



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

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## INTRODUCTION

Excellent attendance at The Worthgate School is necessary for students to fulfil their potential. It is a statutory requirement for Compulsory School Age (CSA) students entering the UK with a visa. The policy should reflect the age range of students attending the school: CSA, 16-17yrs and 18+yrs.

## AIMS

- To maximise student attendance to promote student achievement and safety.
- To provide accurate daily, weekly, and termly information on attendance through efficient use of registration systems and reporting.
- To facilitate monitoring of patterns and absence.
- To ensure prompt and effective liaison with Attendance Officer (AO), Personal Tutors (PTs), parents and agents. To ensure PTs, and House Pastoral Directors (HPDs) are proactive in following up issues.
- To comply with the ISI regulations on school attendance and ensure accurate reporting to parents and the executive committee.
- To comply with the UKVI's requirements for Student and Child Student visas.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

- All staff will follow procedures for checking student non-attendance, based on a shared understanding of registration codes, authorised / unauthorised absence and an understanding of the differences between CSA, 16-17 and 18+ students.
- Authorised absences are individual sessions, mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as illness or an unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. Only the medical team can permit an authorised absence due to illness or injury.
- Registers will be marked within ten minutes of the start of the lesson and checked by the Attendance Officer. All under-18 students are scrutinised more closely, and absences chased directly by the Exeat and Attendance Officer. An hourly attendance review is carried out for all students, with CSA students prioritised for immediate follow up.
- Every day, the 'unmarked register' report in Shackleton is sent to any teachers with outstanding registers. Every Monday, an 'unmarked registers' report is sent to the Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP), Assistant Principal Academic (APA) and Vice Principal (VP). Teaching staff are reminded twice about any unmarked register, and then it is followed up by the line manager for disciplinary action.
- The pastoral team and Attendance Officer will liaise weekly to review low attendance, reasons for it, sanctions, support, and outcomes. Other relevant staff will be engaged where it is in a student's interest to receive specialist support.
- Attendance statistics will be published according to statutory and school requirements.
- The school target for yearly attendance figures is 100% and the school will seek to maximise student attendance year on year.

- The school will observe the requirements of the UKVI. This will include being proactive in monitoring student attendance and ceasing to sponsor students who continue not to meet attendance requirements despite support.
- The school will report all unauthorised non-attendees to the UKVI once they have missed 10 consecutive contact points. A contact point is defined as an entire day (Monday to Friday) for this purpose. In addition to timetabled classes, contact points may also include meetings with residential staff or other school welfare staff.
- A student who is reported to the UKVI for 10 missed contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the school and it does therefore not signify that the school has ceased sponsorship. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Principal.
- New teachers will receive an induction on their role in attendance matters regarding authorised/unauthorised absence and the marking of registers.
- Where strategies in place do not lead to improvement, a clear change in policy could be instituted which may include:
  - SLS session(s)
  - Personal hourly lesson checks by the Attendance Team.
  - Specialist support based on any outcomes / recommendations from investigation.
  - A formal attendance meeting with the LEA at which the possibility of court action may be raised if the student is British and under the age of 16.
  - Increase in Discipline Stage.
  - Meetings with senior staff.
  - Academic warning letters. After a Stage 4 warning the student may be subject to expulsion.
- There will be recognition of critical times in the life of a student after absences (e.g. after long term illness, bereavement, family pressures, etc.) when we need to be proactive to ensure the routines of good attendance are quickly re-established and the student is well supported in this. Clearly every case must be judged on its merits, but the following strategies should be automatically considered:
  - Staff awareness, so there can be tailored responses to student need.
  - Some work set and marked prior to return under the management of the subject departments, overseen by the APA.
  - Enhanced monitoring of attendance upon return, perhaps through the Daily Report system to encourage and motivate the student to succeed.
- Late return to the school or early departure caused by flight schedules will need to be sanctioned by the school on an individual basis only when there is very good reason.
- The school recognises that certain multi-cultural and mixed faith community religious festivals will fall in term time and may be recognised locally as a significant day and as such can be considered as authorised absence.
- Parents of students will be contacted promptly regarding attendance issues as per the Terms and Conditions of the school.

- Students falling below 95% attendance are at risk of falling into 'dire attendance' and will have their attendance monitored closely through use of the Discipline Stages and other relevant strategies.
- A student may not undertake paid employment during their time as a member of the school without the written permission of the Principal. Visa restrictions must also be adhered to.

## **INDIVIDUAL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Teachers**

It is the teacher's responsibility to mark students as 'absent' or 'present' for every class using Shackleton. The register must be marked in the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Teachers must only indicate a student is Present (/), Absent (A) or Late (L). Any formally excused lates or absences will have their codes altered by the Attendance Officer retroactively. The list of attendance codes is shown at the end of this document in Appendix 1, which also shows which members of staff are permitted to authorise absence. Teachers are not allowed to authorise absence. It is essential that only the approved members of staff are involved in authorising any absence under DfE and UKVI mandates.

If a student is more than ten minutes late to a class (defined as 10 minutes after the lesson was timetabled to begin), they must be marked as late (L) and the number of minutes (since the timetabled start of the lesson) recorded. At the end of the lesson, teachers should speak with the student about their punctuality. Where there is a lack of reasonable excuse, instruct the student it must not happen again. Repeated failure to follow staff instructions will warrant a Stage warning. Where a student is regularly absent from classes in just one of their subjects, the teacher should initiate a subject attendance report as part of their Stage warning, annotated on Shackleton.

Where a student is on a whole school, attendance report issued by HPD, teacher should collect sign the report at the end of the lesson if the student is punctual. If late, the teacher indicated this, using the number of minutes late, with an 'L'. This should match the register mark.

### **Personal Tutor (PT) and House Pastoral Director (HPD)**

The Personal Tutor must monitor their tutees' attendance and raise this as part of their 1-2-1s, checking the relevant notes in Shackleton. If a student's low attendance is not seen to be being addressed, the PT must raise this with the AO and HPD immediately, along with details of their conversation with that student. Those whose overall attendance falls below 95% are at risk of 'dire attendance', classed as below 85%, which should result in a visa sponsorship withdrawal. The PT should work with the AO and HPD in supporting improved attendance for a relevant student.

On the Friday of the penultimate week of every half term, that term's attendance report is run by the Attendance Officer. This should be filtered for 100% attenders (for that half term) and sent to HPDs, who will incorporate celebratory recognition into House messages and assemblies.

If the student's attendance does not sufficiently improve (this will be monitored by the AO, HPD and PT), The Pastoral Team can implement the following sanctions:

- Supervised Study Support sessions.
- Place student on report. This will be a subject-based or departmental option if the student's absence is entirely or predominantly from one subject or department. Where regular absence has no discernable pattern, the HPD instigates and monitors the report.
- Removal of permission slips.
- Gate the student to residence or early curfew.
- Exeat refusal.

### **Attendance Officer**

It is the responsibility of the school Attendance Officer to ensure that all registers are marked and recorded on Shackleton. For all students the register should be checked 10 minutes into the lesson, beginning with the first period each teaching day. If unauthorised absence is identified, the Attendance Officer should contact and locate the student, before sending them to lessons.

The Attendance Officer compiles the following reports:

- Daily absence & lateness report – recorded relevant absences in the systems.
- Updating, maintenance and communication of the SLS register.
- Compile and distribute weekly Attendance Progress report to APP, PDs and BTLs detailing low attenders, their support and sanctions; plus outcomes from the previous week's students of concern.
- Hourly Absence report.
- Unmarked registers report sent to relevant teachers daily.
- Weekly unmarked register report emailed to APP, APA & VP.

These reports are checked and actioned as necessary by all staff.

The Attendance Officer is also responsible for spotting trends and checking for regular absence patterns which could give rise to concern, and reporting this to the HPDs and APP.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT AND SANCTIONS**

For any students identified as late or truanting, the deterrent in the first instance is a sanction (as detailed in the table below). A student's time in Supervised Study will be used for support, with supervising staff (middle leaders and AO) and/or the AO/PD/teacher taking the opportunity to discuss and remedy potential barriers to attending.

Breach	Consequence	Procedure
Late to lesson	Attend SLS in PSA on same day (or next available day) from 4:15pm for 30 minutes per recorded 'late'.	Lateness (and attendance) report produced and emailed at 3:45pm by Attendance Officer to Middle Leaders, APP, APA and BTL mailing group. Acts as a register for middle leader supervising. Also serves as a list for Attendance Officer to review reasons for lateness in relevant registers and excuse students where appropriate. At the end of SLS, the updated register is emailed to BTLs & HPDs to follow up on any missed sanctions.
Absent from lesson (truancy)	Attend SLS in PSA on same day (or next available day) from 4:15pm – 5:15pm.	Same as above. AO contacts the truanting student via Teams, Outlook and mobile phone if necessary. After establishing that the student is safe, inform the student they are being issued with a 60-minute SLS (and when).
Missing a Supervised Study without prior notice / good reason	Give one more opportunity to attend SLS. Roll any other SLS sessions forward. If no attendance, set SLT detention (Mon 4:15pm)	AO informs offending student of next SLS session. If they do not attend, AO updates SLT detention tracker and informs student and parent of the sanction.
Persistent lateness / absences	Weekly Attendance report	Issued by HPD. Monitored by HPD & AO. Student must provide teachers of every lesson with the report and ensure it is complete before collecting it at the end. Teachers continue with registers as always.
Less than 85% attendance in a week.	SLT detention	AO & APP weekly meetings highlight causes for concern. Those below 85% immediately qualify for SLT detention.

Note: Where a student has sat (or missed) SLS for any attendance related issues, they have their **permission slip removed** that evening.

<p><b>Examples of support that could be offered as appropriate in addition to the sanctions above:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Meeting with pastoral staff – target setting and review</li> <li>✓ Communications with guardian/parents</li> <li>✓ Daily wake up calls and specialist support with sleep patterns</li> <li>✓ Time management skills support</li> <li>✓ Peer mentor</li> <li>✓ Meet with ALS Coordinator</li> </ul>	<p><b>Additional note on attendance:</b></p> <p>Unless in exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the Principal, no single cause of authorised absence (including medical) can exceed 20% Overall, and no combination of authorised absence can exceed 30% Overall, in a consecutive 5-week period. Any absences beyond these figures are to be recorded as Unauthorised.</p>
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## OVERSIGHT

The Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP) is responsible for oversight of the attendance procedures. They receive information from other school staff and take appropriate action in accordance with the Policy.

### Vice Principal, Assistant Principal Academic, Assistant Principal Pastoral and Head of Boarding

They will implement Stage 4 of the disciplinary process. It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal or the DSL to inform the Police, agents and parents of any serious absences. The Vice Principal will intervene at a Stage 5 in the absence of the Principal for the disciplinary/attendance process.

They will:

- Liaise with the APP and Attendance Officer.
- Meet with the student and HPDs.
- Review the HPD's action plan with student and relevant colleagues to raise attendance.
- Inform parents/agents via Cause for Concern letter.
- Review PT's/HPD's meet(ings) with student to review progress.
- Record action plans on Shackleton and monitor through Attendance Officer.

The Principal is responsible for making the final decision on whether a student will be suspended or expelled for continued poor attendance. Following a Stage 4 warning, a student must meet regularly with their HPD or an SLT member. Progress will be tracked carefully and failure to improve will be dealt with by the APP. Whilst students will be supported to improve their attendance, a continual failure to improve is taken very seriously. The visa sponsorship of a student will be withdrawn if they are expelled.

## STUDENTS LIVING IN INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION

If a student is absent, they should contact the School to speak to the attendance officer or Medical Team if the reasons are medical. A parental note or email is required from an authorised source to



authorise any non-attendance and should be sent to the Student Communications Team or Attendance Officer.

## **EXEATS**

See Exeat Policy.

## APPENDIX 1

### Attendance Authorisation Process and Register Codes

If a student wishes to have absences out of school authorised, the following process should be followed.

- For medical absences the student must contact the nurse if unwell via Microsoft Teams or Outlook (email).
- For other general absences (appointments/interviews/lateness/other reasons) students must contact the Attendance Officer in first instance and/or House Pastoral Director (HPD), with the details of the absence.
- Attendance Officer can authorise up to half a day's absence where proof of reason is valid. Up to two days should be authorised by the HPD, who can consult the Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP) if necessary.
- Absences more than two days must go via the APP.
- Once the evidence is received and verified **the Attendance Officer (AO) should scan a copy of the evidence/save a copy under the** appropriate category (Attendance Documents) [Intakes - Student Files](#). The evidence is usually received via email or Teams.
  - o Global drive has attendance folder in, each school has a folder.
  - o Each school folder contains individual evidence folders: Medical (restricted), Educational, Other.
- Once the evidence has been saved, the student's attendance records need to be updated. They should be block marked, with the appropriate attendance mark used and a note entered detailing the reason.
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The mark is updated appropriately after having received evidence from student and authorisation from member of staff, as per below:

<i>Medical</i>	<i>Other absence</i>
<i>Nurse</i>	<i>Attendance Officer (AO) in consultation with HPD</i>

- A student attendance event should then be entered on a Shackleton note, detailing the dates authorised, reason for (sensitive information being written in a private note box) and the evidence noted as seen.
- Below are the attendance marks that must be used to monitor student attendance together with their definition, when they should be used, and the required evidence.

<u>Code</u>	<u>Definition and Use</u>	<u>Notes/Evidence Needed</u>
/	<b>PRESENT</b> Student attending class.	None.
<b>A</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>	Absent, but no communication has been received from student.

	Unauthorised – student not attending class.	
<b>L</b>	<b>LATE</b> Present – student is late for the start of the lesson.	At teachers’ discretion. No communication received/legitimate reason for lateness.
<b>M</b>	<b>MEDICAL</b> Authorised, student is unwell or attending an appointment.	School nurse enters medical event – confirms whether student’s medical absence request is to be authorised.  Student provides evidence to support medical appointment/absence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official medical certification from GP.</li> <li>• From a Registered doctor.</li> <li>• Worthgate Medical Team’s assessment of student.</li> <li>• Covid testing appointments pre-flight.</li> <li>• Notes from herbalist “shops” will not be accepted.</li> </ul> Medical appointments.
<b>O</b>	<b>AUTHORISED ABSENT</b> Not in class as authorised to be absent by PD/N/AO/SLT.	Student is authorised from lessons due to a verified reason. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police/visa/bank appointments confirmed with official appointment slip.</li> <li>• Landlord visits with confirmation letter/email (no more than 4 hours only off)</li> <li>• Personal leave due to personal matters, at the discretion of Pastoral Team (no more than 3 days)</li> <li>• Compassionate leave (no more than 5 days), confirmed by agents/parents and APP / Registrar. Flight tickets on file where relevant.</li> <li>• Independent Accommodation Student - Transport related (depending on the situation, this can be authorised without evidence. However long periods of absence or a full day, or repeated issues, require additional verification such as a screenshot of underground status report).</li> <li>• English Language Test (external).</li> <li>• Any other reasonable, evidenced event.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	<b>EDUCATIONAL VISIT</b> Authorised, student visiting a University or attending an interview.	Must be informed of absence 48 hours in advance for authorisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University email/letter, from verified email address or on headed paper. Must contain student’s name and/or matching email address with date and time of appointment.</li> </ul> Letter from another institution requesting interview. Must contain student’s name and date/time of appointment.
<b>#</b>	<b>SCHOOL CLOSURE</b> Null, i.e. staff training, bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLT confirm closure of the school. Block mark entire student body for the period, i.e. Bank Holiday, stating the reason in the register event. No evidence or student event needed.</li> </ul>

	weather, religious holiday.	
<b>T</b>	<b>TRANSFERRED</b> Null, student transferred to another class.	None needed.
<b>W</b>	<b>WITHDRAWN</b> Null, student withdrawn from class/school	None needed.
<b>Z</b>	<b>NOT EXPECTED</b> Null, student not expected in that class, arriving late for start of term or class attendance is not expected.	A student is arriving late into the term, once arrival date is confirmed enter this mark until that date. If arrival date is not confirmed, this should be used for a maximum of five days at a time. This mark can also be used to null class modules if they are not expected for one day a week, due to a clash for example. Student event needs to be entered as well as register event.
<b>N</b>	<b>NOT HERE</b> Null, class is optional.	This is an optional mark and should only be used for activities outside the standard timetable, such as activities or additional support lessons. This should not be used for academic classes. Only AOs should use this mark.
<b>D</b>	<b>SUSPENSION</b> Null, student is suspended from school.	If a student has been suspended these marks should be entered from the first day of suspension until the last. Normally a financial suspension is marked as absent until payment is made, at which point the suspension marks can be backdated.
<b>F</b>	<b>FIELD TRIP</b> Student is attending a trip arranged by the college.	Staff should provide the trip list of expected students on the trip three working days in advance, so that authorisation can be done. The morning of the trip a register of those attending should be handed in. Any students absent should have their field trip marks removed and a "none" mark entered in case they attend classes, instead of the trip. A student event detailing this has happened should be made, and copied to personal tutor to check what the student did do.
<b>\</b>	<b>INDUCTION</b> Null, student partaking in induction activities.	None needed.
<b>V</b>	<b>EXAM</b> Present, student is sitting an exam with the school.	A list of students expected in the exam should be cross checked to authorise in advance. The register of attendees on the day should be returned to the relevant school staff and any absent students should have their exam marks removed and returned to "none".

#### Evidence notes:

- Word documents will not be accepted.
- Scan of appointment letter or forwarded appointment email can be accepted.
- Evidence must include names, date/times and email addresses on the documents to confirm ownership and details.

## APPENDIX 2

### Consequences for breaching attendance policy

--Breach		Stage	Consequence
G e n e r a l C o n d u c t	Failing to submit quality homework on time. Inattentive in class. Failing to comply with instructions. Late arrival to timetabled sessions. Rudeness to staff or students. Not 'Classroom Ready' (equipment & attire). Inappropriate use of digital devices (inc. phones, laptops, tablets, earphones etc.)	0	<p>Issued by: <b>Teacher</b></p> <p>has a face-to-face conversation with the student, ensures expectations are understood, and if necessary, informs student of their <b>SLS detention</b>...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. raises a Discipline Note in Shackleton detailing the behaviour and sanction (also describing support where appropriate).</li> <li>2. tick recipient box for 'Residence Supervisor' and 'Attendance' groups, plus your CD.</li> <li>3. alert Attendance Officer, HPD, PT and CD to the note.</li> </ol>
	Late to lesson (more than 5 mins after start).		<p>Issued by: <b>Teacher</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• record student as late on register (inc. number of minutes)</li> <li>• inform student they must attend PSA at 4:15pm for 30 minutes (per late mark each day) <i>Note: Attendance Officer will also communicate with student.</i></li> </ul>
	Truancy (missing a timetabled session).		<p>Issued by: <b>Attendance Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Support meeting with Attendance Officer, then remain in SLS for 1 hour.</li> <li>• No permission slip that evening. Student meets teacher, catch up on work.</li> </ul>
A t t e n d a n c e	Failure to attend SLS detention.		<p>Issued by: <b>Attendance Officer</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend the next 'Supervised Learning Support' for 1 hour.</li> <li>2. Repeat failure to attend SLS results in SLT detention and a Stage 1 Warning letter.</li> </ol>

## RELATED POLICIES

Student Behaviour Policy

Exeat Policy