Attendance Policy and Procedure

West Hill Park School

Contents

1 Aims
2 Scope and application
3 Regulatory framework
4 Publication and availability
5 Definitions and interpretation
6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks
7 The importance of good attendance
8 School responsibilities
9 Staff responsibilities
10 School arrangements
11 Monitoring attendance
12 Pupil responsibilities
13 Additional needs
14 Parent / carer responsibilities
15 Training
16 Information sharing
17 Record keeping and confidentiality
18 Version control

Appendix

Appendix 1 School arrangements
Appendix 2 Admission register
Appendix 3 Attendance register

Appendix 4 Example Letters

Senior attendance champion[1] (including EYFS provision) & parental contact for absence requests	Mr C Ward (Headmaster) Email: headmaster@westhillpark.org.uk Telephone number: 01329 842356
Key staff / contacts[2] **day - to - day attendance contact**	Lisa Travers (AM) - Receptionist Louisa Jenner (PM) - Receptionist Email: frontdesk@westhillpark.org.uk Telephone: 01329 842356
Pastoral Attendance Lead (including EYFS provision)	Mr C Ward (Headmaster) Email: headmaster@westhillpark.org.uk Telephone number: 01329 842356
DSL Link for attendance concerns	Mr J Boddington (Deputy Head Pastoral)

[1]Working together to improve school attendance 2024 and states schools are expected to designate a 'Senior Attendance Champion' (SAC) - a senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, Parents and external agencies. The SAC is expected to sit on the SLT and their name and contact details must be included in the school's attendance policy (see paragraphs 15, 25 and 26)

[2] Schools should populate this with their key contact details for attendance. This may for example be the SAC and school reception (where parents should report non-attendance).

	Email: jboddington@westhillpark.org.uk Telephone number: 01329 842356

1 Aims

1.1 This is the attendance policy of West Hill Park School (the **School**).

1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:

1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;

1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;

1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;

1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and

1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage **EYFS**.

2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

3 Regulatory framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

3.1.2 *National minimum standards for boarding schools* (Department for Education (**DfE**), September 2022);

3.1.3 EYFS *statutory framework for group and school-based providers* (DfE, September 2025);

3.1.4 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.5 • Children Act 1989;

3.1.6 • Childcare Act 2006;

3.1.7 • Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);

3.1.8 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

3.1.9 Equality Act 2010; and

3.1.10 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice: [*Please check the links below to ensure the guidance is up to date*]

3.2.1 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.2 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.3 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.4 Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);

3.2.5 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);

3.2.6 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);

3.2.7 Children missing education (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.8 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);

3.2.9 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);

3.2.10 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);

3.2.11 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.12 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.13 Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024); and

3.2.14 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

3.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

3.3.1 PG 9 Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures;

3.3.2 SG17 Missing or Absconding Pupils

3.3.3 AG11 SEND Policy;

3.3.4 HG22 Disability policy;

3.3.5 PG7 Whole SchoolBehaviour and discipline policy;

3.3.6 Parent Contract;

3.3.7 Remote education plan.[3]

4 Publication and availability

4.1 This policy is published on the School website.

4.2 This policy will be sent to Parents when pupils join the School and Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated.

4.3 This policy is available in hard copy on request.

4.4 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the Front Desk during the School day.

[3] The DfE guidance on Providing Remote Education states: schools should consider sharing any up-to-date procedures and plans in place with parents, carers and pupils in order to provide ongoing clarity and transparency about what to expect from remote education if it is required. It does not prescribe how to do this, but mentions some schools publish details on their website.

4.5 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 Definitions and interpretation

5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.

5.1.2 references to the **Proprietor** are references to the Radley Schools Group

5.1.3 references to a **Parent** means:

(a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;

(b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and

(c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

5.1.4 References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time

education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.[4]

5.1.5 **SAC** means the School's attendance champion

6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2 The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.

6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

[4] This is the definition as set out in section 3 of the Education Act 1996 and referred to in chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024 .

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly Reviewed by Radley Schools Group - Nov. 25 Internal Review by SAC - May 2026
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SAC	As required, and at least annually

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Formal annual review	Proprietor	Annually

7 The importance of good attendance

7.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

7.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

7.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

7.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents;

7.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and

7.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

8 School responsibilities

8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.

8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

9 Staff responsibilities

The SAC

9.1 The Proprietor has appointed a senior member of staff of the School's leadership team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of

the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

9.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

(a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;

(b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;

(c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;

(d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and

(e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

9.2 Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance[5]:

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

[5] The School should provide information and contact details of the staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis (such as a form tutor, head of year etc) and for more detailed support on attendance (such as a head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer etc) in Appendix 1

9.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;

9.2.2 record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;

9.2.3 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;

9.2.4 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;

9.2.5 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;

9.2.6 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;

9.2.7 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

9.2.8 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

9.2.9 Where attendance does not improve despite support, or where parents do not engage with support, the School may escalate concerns to the local authority. Formal legal intervention will only be considered where appropriate and in line with statutory guidance.

9.2.10 A graduated response could be identified as follows -

early concern → parent contact → support plan → review meeting → external support/local

authority → legal escalation.

9.3 All staff

9.3 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.

9.4 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

10 School arrangements

10.1 The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept

electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices 1-3.

11 Monitoring attendance

11.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

11.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

11.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);

11.1.3 undertaking frequent individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeting actions for those cases;[6]

[6] See paragraph 45 of Working together to improve school attendance 2024

11.1.4 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;

11.1.5 benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;

11.1.6 devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;

11.1.7 monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

11.1.8 providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

12 Pupil responsibilities

12.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

12.2 Pupils should be aware that:

12.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

12.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;

12.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

12.2.4 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;

12.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up;

12.2.6 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

(a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;

(b) communication with Parents;

(c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

(d) sanctions against them or their Parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.

12.2.7 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Form Tutor, Class Teacher or those staff identified in

Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

13 Additional needs

13.1 The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. {There is an ISBA document "Dealing with Attendance Issues – Pupils with Health/Medical Conditions and Special Educational Needs" document number 3047 which will provide some guidance.

13.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments[7] where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

13.3 It will also work with Parents , and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop

[7] In this case to meet the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010.

specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.[8]

13.4 Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

13.5 Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance[9].

13.6 Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

[8] The Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools states in the non-statutory summary of responsibilities document that 'in many cases the school may be able to agree with parents / carers adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the EHC plan. In other cases, additional or different attendance support identified may require the LA to review or amend an EHC plan.'

[9] See Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools which includes a Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance and Support for pupils where mental health is affecting attendance: effective practice examples

13.7 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.[10]

14 Parent / carer responsibilities

14.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

14.2 This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill

[10] See paragraph 57 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.

14.3 The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.

14.4 Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy

14.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

15 Training

15.1 **Staff:** The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this

policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

15.1.1 the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and

15.1.2 the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

15.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:

15.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;

15.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;

15.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and

15.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

15.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16 Information sharing

16.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

16.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

16.3 Where appropriate the schools will attend regular targeting support meetings.[11]

16.4 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

16.4.1 New pupil and deletion returns;

[11] Targeting support meetings are meetings local authorities have with schools to discuss attendance data and identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils. See chapter 4 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

16.4.2 Attendance returns[12];

16.4.3 Sickness returns.

16.5 The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

16.6 The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information that can be accessed by the DfE[13]. The School

[12] Schools are required to provide attendance returns to the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been recorded as absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the national attendance codes (G, N, O, and/or U). Individual local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month - see chapter 2 and content on sharing information in the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

[13] Local authorities may seek, and schools are expected to provide, more frequent or comprehensive sharing of data than the statutory minimum where it is essential to fulfilling their obligations under the Education Acts and expectations set out in chapter 4 of the Working together to improve school attendance 2024 guidance. To avoid any unnecessary burdens for schools this should always be automatic from school registers and not require additional manual data collection/returns (see paragraph 50 of the guidance). Independent schools should note that they are not required to provide the specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State relating to sharing daily pupil attendance data (see paragraph 52 of the guidance). We recommend independent schools consult their information management system providers for more details about the relevant permissions and accessible data..

also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

16.7 Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

17 Record keeping and confidentiality

17.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

17.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

18 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	September 2024

Date of last review of this policy	September 2026 (Updated half-termly if required)
Date for next review of this policy	September 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Mr Chris Ward (SAC)
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Radley Schools Group

Appendix 1 School arrangements[14]

1 Managing attendance

1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers[15] as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

1.2 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8.20am, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

2 The role of Parents / carers

2.1 The School expects all Parents to:

2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;

[14] The School should tailor this section to ensure that its arrangements are set out clearly

[15] Boarding schools without day pupils are not required to keep an attendance register. Schools with a mixture of day pupils and boarders must keep an attendance register for the day pupils.

2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

2.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

2.2 Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 8.20am for morning registration;

2.3 Parents of boarding pupils should ensure their child returns to their boarding accommodation by 7pm on Sunday or Monday morning by 8.20am before the beginning of the school week.

3 Registration and attendance checks

3.1 Morning registration is taken at 8.20am. The window for registration is 30 minutes from 8.00am until 8.30am

3.2 Afternoon registration will be between 1.50pm and 2.20pm. Again, there is a 30 minute window for registration to be open.

3.3 Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.

3.4 If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L).

3.5 If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

3.6 Registers will also be called at the beginning of each lesson in order to identify and follow-up on absences from lessons that might occur after morning or afternoon registration.

3.7 The School uses E-Registration and Attendance Management Systems.[16]

3.8 Pupils who are boarding will be roll-called at the end of the school day, before bed and the following morning before breakfast.

4 Reporting absence

4.1 If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 8.35am on first morning of absence and keep the school informed of absence beyond one day on:

frontdesk@westhillpark.org.uk

01329 842356

[16] There is no requirement for the policy to specify which systems it uses, however we have retained this wording should schools wish to include this level of detail.

4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

6 Managing absence

Example letters to follow up on unexplained absence and appropriate escalation procedures are detailed in Appendix 4.

Authorised absences

6.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.[17]

7 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

[17] A leave of absence may be granted by the Head or other person the authorised to do so by the proprietor. While the guidance is not specific on this point we recommend it is a member of the school leadership team

7.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Headmaster at cward@westhillpark.org.uk.

7.2 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

7.3 Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head.[18]

7.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the Front Desk should be informed.

7.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the member of staff authorised to grant permission to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.

7.6 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious

[18] See footnote above

observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

8 Reporting duties

8.1 The School is legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

8.1.1 **New Pupil and Deletion returns**: notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.[19]

8.1.2 **Attendance returns**: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).[20]

8.1.3 **Sickness returns**: providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the

[19] For full details see paragraphs 211 and 219 of Working together to improve school attendance 2024
[20] Local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year.[21]

8.2 In the event that a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System goes missing,[22]The School will report to UKVI if the pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points.

8.2.1 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.[23]

8.2.3 The report will be made by the School's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance

8.2.4 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing child policy

and safeguarding and child protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

[21] This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs.
[22] Children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and / or for prolonged periods and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including exploitation. Exploitation can affect any child, however international students may be at greater risk than other children. UKVI's Student Sponsor Guidance states that a school must have appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection from exploitation of the children whom it sponsors to study in the UK under the Child Student route.
[23] The School may wish to insert its own definition of contact points e.g. just morning registration

Appendix 2 Admission register

1 Admission register

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and

1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last

attended, and in the case of boarding schools whether each pupil of compulsory school age is a boarder or day pupil.[24]

1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.[25]

1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;

1.6.2 the address of the pupil;

1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;

1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;

[24] Regulation 8 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 specifies what information must be included in the admissions register. See also chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024
[25] Schools must refer to regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 for full details of the legal grounds for deleting a pupil from the registers. See also chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) including boarders in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024[26]

1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.

1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.[27]

1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

[26] Regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 specifies what information must be included in the attendance register. See also chapter 8 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024
[27] Registers are legal records and the School must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date that the data was entered.

1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder:

1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or

1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or

1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or

1.6.4 absent.

1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;

1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;

1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;

1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;

1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

2.1.1 leaves of absence;

2.1.2 other authorised reasons;

2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

2.1.4 unauthorised absence.[28]

3 Remote education

3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.

3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.

[28] Schools should refer to regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to ensure they are correctly recording reasons for absence and the applicable commentary in chapter 8 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:

3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;

3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;

3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked

in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.

3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

3.6 The School will maintain pages on its website that provides information and guidance about the remote education provision and links to any trusted external education websites.

3.7 The School has an established remote education plan in place which is reviewed at least annually in consultation with staff.[29]

4 Unauthorised absence

4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;

4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

[29] The DfE's non-statutory guidance on providing remote education recommends (if a plan is in place) it should demonstrate a consideration of any additional burdens that providing remote education may place on staff and families.

4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

APPENDIX 4 - Example Letters

Class Teacher / Form Tutor Letters

Dear [parent/carer's name],

I am writing to let you know that [pupil's name]'s attendance currently stands at XX%. . Pupils with below 90% attendance are on track to miss at least three weeks of school within an academic year, while 80% attendance equates to a half term missed over the course of the year.

Regular attendance is an important factor in a child's academic success. When pupils are frequently absent, it is difficult for them to keep up with their school work and there is strong evidence that this affects future exam results. For this reason, we take school attendance very seriously and inform parents as soon as possible where there is a concern, in order that we can work together to improve attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that you contact the school on the first day of the absence to inform us of the reasons. If this continues for more than one day, you should make contact with the school on a daily basis to keep us updated.

Planned absences must be requested in writing, using the absence request form on the Parent Portal. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we recognise that a short period of illness or necessary absence can significantly impact attendance figures at this point in the year, we are keen to work with you to address any barriers to your child's attendance which may have arisen. If you require any advice or support on this matter, please get in touch with me, or Mr Boddington (Deputy Head Pastoral) to discuss this and we will do our best to help.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of staff member

Class Teacher/Form Tutor

First Attendance Letter (2nd or 3rd term)

Dear [parent/carer's name],

I am writing to let you know that [pupil's name]'s attendance currently stands at XX%. Pupils with below 90% attendance are on track to miss over three weeks of school within an academic year.

Regular attendance is an important factor in a child's academic success. When pupils are frequently absent, it is difficult for them to keep up with their school work and this could

affect their future exam results. For this reason, we take school attendance very seriously and inform parents as soon as possible where there is a concern, in order that we can work together to improve attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that you contact the school on the first day of the absence to inform us of the reasons. If this continues for more than one day, you should make contact with the school on a daily basis to keep us updated. Planned absences must be requested in writing, using the absence request form. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we recognise that children will be absent from school on occasion, we are keen to work with you to address any barriers to your child's attendance which may have arisen. If you require any advice or support on this matter, please get in touch with me, or Mr Boddington (Deputy Head Pastoral) to discuss this and we will do our best to help.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of staff member

Class Teacher/Form Tutor

Appendix 2 Deputy Head Pastoral Letter

Dear [parent/carer's name],

Following our previous letter dated [date of first letter] regarding [child's name]'s attendance, there continues to be a cause for concern. Our records show that [insert name of child]'s attendance is currently at [add percent].

School attendance is an important issue and something we take very seriously. I would therefore like to meet with to discuss any barriers to attendance that may have arisen, and put a plan in place to improve [child's name]'s attendance going forward.

I have arranged for this meeting to take place in school on [add date] at [add time]. Please could you confirm that you are able to attend this meeting. If you are unable to attend, please contact the school office to make an alternative arrangement.

Regular school attendance is the responsibility of parents/carers. If your child's attendance remains at the current level, with no engagement or improvement, the school may need to contact the local authority to access further support to work towards improving your child's attendance.

I look forward to meeting with you, and supporting you in helping your child to improve their school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Appendix 3 Letter from Head - Final Warning

Dear [parent/carer's name],

Following previous letters, we are now writing to formally express our ongoing concerns about the irregular attendance of your child, [add name and date of birth].

If a pupil fails to attend school regularly, the parent could be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. I am therefore warning you that, if further unauthorised absences are recorded, or your child fails to attend school regularly, we will need to refer this matter to the local authority.

Following this notification, if your child's attendance and/or punctuality does not improve, the local authority may start legal proceedings against you. If it is determined that an offence has been committed, this could eventually result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or imprisonment.

We will not issue further notification should we need to escalate this matter to the local authority.

We have attached a record of your child's attendance with this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Headmaster