughout the term and to attend Prize Giving (except New Year 7 pupils) and Open Morning.

Exceptions:

Statutory Absence - is allowed for family funerals or days of religious observance. In these cases, it would be helpful if prior notice could be given to the Form Tutor.

Absence through sickness - A telephone call to the School is expected and in-line with our Safeguarding and Missing Child Policies, the School will make a telephone call home during the first day of absence if parents have not already contacted the School. The office will record reasons for absence on the register.

Temporary absence for part of a day - is allowed for medical and other essential appointments where it is not possible to arrange out of school hours. A parental note to the Form Tutor is expected in advance.

School Activities - may result in pupils being absent for part or all of a day. As the activity (e.g. sports fixtures, work experience, departmental trips) has been approved by the School, selection of pupils is the responsibility of the teacher in charge. The Form Tutor should monitor the number of individual absences and inform the Head of Section and Deputy Head (Pastoral) if the individual or his/her work appears to be suffering.

Other Absence - may occasionally be granted for specific events deemed to be educational or very important to the future of the pupil. In such cases a request from the parent should be presented to the Form Tutor for approval by the Headmaster.

Absence for holidays - is strongly discouraged but any request for such leave of absence should be addressed to the Headmaster in advance and delivered via the Form Tutor. **In accordance with DFE statutory guidance leave of absence for holidays will be recorded as unauthorised. The School has to provide the relevant local authority of periods of continuous unauthorised absence of 10 days or more.**

Suspension - on the Headmaster's authority.

Pupils with permission to leave school during the School day must sign out at the office and Sixth Form pupils leaving the School site may sign out in either the main office or in the Sixth Form centre.

Authorised absence – absence will only be authorised where the School has given approval in advance for a pupil to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the School can authorise absence.

Unauthorised absence – absence will be marked as unauthorised where the School is not satisfied with the reason given for absence.

Reporting Absence from School

Where a pupil is to be absent from school without prior permission, the parent/carer should inform the School by telephone or email on the morning of the day of the first absence before 8.50am and let the School know when they expect the pupil to return. If the return date is not confirmed on the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the School on each day of absence before 8.50am.

In cases of prolonged absence due to illness, the parents/carers may be asked to provide the School with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor. If evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

Appointments

Medical, dental and other essential appointments for pupils should take place outside of school hours where reasonably possible. Where an appointment must take place during school time, the pupil should attend school for as much of the day as possible. In cases of frequent absence due to appointments the School may insist on written confirmation of the appointment.

Registration

The normal school day starts at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:50 p.m. in the senior school and 3:40 p.m. in the prep school.

Registration is taken during tutor time in form rooms at 8:50 a.m., pupils registered after 9:00 p.m. will be recorded as late. In the afternoon registration times starts at 12:50 p.m., registers are taken at 12:50 p.m. in the Prep School and 1:00 p.m. in the Senior School. Pupils recorded after 1:10 p.m. will be recorded as late. Registers will be called at these times.

Registration is recorded using SIMS. If SIMS is unavailable registers should be recorded on class lists and sent to the office.

Pupils who miss registration must report to the School reception before joining lessons.

If a pupil arrives late to school after the relevant registration period has ended, they must immediately report to the School reception and provide a reason for lateness. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence.

Persistent lateness may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

A list of codes is available on the School's Information Management System (SIMS) and are shown below:

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
A	Absent from lesson but educated	This is used for when a pupil is in a

	elsewhere on site. Not available for sessions, only lessons.	music lesson, Lamda lesson etc. This should be changed when the pupil is in the lesson.
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity (May be used for pupils present on Google Meet)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
C1	Leave of absence - regulated performance or employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Leave of absence - part-time timetable	Authorised absence
D	Dual Registration	Authorised absence
E	Excluded/suspended (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Interview for employment or transfer	Approved Education Activity
K	Attending alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
D	Approved education Activity	
X	Non-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y codes	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

N = Absent (no reason given). A pupil must never be marked present unless a member of staff has seen the pupil.

The School office will follow the Absent Pupils Procedure if pupils are not marked present by 10 a.m. This initially involves contacting pupil contacts to ascertain the reason for their absence. All N's should be replaced by the end of this procedure.

Pupils that are not in registration sessions should be given a relevant code unless the Form Tutor has been informed that the pupil is present by another member of staff.

It is the responsibility of Form Tutors to keep their registers up to date and replace N codes when reasons for absences are known, although it is likely that the receptionist will have already done this if they have received information from parents regarding reasons for absence

All Senior School and Sixth Form pupils are also registered in each lesson using SIMS. The register should be completed within the first 15 minutes of the lesson.

Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- Low level attendance;
- A pattern of unauthorised absence;
- A question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival;
- Persistent truancy or lateness

the School will follow the procedures outlined below for managing attendance concerns.

Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time may also be dealt with as a behaviour issue in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Attendance of 95% is generally considered good.

Persistent absence is defined as an attendance rate of 90% or below. Absence at this level is likely to hinder educational progress and the School expects full parental/carer cooperation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention may include the implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place a parenting contract.

Absence is classed as severe where it falls below 50% attendance. Severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their attendance. Intervention for these pupils will be more intensive and likely to need support from other agencies.

Procedure for managing attendance concerns (Year 7 – 11)

Key levels of attendance over one full term are:

Attendance %	Description
98 - 100	Excellent
95-98	Good
93-95	Satisfactory
90-93	At risk of persistent absence
Below 90	Persistent absence
Below 50	Severe absence

During the last week of half term, the Attendance Champion and the Deputy Head Pastoral will analyse whole school attendance for that half-term period. Consideration will be given for reasons for absence. In addition to this they meet monthly to analyse the attendance figures with regard to those pupils that need to be reported to the local authorities as per the guidelines outline below.

Where attendance concerns are identified and are below 90% for the half term period, consideration will be given to whether a concern exists.

Where absence concerns exist, it could be indicative of a safeguarding concern, so relevant absence concerns and actions will be recorded on MyConcern.

Stage 1 – Possible Form Tutor conversation with pupil and contact with parent/carer (This is likely to be in the form of a standard letter sent from the School office). Contact will be recorded on MyConcern (Safeguarding Reporting System).

If there is no improvement in attendance or insufficient improvement in attendance moving forwards:

Stage 2 – Possible Deputy Head/DSL conversation with pupil and contact with parent/carer to discuss level of attendance followed by a letter from the Deputy Head /DSL. Contact will be recorded on MyConcern.

If there is no improvement in attendance or insufficient improvement in attendance moving forwards:

Stage 3 – Headmaster/Deputy Head/DSL meeting with parents/carers. Contact will be recorded on MyConcern.

<u>Sharing information with local authorities</u>

In accordance with DFE statutory guidance and in order to facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, the School will share information from their registers with the relevant local authority as detailed below:

• New Pupil and Deletion returns: notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the School admission register outside of standard transition times.

• Attendance returns: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U). This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

• Sickness returns: providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the School has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the School and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

Pupils with a social worker and/or youth offending team worker

To facilitate effective working across the local authority area, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school. The School will also inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if their name is to be deleted from the School register.