



# **Attendance Policy**

August 2021



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## 1.0 Vision Statement

- 1.1 As a centre of excellence, all pupils at Cardiff Sixth Form College, on both A-level and GCSE courses, will be given an equal opportunity to learn in order to achieve their full potential.
- 1.2 It is the aim of the College to create a desire to excel in an environment where expectations are high and training is rigorous
- 1.3 A variety of teaching styles are employed and pupils' performance is monitored and enhanced
- 1.4 It is the overall responsibility of all staff and pupils to evaluate their own performance, by knowing and understanding how they are performing. Staff at all levels can enhance and share strengths and identify potential for improvement.

## 2.0 Aims

- 2.1 The College is committed to providing the highest quality of education for our pupils. As a result, the College expects pupils to all have outstanding attendance records, as there is a direct correlation between poor attendance and poor performance. Pupils are required to attend all lessons, timetabled additional support sessions, UAP (University Application Preparation), EAP (English for Academic Purposes), EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) and Critical Thinking lessons.
- 2.2 If pupils are over 16 years old, (on the 1st September of that academic year), then they are able to leave college during non-timetabled lessons or lunchtime. However, they have to report to boarding each night and register by 22.00hrs. They are then not allowed out of boarding until 06.00hrs each morning.
- 2.3 Compulsory School Aged pupils (CSA) are required to be in college for the entire college day. They are then registered for homework prep in the boarding house at 19.00hrs. Prep finishes at 20.30hrs. CSA pupils must register back at boarding for the night by 21.00hrs, being unable to leave until 06.00hrs the following morning.
- 2.4 The college day starts with voluntary drop in sessions, that any pupil can attend if they wish to do so, from 08.00 to 08.45hrs. Although these are not registered, a list of pupil attendance is kept.
- 2.5 Lessons then run from 08.55 to 17.55hrs, with a 45-minute lunch break and four 10 minute moving breaks too allow for Covid measures in place. From 17.30 to 19.30hrs, as well as dinner being served, there are various societies, clubs and sporting events that any pupil can choose to attend if they wish.
- 2.6 Term dates are published over a year in advance on the College website), in order for holidays to be arranged without disturbing a pupil's education. Please note that it is the College's policy to not allow holidays to be taken during term time. These will therefore count as unauthorised absences
- 2.7 The College aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
  - Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
  - Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - Acting early to address patterns of absence

## **3.0 School Procedures**

### **3.1 Attendance Register**

3.1.1 An attendance register is taken at the start of every lesson during each school day.

3.1.2 It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Late to a lesson
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

3.1.3 **See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes used to register pupil's attendance.**

### **3.2 Unplanned Absence**

3.2.1 For day pupils, parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence. For example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health, the College must be informed before the pupil's first lesson or as soon as practically possible. (See also section 5). Parents should contact the college to notify them of any absence.

3.2.2 Absence due to illness will be authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern regarding the authenticity of the illness.

3.2.3 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The College will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

3.2.4 If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.2.5 Boarding pupils must visit the College nurse if they are unwell and the nurse will decide whether the pupil is ill enough to miss lesson. In this event, the pupil will be admitted to the sickbay, which is located within the pupil's boarding house, where they will be monitored by the nurse. The nurse will decide if the pupil is well enough to return to class.

### **3.3 Medical or Dental Appointments**

3.3.1 Missing lessons for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage these medical and dental appointments to be made out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

3.3.2 Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 5.

### **3.4 Lateness and Punctuality**

3.4.1 Any pupil who arrives late to a lesson will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L) and the number of minutes late is entered by the classroom teacher.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

- 3.5.1 The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason behind the absence, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.
- 3.5.2 It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to monitor the attendance of pupils within their lesson and dealing with any individual pupil's with poor attendance. This may mean that pupils are required to attend additional drop in sessions, or to spend time in the supervised study area, catching up on missed work.
- 3.5.3 Heads of House oversee their pupil's overall attendance. By having an overall picture of an individual's attendance, they are able to spot trends and patterns.
- 3.5.4 For those pupils who have been highlighted as having consistently poor attendance or punctuality, they will have a one to one meeting with the Head of Academics, who will then initiate the relevant improvement programme for that pupil. This will be monitored by their Head of House. Parents and guardians will also be notified. Where appropriate, disciplinary action as detailed within the Disciplinary Policy can be a result. This can include formal verbal warning and subsequently a formal written warning and ultimately expulsion from the college, if their attendance does not improve.
- 3.5.5 Due to many of the College's international pupils being on a UK Tier 4 visa, it is imperative that registers are taken at the beginning of each lesson and the whereabouts of our pupils, during the college day, is known. This is particularly important for CSA pupils.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

3.6.1 Parents and Guardians have access to pupils' attendance records through the parent portal of ISAMS

## **4.0 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

4.1.1 The College may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The College considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the discretion of the SMT.

### **4.2 Reasons for authorised absence**

4.2.1 Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

4.2.2 If the absence is not approved but is taken, then this will be logged as unauthorised attendance.

## 5.0 Attendance Monitoring

- 5.1 The Attendance Officer and the Academic and Data Manager monitor pupil absence on a daily basis.
- 5.2 Parents of day pupils are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).
- 5.3 If a pupil's absence exceeds 5 days in a row, the College will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.
- 5.4 The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

## 6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### 6.1 SMT

- 6.1.1 The SMT is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. They are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the College.

### 6.2 The Academic and Data Manager

- 6.2.1 The Academic and Data Manager, with the support of the Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil as requested
- Reports concerns regarding attendance to the Academic and Data Manager
- Works with the Heads of House and teaching staff to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/guardians to discuss attendance issues

### 6.3 Heads of House/Class teachers

- 6.3.1 Heads of House/class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis on iSAMS, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Admin office.

### 6.4 The Attendance Officer and the Admin staff

- 6.4.1 The Academic and Data Manager, supported by Admin staff is expected to take calls from parents regarding absence and record it on the school system.

## 7.0 Raising Concerns

- 7.1 Any concern, including repeated or prolonged absence, should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers. The Wellbeing Officer is available to offer advice and to support the pupil if necessary. If the absence results in the identification of a serious safeguarding concern, the relevant person/body will be contacted as per the College's Child Protection Policy.

## 8.0 UKVI Reporting

- 8.1 In the event that a pupil is absent for more than 10 consecutive contact points, then the UKVI will be informed and this may result in the pupil's study visa being revoked.

## 9.0 Links with other policies

9.1 This policy is linked to the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

### Appendix 1: CSFC Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present	Pupil is present at morning registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
	Authorised absence	



C	Other authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
Q	Lessons have not started	Lessons have yet to start
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Non-compulsory School Age Absence	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day