



Attendance Procedure

Melton Vale Sixth Form College



Approved by: TILT

Date: 11th November 2022

Last reviewed on: December 2023 - NRO

Next review due by: 31 August 2024

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to college attendance through our whole- college culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student 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 ensure students have the support in place to attend college

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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 college attendance across the college's policies and ethos
- Making sure college leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole college
- 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 college
- Monitoring college -level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the college
- 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Natasha Roberts and can be contacted via college reception.

3.4 The attendance officer

The college attendance officer 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 college staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

The attendance officer is Sara Tibbetts and can be contacted via college reception.

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers and tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the college office via the colleges MIS, Bromcom.

3.6 College office staff

College office staff will:

- Take calls from students/parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the MIS system

- Transfer communication from students/parents/carers to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time
- Remind their child to inform college when absent before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Use MCAS app to monitor their child's attendance
- Provide the college with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the college day

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Call the college to report their absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Email individual teachers for missed work or access work through Teams for each subject to ensure work is completed following an absence
- Ensure that. Where possible, appointments are made outside of the college day

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 college 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 also record:

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

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

Students must arrive in college at least 5 minutes before their first lesson, on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken in the first 10 minutes of the lesson and will be kept open for 30 minutes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student/parent/carer must notify the college of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the college office staff or emailing either contactus or individual teachers for the lessons that will be missed. (see also section 7).

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the college 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 college is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

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 college in advance of the appointment.

A request for leave of absence should be submitted to the SLT lead for attendance via the college reception.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of college hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the students should be out of college 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 college 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 will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Should a student be late to lesson 3 or more times in a week then they will be placed on the monitoring list and a meeting held with the SLT lead for attendance, Natasha Roberts.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Send a text message the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- 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
- Contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The college will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through a half termly report home.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event/s that is an emergency and exceptional in its entirety.

*Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. There is **no** entitlement to time off in school time to go on holiday.*

The college 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 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via college reception. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** 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 students' parents belong. If necessary, the college will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 college, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

Further Education (FE) providers do not implement legal sanctions. However, should a student's attendance fall below 70% for no specific reason and academic performance is clearly affected, then consideration will be given to the student's place at the college in the longer term.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Students attendance is promoted and celebrated through tutors, personal development and assemblies.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The College will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the college 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 college will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The College 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 College will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and form tutors and other college 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 college, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of college.

The college will:

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the SLT lead for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the local governing body.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- College Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: 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 college
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 college
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the college
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	College 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 college
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the college
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	College is not satisfied with reason for Student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at college after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in college	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	College 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 college
#	Planned college closure	Whole or partial college closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day