



WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

Attendance Policy and Procedure

Next review date: June 26

1 Aims

- 1.1 Attendance is the essential foundation for securing positive outcomes for all pupils and everyone has a responsibility to manage and improve attendance across the School community.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to create a culture across the School which promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality in order to support pupil wellbeing and enhance safeguarding.
- 1.3 This policy addresses the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

2 Regulatory framework

- 2.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - 2.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 2.1.2 *National minimum standards for boarding schools* (Department for Education (DfE), September 2022);
 - 2.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 2.1.4 Children Act 1989;
 - 2.1.5 Childcare Act 2006;
 - 2.1.6 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);
 - 2.1.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
 - 2.1.8 Equality Act 2010; and
 - 2.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- 2.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
 - 2.2.1 [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);
 - 2.2.2 [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);
 - 2.2.3 [Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024);

- 2.2.4 [Guidance for Parents on school attendance](#) (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);
- 2.2.5 ['Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) (NHS, April 2024);
- 2.2.6 [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE, September 2024);
- 2.2.7 [Children missing education](#) (DfE, August 2024);
- 2.2.8 [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) (DfE, August 2017);
- 2.2.9 [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff](#) (DfE, February 2024);
- 2.2.10 [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) (DfE, November 2018);
- 2.2.11 [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#) (DfE, February 2023);
- 2.2.12 [Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#) (DfE, February 2023);
- 2.2.13 [Providing Remote education: guidance for schools](#) (DfE, updated August 2024); and
- 2.2.14 [SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

3 **The importance of good attendance**

- 3.1 Winchester College is a full boarding school with a day pupil cohort, and this policy and associated procedures apply primarily to our day pupils, though the attendance monitoring of our boarding pupils is also explained here. The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. The Second Master is identified as the School Attendance Champion (SAC). In building a culture of good school attendance we recognise:
 - 3.1.1 the importance of good attendance;
 - 3.1.2 the interplay between attendance and other aspects of pupils' progress and wellbeing (e.g. bullying, special educational needs support, support for disabilities, physical and mental health issues, safeguarding, and support for disadvantaged pupils);
 - 3.1.3 the importance of communicating high expectations for attendance;
 - 3.1.4 the need for a long-term consistent approach; and
 - 3.1.5 the potential for poor attendance to provide a vital warning of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

4 **School responsibilities**

- 4.1 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work with pupils and their families.
- 4.2 In accordance with its policies and guidance, the School will act in a proportionate and targeted way to respond to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.
- 4.3 The School will maintain robust systems to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups. It will use these systems to identify pupils at risk to facilitate early intervention.
 - 5.5.1 Attendance is registered on the School's Management Information System (MIS called iSAMS) at lesson times, at breakfast and at lunch. Attendance is also recorded at the

evening meal and evening assembly by each boarding house and annually checked as part of a compliance inspection. As part of the lock-up procedures each night, the tutor on duty will check that every boarder is present in the house. Boarding house lock-up procedures are also checked annually as part of a compliance inspection.

- 5.5.2 Parents of day pupils complete a whereabouts form each week which is provided to housemasters, matrons and their tutor teams. Day pupils are expected to attend all weekday meals in the boarding house (as well as breakfast and lunch on a Saturday), and their mealtime and lesson attendance is monitored on the School's MIS. The whereabouts form will indicate whether the day pupil is to attend the evening assembly or return home after tea. Day pupils are required to attend one evening assembly per week, and they have the option of tea on Saturdays as well as all meals on Sundays if they sign up for them.
- 5.5.3 All pupils' (day or boarding) extracurricular attendance (including cultural, community service, clubs, societies, additional or extracurricular academic work as well as sports and Combined Cadet Force) is monitored and recorded on SOCS (a system that interfaces with iSAMS).
- 5.5.4 The School will keep accurate admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively.

5 **Staff responsibilities**

The SAC

- 5.1 The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.

5.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

- (a) to set a clear vision for maintaining high levels of attendance;
- (b) to maintain consistent and effective systems for tackling absence;
- (c) to regularly monitor and evaluate attendance and the efficacy of the School's systems;
- (d) to communicate the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

5.2 **Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance:**

The staff identified in Appendix 1 have day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

- 5.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- 5.2.2 record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;
- 5.2.3 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;
- 5.2.4 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- 5.2.5 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;
- 5.2.6 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- 5.2.7 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

- 5.2.8 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

Appendix 1 School arrangements

1 The role of parents / carers

- 1.1 The School expects all parents to:
- 1.1.1 apply for leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
 - 1.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and
 - 1.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.
- 1.2 Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 08:00 for house breakfast;
- 1.3 Parents of boarding pupils should ensure their child returns to their boarding accommodation by the designated starts of term published in our term times on the school's website.

2 Registration and attendance checks

- 2.1 Morning registration is at breakfast 08:00.
- 2.2 Afternoon registration is at lunch 13:00.
- 2.3 Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.
- 2.4 If a pupil is late to a class they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L) and number of minutes late is recorded.

3 Reporting absence

- 3.1 If a day pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the housemaster by 08:00 on the first morning of absence;
- 3.2 Where a day pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

4 Arrangements for reporting absence

- 4.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in 0.

5 Managing absence

If a pupil is absent for a short time (such as for a short illness), the Housemaster and Matron should be informed. They will record this in iSAMS. Unexplained absences are referred to the Second Master and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for appropriate follow up. Long term absence by a pupil is managed by the DSL, Deputy Head Pastoral and the Second Master in conjunction with the Pastoral Support Group. This is likely to include regular liaison with parents, the Housemaster and Matron, the Health and Wellbeing Centre, the School Doctor and any relevant external agencies such as CAMHS. Depending on the circumstances, the School may implement

a phased return for a pupil and organise the provision of online resources (if that is appropriate). The School will always work towards a pupil returning full time to lessons and the boarding house as soon as possible.

6 **Authorised absences**

6.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

7 **Applications for leave of absence**

7.1 Applications for leave of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Undermaster (e-mail: dtr@wincoll.ac.uk).

7.2 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

7.3 Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Undermaster.

7.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the Housemaster and Matron should be informed.

7.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Undermaster to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.

7.6 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

8 **Reporting duties**

8.1 The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attendance their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

8.2 If a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System misses ten consecutive expected contact points, the School will report to UKVI.

8.3 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

8.4 The report will be made by the School's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management system and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance

8.5 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Pupil Policy, an appendix in the safeguarding and child protection policy, if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

Appendix 2 Admission register

1 Admission register

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:
 - 1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
 - 1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2 The admission register will be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register will be made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.3 The school will ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 1.4 The admissions register will contain specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended and whether each pupil of compulsory school age is a boarder or day pupil.¹
- 1.5 A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name will be deleted.²
- 1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School will provide it with the following information:
 - 1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;
 - 1.6.2 the address of the pupil;
 - 1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
 - 1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
 - 1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
 - 1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

¹ Regulation 8 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 specifies what information must be included in the admissions register. See also chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

² Schools must refer to regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 for full details of the legal grounds for deleting a pupil from the registers. See also chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

Appendix 3 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

- 1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) including boarders in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024³
- 1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.⁴
- 1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
 - 1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
 - 1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
 - 1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or
 - 1.6.4 absent.
- 1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
 - 1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
 - 1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
 - 1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
 - 1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
 - 1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

- 2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

³ Regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 specifies what information must be included in the attendance register. See also chapter 8 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

⁴ Registers are legal records and the School must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date that the data was entered.

- 2.1.1 leaves of absence;
- 2.1.2 other authorised reasons;
- 2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;
- 2.1.4 unauthorised absence.⁵

3 **Remote education**

- 3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.
- 3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:
 - 3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;
 - 3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
 - 3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.
- 3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.
- 3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4 **Unauthorised absence**

- 4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:
 - 4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Undermaster.
 - 4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

⁵ Schools should refer to regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to ensure they are correctly recording reasons for absence and the applicable commentary in chapter 8 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

- 4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- 4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.