

Attendance Policy



Saffron Valley Collegiate

Last reviewed: 18.11.20

To be reviewed: Autumn 2021

Mission Statement

The Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the re-engagement of the young person with education.

EQUALITIES STATEMENT:

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of the Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

Introduction

Ref:

- School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE November 2016)
- Safeguarding, Early Help and Child Protection Policy

The Saffron Valley Collegiate recognises the importance of regular attendance and punctuality to pupil progress. For many of the pupils at SVC, irregular patterns of attendance in the past have only served to compound their educational problems and increase their level of disaffection. We therefore place great emphasis on the need to encourage and support full attendance.

We aim to be insistent, persistent and consistent in our approach to improving attendance.

Aims & Objectives:

We aim to:

- Help overcome past 'habits' of avoiding attendance as a coping strategy;
- Ensure that all students receive their maximum entitlement to education and success;
- Fully involve parents/carers in the task of improving their son/daughter's attendance, where there are concerns;
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own attendance and to maintain a full attendance record in order to get the most benefit from their time at school;
- Re-establish the norm of daily attendance;
- Help students to gain the most benefit from their time in education and to protect them from the hazards of non-attendance.

This will be achieved through:

- Having a clear home-school agreement;
- Fostering positive teacher-pupil relationships;
- Developing and maintaining close home-school links;
- Providing access to needs focused curriculum;
- Developing personalised support plans, which may include time-limited work with parents/carers;
- Rewarding regular attendance;
- Prompt follow-up in cases of non-attendance and low attending pupils;
- Working in partnership with our educational welfare service provider and the Local Authority;
- Collaborative working with other external professional and voluntary agencies involved with a pupil's care

Expectations (see also Appendix A – attendance leaflet):

There are high levels of expectation with regards to attendance. There is a single clear message to pupils and parents/carers regarding the link between attendance and achievement through a RAG rated reporting system. Attendance below 95% is considered unacceptable and likely to result in underachievement.

Red: Less than 80%, significant concern

Amber: 80% - <90%, some effort required to achieve acceptable level of attendance

Green: 90% +, acceptable level of attendance

Parental Responsibility

The government expects parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer (NOT students) to:

- Contact the PRU on the morning of the first day of absence, and everyday thereafter;
- Ensure that all absences are accounted for by cooperating with staff seeking to establish reasons for non-attendance, in a timely manner;
- Minimise instances of absence due to appointments by, (wherever possible,) scheduling these in school holidays, after school, or towards the beginning or end of the school day;
- Provide advance warning of appointments that will result in school absence.

In cases of repeated unexplained absences or lack of communication from parents/carers, a referral will be made to our education welfare service provider. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) may also be imposed, in accordance with current guidance.

Punctuality

Punctuality to school and all lessons is as important as regular attendance.

Pupils who arrive at school after the register has closed will be allocated a U code. This equates to an absent mark. The school will challenge pupils receiving repeated U codes.

Attendance during the COVID-19 pandemic

It is particularly important that pupils maintain regular attendance during this challenging period, as there is always potential for disruption, e.g.:

- A pupil has COVID symptoms and needs to self-isolate and be tested;
- Someone in their household has COVID symptoms;
- A pupil is required to self-isolate because they have been a close contact of someone at school who is a confirmed case;
- There is national or local lockdown, which includes closure of the PRU. (NB: at the time of writing, it is the government's intention that pupil referral units would remain open to all pupils, even if mainstream schools were closed).

If a pupil is self-isolating, but they do not/no longer have COVID symptoms, they will be expected to continue learning. Teachers within their provision will direct them to work; this is most likely to be provided electronically, via email or an e-learning platform. **Pupils will only be able to receive an attendance mark for working offsite, if they join live lessons provided by teachers or directed by teaching support staff.**

Monitoring and Tracking Individual Attendance

There are robust systems for tracking pupil attendance on at least a fortnightly basis. Senior leaders use the data to identify concerns regarding punctuality and attendance and agree appropriate actions.

Modified (personalised) timetables

In certain circumstances it will be in a pupil's best interests to design a personalised, modified

timetable. Where this requires a pupil to attend the PRU for fewer than 10 full sessions, this will be recorded in a form, with clear reasons for the arrangements and a review date. This document will be signed by the parent/carer. The aim will always be to work towards a full-time timetable as soon as possible.

Authorised absence

The PRU is very clear about the circumstances under which absence can be authorised. See appendix B – authorised absence codes.

Granting leave of absence during term time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. If a headteacher grants leave, he or she will determine the number of days the child can be away from school.

The Headteacher will consider each application [for authorised leave of absence] individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Examples of circumstances where a leave of absence *may* be granted:

- A religious observance;
- Children of service personnel who are about to go on deployment;
- The funeral of a parent, grandparent or sibling;
- Sudden loss of housing (up to a maximum of three days);
- Weddings of parents and siblings.

(This list is not exhaustive)

In each case, the Headteacher will consider the nature of the circumstance and the child's former attendance record when making a decision on the authorisation of extended leave. All applications for absence during term time must be made in advance. Absence due to emergencies will be coded in the usual manner. Leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.

Parent/carers should note that they can be fined for taking a child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

Taking pupils off roll

The Collegiate follows Local Authority procedures for removing pupils from a school roll, to safeguard our vulnerable cohort; this includes identifying young people identified as CME: children missing education.

Rewarding excellent attendance

Group and individual rewards are awarded on a regular basis. These are most often agreed in consultation with pupils.

APPENDIX A



Working together to get your child to school.

Fact: there are 190 days in a school year which leaves 175 days to spend on family time, shopping, appointments and other things.

Their future in your hands....

190 days 100%	183 days 96%	179 days 94%	175 days 92%	More than 18 days 90%
Very best chance of success	Off to a good start	Less chance of success	Harder to make progress	Persistent absentee

Attendance at school is key to:

- Academic success- achieve potential and fulfil aspirations
- Returning to mainstream
- Successful transition to college, training or employment.
- Increase confidence and self-esteem.

It is an important part of us working together with parents and carers.

What do we do to promote good attendance?

- Provide an interesting range of subjects
- Make immediate contact if your child is not at school by the close of registration.
- Reward good attendance appropriately.
- Provide free breakfast.

What can parents/carers do?

- Call the school on the first day that your child is unable to attend. They may be have school day
- Avoid medical appointments during the school day.
- Advise the school of any difficulties they may be having so we can support appropriately.

Attendance system at SVC

Attendance alert letters: Below 95%

All pupils who have less than 95% attendance will receive a letter to show their attendance has fallen below the threshold for good attendance.

Attendance meetings: Below 90%

If attendance fails to improve, a meeting will be held to inform an Attendance Action Plan, to support your child improve their attendance. We will look into how best to do this together. Targets will be set, and monitored.

Referral to Local Authority

"if a pupil of compulsory school age ,who is registered pupil, fails to attend school regularly ,his/her parent is guilty of an offence" Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Penalty Notice fines can be issued:

- If a holiday is taken during term time without the permission of the Head Teacher
- If a pupil has unauthorised absence from school -10 unauthorised sessions [5 days] and the parent/carer fails to co-operate with school staff and/or other professionals to improve the situation.

How much are the fines?

£120 per parent/carer reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days

Punctuality

It is important that your child attends school every day and on time. Arriving late to school is unsettling for children. If your child arrives very late it is the same as being absent.

Did you know? 10 minutes late every day = 33 hours lost learning each year.

Can your child afford to miss out?

ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE CODES

The codes below are used for the following reasons/ circumstances (this list is not exhaustive):

B- Educated off site

This is used when pupils are accessing education off site, and are supervised by an adult, for example if a child is accessing home tuition.

C- Authorised absence

This is used when pupils have an authorised reason to not be in school. Examples of this are when pupils are on a reduced timetable for the above reasons but are unable to complete work due to family circumstances; or if pupils are attending meetings off site with other agencies i.e. Youth Offending Services, Social Services.

In addition, this code is used when schoolgirl mothers are on maternity leave.

D- Dual registered

This is used when pupils spend time accessing education at another site and are on the roll of both institutions. They are therefore dual registered.

E- Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded they will be marked absent using the code E.

I- Illness

This is used when pupils are too unwell to attend school. Staff will not authorise absences if they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. The PRU can request parents/carers to provide medical evidence to support illness; this can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards etc. If the PRU is not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness, parents/carers will be informed and the pupil will be marked absent.

J- Interview

This code is used when pupils have interviews, e.g. for college.

L- Late

This code is used when pupils are late for registration, but arrive before the register has closed.

M- Medical appointments

This is used when pupils have medical appointments. For example CAMHS, hospital, GP, dentist, baby's medical appointments (schoolgirl mothers). Where possible, parents/carers are asked to arrange appointments outside of school hours.

P – Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This will be used for pupils participating in a sporting activity that has been approved by the PRU and is supervised by someone authorised by the PRU.

R – Religious Observance

The PRU will treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body.

S – Study Leave

This will be used sparingly, and only granted to year 11 pupils during public examinations. In most provisions, the expectation will be that pupils will come to school to revise or engage in preparation classes.

T – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller. This code will be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the PRU, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It will not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

V- Educational Trip/ Visit

This is used when children are on an educational visit/ trip.

W – Work experience

This code will only be used for pupils in year 10 and 11. Absence from the placement will be recorded using the relevant code.