

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a fulltime education which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- 1.2 At Tudor Hall we believe education to be a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for our pupils, and we look to parents to support this objective.
- 1.3 Regular school attendance correlates directly with success in academic work and provides opportunities for important communication between teachers and pupils. National research shows that when students of equal 'ability' are compared, those with attendance of over 95% perform one grade higher per subject than those with attendance of 85% or less. Each further 10% fall reduces this by another grade.
- 1.4 Regular attendance also has a cumulative effect of establishing life-long positive traits — responsibility, determination, respect for rules of society - that are critical for developing career- readiness skills, success at university and in life.
- 1.5 We expect all pupils on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, provided they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- 1.6 The school recognises that reducing absence will:
 - 1.6.1 Promote our pupils' welfare and safeguarding;
 - 1.6.2 ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled; and
 - 1.6.3 improve each pupil's opportunity to succeed whilst at school and after they leave school.

2. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- 2.2 **It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that their child is safe.**
- 2.3 The Senior School can be contacted by phoning the absence line 01295 756 274 as soon as possible, and preferably before registration at 8.20am.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Authorised absence** - When a pupil is away from school, the school has received notification from a parent or guardian, and the school has granted permission for the absence.
- 3.2 **Unauthorised absence** - When a pupil is away from school without the permission of the school.

3.2.1 The decision as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised rests solely with the school. Therefore, an absence may be deemed unauthorised even if it has the support of a parent.

3.3 **Registration and Late Arrivals** - Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement *under 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations' 2006.*

3.3.1 Morning registration is taken by form tutors at 8.20am. Afternoon registration takes place in lessons on iSAMS at 13.35pm with the pupil's class teacher. Pupils arriving after these times report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L').

3.3.2 Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

3.4 **Early Arrivals** - If a Senior School pupil arrives on site before 8.10am they must go to their boarding house, after which they are free to go to their form room.

4. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL STAFF IN RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

4.1 **Form Tutors/Class Teachers/ Housemistress will:**

4.1.1 complete a register at the beginning of each morning. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late;

4.1.2 class Teachers register in the afternoon at the beginning of lesson 7 and mark pupils present, absent or late;

4.1.3 notify the Attendance Officer of pupils whose attendance is causing concern;

4.1.4 contact parent and/or pupil if a pupil is absent for more than three days;

4.1.5 contact Housemistresses, Head of Sixth and DSL and report concerns about attendance.

4.2 **The Attendance Officer will:**

4.2.1 endeavour to contact a parent or guardian at the earliest opportunity if an absence is unexpected. When communication from a parent is via email, the school office will send an acknowledgement to the same email address as verification;

4.2.2 collate a full list of absent pupils to put up in the post room for all staff after morning and afternoon registration.

4.3 **The Attendance Officer (AO) has overall responsibility for attendance** - It is the responsibility of the Senior Attendance Officer to ensure that:

4.3.1 attendance and lateness records are up to date;

4.3.2 parents are contacted on the day of absence if no reason has been provided;

- 4.3.3 unauthorised absence is followed up, with a seven day reply deadline before the absence is unauthorised (Code N will be changed to O);
 - 4.3.4 the appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes);
 - 4.3.5 the Senior Attendance Officer will examine attendance figures at the end of the first half term and monthly thereafter and will identify all pupils whose attendance/ punctuality has dropped below 95%. The Senior Attendance Officer will print off individual attendance/punctuality reports for these pupils and pass these to the relevant Housemistress; and
 - 4.3.6 report concerns to Housemistress and the DSL.
- 4.4 The Housemistress and Head of Sixth Form will have an overview of all issues relating to poor punctuality and attendance. If a new pupil has a history of poor attendance at their previous school, there will be a pre-start attendance meeting held with the relevant Head of School.
 - 4.5 The Housemistress and Head of Sixth Form discuss attendance and punctuality concerns at Welfare Meetings.

5. RECORD KEEPING

- 5.1 The school keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years. To comply with ISI regulations, a monthly back-up of the computerised registration system is recorded and kept in a separate location.

6. TIMELINE OF SCHOOL ACTION

6.1 **Poor punctuality**

- 6.1.1 If a pupil is unauthorised late regularly, the pupil will meet with the relevant Housemistress or Head of Sixth;
- 6.1.2 If a pupil fails to improve, sanctions may be enforced, and a letter will be sent home; and
- 6.1.3 If improvement is still not shown, parents will be required to meet with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) (see penalty proceedings).

6.2 **Authorised absence**

- 6.2.1 The Attendance Officer will identify all pupils whose attendance has dropped below 95% after the first half term, and monthly thereafter. The Attendance Officer will print off individual attendance/punctuality reports for these pupils and pass these to the relevant Housemistress/Head of Sixth who may contact the pupil's parent or guardian if the reasons have not already been discussed. The conversation is a proactive measure emphasising the importance of excellent attendance and exploring reasons for absence if unknown or unclear;
- 6.2.2 When a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, the Housemistress/Head of Sixth will investigate in more detail. Parents will be invited into school to

discuss the impact of the absences and solutions sought. The DSL will be made aware; and

- 6.2.3 Should poor attendance continue, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL will contact parents and this may involve a referral to the Oxfordshire County Council Education Welfare Officer.

6.3 **Unauthorised absence**

- 6.3.1 A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.
- 6.3.2 In the first instance, the school office will contact the parent or guardian of any pupil who has an unauthorised absence. Where there has been no communication, an email will be sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a seven day reply deadline before the absence is unauthorised;
- 6.3.3 The Attendance Officer will identify all pupils who have more than 3 unauthorised absences in a half term and inform the relevant Housemistress/Head of Sixth. The Housemistress/Head of Sixth will investigate in more detail and parents may be invited into school to discuss the problem. The DSL should be made aware and the situation closely monitored;
- 6.3.4 Should poor attendance continue, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL will contact parents, and this may involve a referral to the Oxfordshire County Council Education Welfare Officer;
- 6.3.5 Any pupil who has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more is deemed to be a safeguarding risk. The DSL will be actively involved and a referral to the Oxfordshire County Council Education Welfare Officer and the CME (Children Missing Education) team may be made.

6.4 **Children Missing or Absent in Education** - The school will inform the local authority where a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the admission register on certain grounds. These are:

- 6.4.1 When a child has been taken out of school to be home educated;
- 6.4.2 When the family has apparently moved away, or the child will be attending another school;
- 6.4.3 When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend;
- 6.4.4 When the child is in custody for more than four months;
- 6.4.5 When a child has been permanently excluded;
- 6.4.6 The school will alert the Local Authority to children removed or added at non-standard times (when a compulsory school age child leaves the school before completing the school's final year or joins a school after the beginning of the school's first year). If children leave at 16+ or 18+, authorities are not informed;

6.4.7 The school recognises that children missing education can be a safeguarding issue particularly when a child leaves with no known destination. The local authority will be informed. The school will consider whether to inform the local authority in which the pupil lives if it is different to that of the school; and

6.4.8 The school will notify the local authority when a pupil fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days (continuously).

7. IF A PUPIL IS ABSENT FROM A LESSON

7.1 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a pupil, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the Attendance Officer or reception. Reception will follow the appropriate procedure to locate the pupil (see 'Missing Child Policy-Whole School').

8. PENALTY PROCEEDINGS

8.1 Aside from an impact on attainment, poor attendance will have other long-term repercussions.

8.2 Attendance percentages will be recorded on Senior School reports. Increasingly we are finding that reports are requested as part of references. Thus, pupils with poor attendance could jeopardise long term prospects;

8.3 In terms of writing references Tudor Hall cannot in good faith make a positive comment about a pupil's reliability should they have poor attendance and punctuality;

8.4 When a pupil has a record of poor punctuality or attendance without good reason, the school may preclude them from possessing positions of responsibility in the Sixth Form;

8.5 In significant cases the school reserves the right to review a pupil's place at Tudor Hall, particularly during the transition from Year 11 to the Lower Sixth; and

8.6 If authorised attendance is below 90% for 2 half-terms in any academic year, a referral to the Oxfordshire County Council Education Welfare Officer may be made.

9. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

9.1 A parent's explanation, a letter or telephone message does not in itself authorise an absence. Absences will only be authorised if an explanation is received and agreed by the school.

9.2 Term dates are published in advance in order that parents can arrange holidays and family activities without disrupting their child's holistic education. We expect parents to respect these dates to ensure their child's full participation in the life of the school.

9.3 **Parents are requested to note that pupils are required to attend a number of events that occur after the normal school day or on Saturdays. These compulsory events include:**

9.4 **Autumn term**

- Closed Weekends
- School Birthday
- Open Days if required to attend
- School Lectures/Talks
- Mark Readings

9.5 **Spring term**

- Closed weekends
- School Lectures/Talks
- Mark Reading

9.6 **Summer term**

- Closed weekends
- Sports Day
- Speech Day
- Mark Reading

9.7 The following reasons are examples of absence that will not normally be authorised:

- 9.7.1 Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell;
- 9.7.2 Absence of siblings if one child is ill;
- 9.7.3 Oversleeping;
- 9.7.4 Confusion over school dates;
- 9.7.5 Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons;
- 9.7.6 Child's/family birthday;
- 9.7.7 Family holidays; and
- 9.7.8 Travelling during term time.

9.8 **Boarders are particularly required to note that leaving early at the end of a school term in order to utilise cheaper/more convenient flights is not acceptable. Such absence will be recorded as unauthorised.**

10. AUTHORISATION OF ABSENCE: UP TO ONE DAY

10.1 Absence can be authorised by the relevant Housemistress/Head of Sixth Form for:

- Interviews;
- Careers courses etc. connected with a pupil's future;
- Participation in representative games and activities;
- Unavoidable doctors' and dentists' appointments. Whenever possible these should be arranged after the school day, at weekends or during the school holidays; and
- Sixth Formers are allowed to attend two university visits in the Summer term of the Lower Sixth. Students should fill out the required permission form, which should be signed by parents, the student's Form Tutor and the Head of Sixth Form.

11. AUTHORISATION OF ABSENCE: ABSENCE OF MORE THAN ONE DAY

11.1 Only the Head can authorise absence of more than three consecutive days. Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds or in exceptional family circumstances should be made in writing to the Headmistress.

- 11.2 Where there is doubt, the Headmistress, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be absolutely unavoidable.
- 11.3 If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

12. MEDICAL LONG-TERM ABSENCE

- 12.1 When a pupil has an illness or injury that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that the pupil can keep up with their schoolwork. After 5 consecutive days' absence, a doctor's note must be provided. Housemistress/Head of Sixth or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be in regular contact with parents to ensure continuity of provision.
- 12.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repeated absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for them to be given some tuition outside school.

13. STUDY LEAVE

- 13.1 Pupils will be granted study leave during internal and public exams. During this time, pupils will be expected to sign in and out at reception. Pupils are only allowed to take study leave that has been agreed with the school.

14. BOARDERS

- 14.1 **Term dates are published over a year in advance in order that flights can be booked without disrupting a pupil's education. We therefore expect all pupils to arrive punctually on the first day of term, and not to leave school before the last day of term.**
- 14.2 All pupils who board are cared for by House staff, who are responsible for the pupils during term-time, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal school hours.
- 14.3 The school expects pupils to 'sign out' when they leave their boarding house and 'sign in' on return. This is to ensure that the school always knows the whereabouts of the pupils during the daytime when they are under the school's care.
- 14.4 The school expects the pupils to live with their parents or their guardian when they are away from school during exeats and half terms. Permission must be sought from the pupil's Housemistress if they are invited to stay with another family. The House staff will liaise with both families and guardians.
- 14.5 If a pupil is taken ill during an exeat and will not be returning on time, parents or guardians must inform the school. (The school will always telephone the home if the pupil is more than three hours late in returning from an exeat.)
- 14.6 The school expects Year 11 and Upper Sixth boarders to make arrangements with guardians if they wish to have time away from school on completion of their public examinations. Pupils must remain in the country in order to attend Mark Reading.

15. SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE PRIVILEGES

- 15.1 Sixth form pupils are expected to attend the full school day. However, as benefits their increasing responsibility and independence, they may be granted a number of unique privileges. These privileges are given at the discretion of the school and will be removed should there be any academic or pastoral concerns. These privileges are:

- 15.1.1 Any Sixth Former may arrange to leave school for a driving lesson during the school day if they have no lessons. Written permission for this must be given by home and agreed by the Head of Sixth Form.
- 15.1.2 Upper Sixth may leave at 4pm on a Friday (boarders) and return on a Sunday, if they do not have any school commitments on the weekend that require them to stay in school.

Approved by Tudor Hall Head: September 2023

Approved by Education & Welfare Committee: October 2023

Approved by Tudor Hall Head: August 2024