



C30 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Last reviewed: November 2009

Next Review: A1 11

Approved by Governors Cabinet

Date: 2/11/09

1 Aims

Students will achieve most by attending school on a regular basis. Recent DCSF evidence indicates that even a 90% attendance record would have a considerable effect on achievement. Our core aim is to encourage and support students and their families so that student attendance is as high as possible in all year groups in the school.

We aim to:

- Monitor attendance for all students closely
- Identify performance targets and implement strategies to help achieve these targets
- Follow a clear and effective system (below) to improve student attendance

2 Attendance System

- Online registration occurs at am and pm roll call and during every lesson
- Letters are sent to parents whose child's attendance drops below 90%
- We operate a computer based attendance system overseen by staff in the main school office
- Support staff to track attendance and report to the Deputy Head, Assistant Heads and Student Achievement Leaders on a regular basis
- Student Achievement Leaders discuss and analyse attendance statistics twice per term, share good practice and agree action to improve student attendance
- Form Tutors set regular attendance targets with students causing concern
- A dedicated phone line with answer machine is available for calls 24 hours a day
- The school will contact parents as soon as a student is absent with no explanation
- Staff will take a class register at the start of each lesson
- Continued and frequent absences with no satisfactory explanation will be referred to the Attendance Improvement officer
- Only the Headteacher has discretion to approve absence from school
- Random attendance checks will be operated during the day to deter unauthorised absences from lessons
- Attendance and punctuality is reported to parents at least twice a year
- If students miss a registration they must sign in and bring a note explaining their lateness

3 Rewards

- The school rewards students with excellent attendance in the following ways
- Excellent attendance is highlighted in assemblies by Student Achievement Leaders. Form groups with the best attendance are commended regularly
- Regular information is published in the Newsletter regarding whole school attendance and best performing Form Groups and Year Groups are announced
- All students with excellent attendance are awarded certificates at the annual prize giving assemblies in July

4 Guidance to Parents

- Parents must inform school on the first day a student is absent (by note or phone)
- Please do not take students out of school during term time; this seriously affects their learning.



- Under normal circumstances, absence will not be granted for a holiday. If a child is taken on holiday without permission this will count as unauthorised absence and will be reported as such on all reports and references.

5 Guidance to Students

- Monitor your own attendance and ensure that it is excellent
 - Your achievement will be affected by poor attendance
 - You must catch up with any work missed as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to find out what the work is from your teachers
- 6** The Governing Body has authorised the Headteacher to issue a fixed penalty notice to parents who take students out of school for a period of time unauthorised by the school, e.g. a holiday of 10 or more days.



APPENDIX 1

AUTHORISING ABSENCE

Only the Headteacher has discretion to approve absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered – or when no explanation is forthcoming at all – the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Absence will be recorded as AUTHORISED if:

- The student is absent with leave granted by the Headteacher
- The student is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent belongs
- The student is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- There is a family bereavement
- The student is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at an institute of further or higher education or for a place at another school
- The student is attending approved work experience
- The student is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition
- The student is attending the Dacorum Education Support Centre
- The student is participating in an approved public performance
- The student is involved in an *exceptional* special occasion. In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered

Family holidays and extended trips overseas during term time

Parents are reminded that they cannot expect that the school will agree to a *family* holiday during term time. In fact, the Governors of the school actively discourage this practice. However leave of absence may be granted by the Headteacher for a *family* holiday of no more than 10 school days in *exceptional circumstances*.

Absence will be recorded as UNAUTHORISED if in all other cases especially and including the following:

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation



- The student is staying at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the DCSF guidance is that absence in such cases should only be granted in *exceptional circumstances*)
- The student is shopping during school hours
- The student is absent for *unexceptional* special occasions
- The student is away from school on a *family* holiday for a period of time that has not been agreed with the school
- The student is on a *family* holiday without permission or, in the case of *exceptional circumstances*, the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return