



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Version History:

Draft revised: 3 September 2026

Ratification by Trustees: 14 Sept 2026

The importance of good attendance and punctuality

High attendance and punctuality are essential components in achieving Wyvern College's **Think, Grow, Care** education aims for all our students. Only through high attendance can students reach their full academic, personal, and social potential. Attendance both reflects and supports enjoyment of college; absence can itself be a barrier to students engaging with education and being able to think, grow and care.

Furthermore, in law, every child has a right to a full-time education. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality. Research has shown that for a student to stand the best chance of reaching their full potential in academic achievement a high level of attendance is essential.

It is our duty as College staff and as parents/carers working together to consistently strive to achieve the highest possible attendance for all students. Regular opportunities will be used to convey to students and their parents the importance of high attendance and punctuality.

For our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital they are at College, on time, every day the College is open. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at College are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and achievement of future aspirations depend on good attendance. Attendance has also been shown to be a protective factor for the most vulnerable students, reducing the chances of extrafamilial harms, such as gaining a criminal record.

This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of attendance and punctuality are well informed, understand their roles and with a particular emphasis on the need to work effectively together.

This policy follows the principles and expectations set out in the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Statutory Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools, and Local Authorities (July 2026). While this policy provides a framework for attendance practice, it is not exhaustive, and the College will refer to current legislation and government guidance or seek advice from the local authority's School Attendance Support Team where appropriate.

Aims

This policy aims:

- a) To raise the importance of good attendance in line with Ofsted requirements
- b) Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently
- c) To improve punctuality
- d) To promote a consistent approach across the school to all matters relating to attendance
- e) To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance
- f) To communicate to all relevant parties (staff, trustees, parents/carers and students) the legal position on attendance and the circumstances in which absence may be authorised
- g) To stress the need for home and school to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance
- h) To promote opportunities to celebrate and reward students for attendance and punctuality achievements, including sustained improvement, in a fair and sensitive way

Key definitions

Persistently absent- cumulative attendance at or below 90.0%

Severely absent- cumulative attendance at or below 50.0%

DfE- Department for Education

Key contact for attendance queries

All attendance queries should be directed to our Attendance Officer:

Day-to-day attendance enquiries: Mrs Clark, Attendance Officer –
k.clark@wyvern.hants.sch.uk

Senior Attendance Champion: Mr William Emeny, Deputy Headteacher –
w.emeny@wyvern.hants.sch.uk

For more detailed attendance support, parents/carers should contact their child's Pastoral Leader through the College or use the Attendance Officer as the first point of contact.

What does 'good attendance' look like?

Wyvern College expects all students maintain a cumulative attendance of over 95% and to aspire to an attendance of above 97%.

In addition to cumulative attendance, the College also monitors the number of **broken weeks** a student has. A broken week is when a student does not attend all sessions of school over a whole week. **Multiple broken weeks** can indicate a cause for concern and will be followed up on by the College.

Furthermore, the College monitors the number of unauthorised absences each student has against a national threshold (equivalent to **5 days in a 10-week rolling period**) and if this level is met or exceeded the College is required to consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Parent/carer monitoring of a student's attendance and punctuality

The College provides tools and resources to help parents/carers monitor their child's attendance and punctuality:

- **EduLink App:** The EduLink App allows parents/carers to view their child's AM and PM registration marks. Parents/carers are expected to check these regularly and to contact the College if they believe a registration mark may be incorrect.
- **Half-Termly Absence Reports:** These detailed reports provide a day-by-day breakdown of absences and late marks, making it easier to identify patterns and support good attendance

The College expects parents to make use of these tools to monitor their child's attendance and punctuality, to praise their child for good attendance and punctuality, and to identify if they require support from us in improving their child's attendance and punctuality.

Rewards and recognition

To encourage and celebrate good attendance and punctuality, the College has several rewards and recognition strategies:

- **Praise Trips:** Students with good attendance and punctuality may qualify for exciting praise trips, providing an additional incentive to attend regularly
- **Weekly Recognition:** Each week, students who maintain good attendance and punctuality are awarded house points. These points contribute to our house system, building a sense of pride and friendly competition
- **Termly Praise Postcards:** Students who demonstrate strong attendance each term receive praise postcards as a personal acknowledgment of their commitment
- **Celebration Assemblies:** Strong attendance is celebrated in year group assemblies, where students with exemplary attendance records receive rewards and recognition
- **Half-Termly Absence Reports:** Students with low absence rates are acknowledged via praise comments in half-termly absence reports, congratulating them for their dedication

To work consistently together, parents/carers should monitor, acknowledge and celebrate achievements in overall attendance and punctuality, or improvements made by their child. Attendance recognition will be applied sensitively and without discrimination. The College will consider individual circumstances, disability, medical needs and other unavoidable absence, and will recognise improvement as well as sustained strong attendance.

Support available

Support in school

We are committed to working together with parents and students to identify and address any barriers to attendance. By collaborating closely, we can develop effective support strategies to help students maintain consistent attendance. Our approach is as follows:

- **Identifying Barriers:** We understand that there may be various challenges impacting a student's ability to attend regularly. By working together, we can uncover these barriers and consider how to best support your child
- **Support and Adjustments:** Our pastoral team is ready to discuss and implement reasonable adjustments to overcome your child's barriers to attendance. These adjustments might include additional resources, flexible strategies, or support tailored to individual circumstances. We will also work with you to identify your role in improving your child's attendance
- **Open Communication:** To make a difference, we rely on open communication from parents. If there are issues impacting your child's attendance, please reach out to us. Together, we can create a positive plan to support your child's success and wellbeing

By working in partnership, we can ensure that every student has the support they need to overcome challenges and attend school regularly.

Remote education is not a substitute for regular attendance. In line with DfE guidance, it will be used only as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments and other suitable support have been considered, and normally for a limited period as part of a clear plan for reintegration. A student receiving remote education while absent from the College must still be recorded as absent using the most appropriate national attendance code.

Mental health and attendance

DfE guidance recognises that students sometimes face emotional challenges that may make attending school feel difficult. Concerns about friendships, academic pressures or personal issues can create understandable worries. Maintaining regular attendance, however, is often a crucial support in managing these feelings and helping students feel more connected and confident in school.

The guidance states:

“Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.”

If a student is feeling anxious or facing difficulties that affect their attendance, the College expects parents/carers to reach out to us and also to fully engage in the support we offer. We can provide support and connect parents with additional resources, such as referrals for counselling, the School Nursing Service, Mental Health Support Teams, or CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). Our aim is to work together to strive for the student's full-time, good attendance at school whilst getting them the support they need to achieve this.

Anxiety, avoidance and attendance

Anxiety should be listened to, taken seriously and understood; it should not be dismissed. At the same time, avoiding school can bring short-term relief while making the worry and the return to school feel harder in the future. A single day away can become a repeated pattern, and repeated absence can allow barriers, missed learning and anxious feelings to grow.

Where a student is anxious about attending, the usual starting point is for parents/carers to maintain the expectation of attendance, communicate calm confidence that their child can manage with support, follow the normal morning routine and bring or send them to College. Parents/carers should contact the College promptly—ideally before absence begins—to explain the concern and help us identify the specific barrier. We will listen, agree practical support or reasonable adjustments where appropriate, and help the student face the difficulty safely rather than allowing avoidable absence to become established.

This does not mean forcing a student into an unmanaged situation or ignoring serious mental ill health. Where needs are more complex, the College will work with the student, family and relevant professionals and may agree a time-limited phased return or other plan. If there is an immediate risk of harm or an acute mental health crisis, parents/carers should seek urgent professional help and inform the College as soon as possible.

Foundations for mental health and readiness to attend

Strong daily routines support mental health, emotional regulation, learning and attendance. As an early and continuing response to emerging anxiety or low mood, parents/carers are expected to support their child with the practical foundations below, alongside sharing concerns with the College and seeking professional advice where needed:

- A consistent sleep and waking routine, with enough sleep for the child's age
- A calm wind-down before bed and avoiding phones, gaming and other stimulating screen use for around an hour before sleep
- Regular meals, a balanced diet and good hydration, while limiting caffeine and energy drinks
- Daily movement or physical activity and regular time outdoors
- Predictable morning routines, preparation the night before and arriving at College on time
- Regular opportunities for supportive conversation, positive relationships and age-appropriate independence

These foundations are not a substitute for assessment, treatment, safeguarding action or reasonable adjustments. The College can help families review routines, identify barriers, agree an attendance plan and connect with suitable support services.

Reporting an absence

All absences must be reported to the College by 8:15 a.m. on the day of the absence.

- **Reporting via Edulink App:** Parents/carers are requested to use the Edulink app to notify the College of any absences. To report an absence, log into Edulink, select the 'bell' icon, choose the appropriate start and end dates/times when prompted, enter the reason for absence, and press 'send.' A green tick will confirm successful submission. Notifications can be submitted at any time but must be sent before 8:15 a.m. on the day of the absence.
- **Alternate Reporting Methods:** If the Edulink app is unavailable, absences can also be reported by 8:15 a.m. via phone at 02380 692679 (select option 1, or extension 255) or by email at welfare@wyvern.hants.sch.uk. Please include the student's name, tutor group, reason for absence, and the anticipated date of return. A written note is only required if the absence has not been previously reported via Edulink, phone, or email; such notes should be submitted to the Welfare Office.
- **Daily Reporting Requirement:** For safeguarding purposes, parents/carers are required to inform the College of their child's absence each day they are unwell, unless it has been previously specified that the student will be absent for a set number of days. Wyvern College cannot assume that a student remains unwell without daily notification, as attendance is not automatically carried over.

Accurate information and a trust-based relationship

Accurate attendance decisions depend on a trust-based relationship between home and the College. We will ordinarily begin from the position that information supplied by a parent/carer is honest, accurate and given in good faith. We will consider that information and record the attendance code that, in the College's judgement, most accurately describes the reason the student could not attend. A parent's notification explains an absence but does not, by itself, authorise it; the College is responsible for the final coding decision.

Where an account conflicts with other reliable information, changes materially, or gives the College genuine and reasonable doubt about the stated reason, we may seek clarification and may request reasonable supporting evidence. We will consider the information as a whole and make a fair, evidence-based decision based on our judgement of the balance of probabilities. If later information shows that an entry was inaccurate, the register may be amended in accordance with the regulations, preserving the original entry and the required audit trail.

Where information previously supplied by a parent/carer has been established to be inaccurate or misleading, that history may reasonably inform the College's assessment of later absence reports. In future cases the College may seek evidence at an earlier stage, more frequently or to a higher level before deciding that an absence should be authorised. This is not an automatic or permanent rule: each absence will still be considered on its own facts, and any request will be proportionate, relevant to the reason given and flexible about the form of evidence available.

Illness reported around a requested or known holiday

Where illness is reported immediately before, during or after a requested, declined or otherwise known holiday or leisure absence, the timing does not automatically mean that the illness report is false. It may, however, provide genuine and reasonable grounds for the College to make further enquiries so that the primary reason for absence and the correct attendance code can be established.

The College may ask for a conversation and/or reasonable evidence relating to the illness and/or the dates of travel. Depending on the circumstances, this could include booking confirmations, travel tickets, flight details, accommodation records or other dated information showing when the student left and returned. Families may redact irrelevant financial, passport or other personal information. The College will not insist on one rigid form of evidence and will consider reasonable alternatives.

The College will decide each case on the available evidence. If we are satisfied that the primary reason for the additional absence was a holiday or leisure trip rather than illness, the absence will be recorded using the appropriate unauthorised code. If the resulting total reaches the national threshold, the College must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in line with the National Framework and Hampshire's local code of conduct. A failure to provide requested evidence will be relevant, but will not on its own prove that an absence was a holiday.

Information received from other people

Parents/carers, students and members of the community may notify the Attendance Officer if they hold relevant information suggesting that the reason given for an absence may be inaccurate. Reports should be made honestly and in good faith. The College will assess the reliability of the information and, where appropriate, make further enquiries.

Information will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need it for attendance, safeguarding or legal purposes. The College will not normally disclose the identity of a person who provides information without their consent. Absolute confidentiality cannot be promised where disclosure is required by law, necessary to protect a child or another person, or required for a fair legal process.

Identifying reason for absence when no reason has been given

Wyvern College uses the 'SIMS InTouch' system to monitor daily attendance. If a student is not present for registration and no reason for absence has been provided, an automated text message will be sent to the parent/carer on record. The notification will state: "<First name> has been absent on the following date. Please respond by specifying the reason for absence."

Parents/carers are expected to reply promptly so that the correct reason can be recorded. If no response is received, additional messages may be sent and the College will make further contact, including using additional emergency contacts where appropriate. Where an absence is recorded as reason not yet established (code N), the correct code will be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained and no later than five school days after the session; if the reason cannot be established within that period, the entry must be amended to code O (absent in other or unknown circumstances). Parents/carers are expected to provide and keep up to date more than one emergency contact number wherever reasonably possible.

Reporting late arrivals

If a student will be late due to an appointment, parents/carers are asked to report this by 8:15 a.m. A note is required unless the late arrival has been reported via phone or message. Upon arrival after morning registration, students must sign in at Student Services or the Welfare Office.

Medical appointments

Whenever possible, medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside College hours. If an appointment must take place during the College day, students are expected to

attend before the appointment and return afterwards where reasonably possible. Parents/carers should provide reasonable evidence of the appointment, such as an appointment card, letter, text, email or other dated confirmation. The College will be flexible about the form of evidence and will consider reasonable alternatives. The College decides the appropriate attendance code for the time missed.

Medical appointments or illnesses affecting one student should not impact the attendance of their siblings. For appointments at the start or end of the College day, arrangements should be made to ensure that siblings are brought to or collected from school at the standard times.

Illness

In general, students with mild respiratory symptoms, such as a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat, should attend school. However, students should not attend if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

If there is uncertainty about whether a student should attend, parents/carers are encouraged to seek guidance from the Welfare Office at welfare@wyvern.hants.sch.uk or by calling 023 80 692679, extension 255.

All medications brought to school must be clearly labeled with the student's name, dosage, and date. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that any medication stored at Wyvern College is within its expiration date, and should collect or return medications as needed during holidays.

For further information on whether a child is well enough to attend school, please refer to the NHS guidance: [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

In most cases, a parent/carer's notification that their child is too ill to attend will be accepted without question or concern. Medical evidence will not be requested routinely and there is no blanket requirement. The College may seek reasonable evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or where illness is prolonged, frequently recurring or forms a repeated pattern and evidence is needed to understand the student's needs, plan support or record the absence accurately.

Long-term illness

Parents/carers should tell the College promptly if their child has a chronic, recurring or long-term physical or mental health condition so that appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and continuity of education can be considered. The College will maintain the same ambition for regular attendance while recognising that additional support may be needed. Evidence may be sought on a case-by-case basis where it is necessary to understand complex or long-term needs, identify suitable provision or establish the correct attendance code; it will not be required automatically solely because an absence has lasted seven days or more.

The College will make a sickness return to the local authority where a student of compulsory school age is recorded with code I and there are reasonable grounds to believe that illness will cause 15 or more missed school days, consecutively or cumulatively, in the current school year. We will work with the local authority and relevant health services to consider any education required for a student who cannot attend because of health needs.

Evidence relating to illness

Where evidence is reasonably needed, the College will normally begin with a conversation with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, the student. That conversation may itself provide enough information. Other evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- Dated appointment information, including a letter, card, text, email or screenshot
- A prescription or other dated pharmacy information bearing the student's name
- Medication or its label bearing the student's name and relevant date
- Relevant correspondence from a hospital, specialist, GP or other health professional, particularly where an ongoing condition is being clinically managed

The College will not be rigid about the form of evidence, will consider other reliable evidence offered by the family and will avoid asking health professionals for unnecessary letters, particularly for conditions that do not normally require medical treatment. Evidence requests and the personal information retained will be proportionate to the decision being made.

Requesting leave of absence

In accordance with Regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Headteacher (or other designated person) may grant term-time leave of absence when specific circumstances apply. These circumstances are as follows:

- **Participation in a Regulated Performance or Employment Abroad:** Leave may be granted if the pupil is taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad, in line with a licence issued by a local authority, Justice of the Peace, or under a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA)
- **Attendance at an Interview:** Leave may be granted if the pupil needs to attend an interview for entry into another educational institution or for future employment. Requests must be made in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- **Study Leave:** Leave for public examination study may be granted with prior agreement from the parent the pupil resides with. This does not include study leave for internal examinations, such as mock exams
- **Temporary Part-Time Timetable:** In exceptional circumstances, a time-limited part-time timetable may be arranged. This must be agreed upon by both the school and the parent with whom the pupil resides, specifying the dates and times the pupil will be required to attend school as part of this temporary arrangement
- **Exceptional Circumstances:** At the discretion of the Headteacher (or other designated person), leave may be granted for other exceptional circumstances. A request must be made in advance by a parent with whom the student normally resides. Each application will be judged individually, taking account of its specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context. The College will not operate a blanket policy under which leave is automatically granted for a particular event or category. If leave is granted, the College will determine its length. A day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body is recorded under the specific religious-observance code; any additional time requested is considered separately under the leave rules.
- **Religious observance and cultural events:** Code R will be used where a student is absent on a day that has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent or parents belong. This is normally a day on which members of that religious body would be expected to refrain from work in order to observe the occasion. Where necessary, the College may seek clarification from the relevant religious body. Where the religious body has set apart one day for the observance, only that day may be recorded using Code R. Additional time requested for travel, preparation, pilgrimage, family celebration or other activities connected with the occasion must be requested in advance and will be considered individually under the exceptional-circumstances provisions for Code C. Cultural, community or family celebrations that do not meet the statutory requirements for religious

observance do not create an automatic entitlement to authorised absence. Any request for leave will be considered fairly and sensitively on its individual facts, taking account of the student's religious and cultural context, the nature and significance of the event, the time requested and the likely effect on their education. The College will not operate a blanket policy under which absence is automatically granted or refused for a particular cultural event.

The DfE is clear that a need or desire for a holiday or other leisure or recreational absence will not generally amount to an exceptional circumstance. Unauthorised absence may lead to a penalty notice for each liable parent in respect of each child. For a first notice in a three-year rolling period, the charge is £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second notice to the same parent for the same child within that period is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

Leave of absence will also not be granted for participation in protest activities during school hours.

To request leave during term time, parents/carers must complete a 'Request for Leave of Absence' form, available on the [attendance page](#) of the school website, and submit it prior to the absence.

Only two attendance penalty notices may be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a rolling three-year period. If the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time within that period, a further penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action will be considered, which will often include prosecution or another legal intervention. Decisions will be made in accordance with the National Framework and Hampshire's local code of conduct.

Attendance at educational activities off-site

In certain circumstances, students may attend approved educational activities off-site as part of their educational programme. This includes provision arranged by the local authority, educational visits or trips, approved sporting activities, work experience, or another approved educational activity. The College will use the relevant national code only where all required conditions are met, including suitable physical supervision, safeguarding arrangements and a process for the provider to notify the College promptly of any absence. For a dual-registered student, code D will be used only for a session when the student is scheduled to attend the other school; the school the student was due to attend will record any illness or other absence using the appropriate code.

High-level and elite sporting activity

The College recognises and supports students who are selected to participate in genuine high-level sporting activity, while also protecting their entitlement to a full-time education.

A student participating in an off-site sporting activity may be recorded using Code P where the College has approved the activity as an educational activity and all the statutory requirements are met. The activity must be educational in nature, take place during the relevant College session and be physically supervised by a person whom the College considers to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge. The College must also be satisfied that suitable safeguarding and welfare arrangements are in place and that the provider will notify the College promptly if the student does not attend the activity.

Requests should normally be made in advance and supported by written information from the relevant club, academy, sporting organisation or national governing body. This should confirm the nature and level of the activity, the dates and times involved, the supervision and safeguarding arrangements, and a named contact who can confirm the student's attendance.

Selection for a professional academy, county, regional, national or international pathway does not, by itself, create an automatic entitlement to miss College. The final decision rests with the College, which will consider whether the Code P requirements are met and the likely effect of the arrangement on the student's attendance, education, progress, wellbeing and public examinations.

Where an activity does not meet the requirements for Code P, a request for leave may be considered under Code C as an exceptional circumstance. Such requests will be decided individually and will not be automatically granted because a student or provider describes the activity as "elite". Where recurring absence is approved, the arrangements will be reviewed periodically and the student, parents and sporting provider will be expected to work with the College to minimise missed education.

Absence due to suspension or permanent exclusion

A penalty notice may be issued to parents/carers who allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a suspension or permanent exclusion. The College will notify parents/carers of the days on which the student must not be present in a public place.

This type of penalty notice is separate from those issued for non-attendance and does not fall under the National Framework or contribute to escalation limits for repeat attendance-related offences. The penalty is set at £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

A suspension or permanent exclusion is recorded as an authorised absence for statistical purposes while the student remains on the admission register and no alternative provision has been made for the session.

Attendance Register

The statutory attendance register is taken at the beginning of each morning session and once during the afternoon session, at the same time for all registered students. It is kept open for no more than 30 minutes:

- AM session – taken at 8:30 a.m. and closes at 9:00 a.m.
- PM session – taken at 12:25 p.m. and closes at 12:55 p.m.

A student who is present when the register begins to be taken is recorded as present. If a student is late to registration but arrives while the register remains open, they will be recorded using Code L (late before the register has closed), which counts as attendance for the session.

The compulsory College day begins with a warning bell to transition to tutor time or assembly at 8:25 a.m. Students must be present and ready for the warning bell at that time.

A student arriving after the register has closed will be recorded as absent for the session. Code U will be used where no reason is established or the College is not satisfied that the reason would be recorded using an authorised absence code; where another national absence code more accurately describes the reason, that code will be used. A student recorded with code U for the morning session is legally absent for that session even though they later arrive on site.

Attendance and punctuality to individual tutor time and lessons is also recorded for monitoring, behaviour management, reporting and safety purposes.

Lateness

The College has a centralised system used for monitoring lateness to tutor time and to lessons. A student's weekly count of lates will include both tutor time and lesson lates. Sanctions are applied based on the following thresholds:

- **1–3 Lates per Week:** No sanction
- **4–6 Lates per Week:** 30-minute after-school detention
- **7+ Lates per Week:** 75-minute after-school detention

If a student receives a sanction for lateness and parents would like further details they should contact detentions@wyvern.hants.sch.uk.

Unauthorised absences

Absences will be classified as unauthorised under the following circumstances:

- No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents/carers
- A request for absence was not made in advance when, in the College's discretion, it was feasible to do so
- The College, at its discretion, does not approve a request for absence made in advance
- The reason for the absence does not align with the categories of authorised absence

Typical examples of unauthorised absences include, but are not limited to:

Family-Related Absences

- Taking an unauthorised holiday during term time
- Acquiring cheaper flights or accommodating parental work commitments for a holiday during term time
- Visiting relatives
- Holidays abroad to visit a sick relative (except where the relative is seriously ill, in which case medical evidence may be required and the absence has been pre-authorised by the College)
- Family or birthday celebrations
- Extended weekends or "long weekends" added onto term-time for convenience
- Moving house or assisting in household moves
- Minding the house or caring for relatives
- Awaiting repair personnel or deliveries
- Parental illness
- Accompanying family members to events
- Acting as an interpreter for family members

Appointments and Personal Errands

- Non-medical appointments
- Attending appointments for siblings, parents/carers, or other relatives
- Shopping

- Buying shoes or getting a haircut
- Family errands (e.g., attending to a family business)
- Visiting Colleges or workplaces without prior authorisation by the College

Cultural and Religious Events

- Additional days connected with a religious observance, including time for travel, preparation, pilgrimage or family celebration, where those days do not qualify for Code R and leave has not been granted in advance under Code C
- Attendance at a cultural, community or family celebration that does not meet the requirements for Code R and has not been authorised in advance as exceptional leave

School-Related or Academic Issues

- Lack of school uniform or shoes
- School refusal
- Issues with bullying, conflict, meanness, unkindness or friendship problems
- Relationship issues with teachers
- Parental complaints or disagreements with the school

Health and Personal Wellbeing

- “Mental health day” without prior authorisation by the College
- Head lice
- Death of a pet
- Oversleeping or missing the bus

Entertainment and Leisure Activities

- Attending or travelling to a sporting event as a spectator, or taking part in a sporting or leisure activity that has not been approved under Code P or otherwise authorised in advance by the College
- Taking the day off after a family event, such as a wedding or reunion

The College is responsible for deciding the attendance code that most accurately describes each session. A report or note from home does not automatically make an absence authorised. Decisions will be based on the relevant regulations and guidance, the reason given, any reasonable supporting information and the individual facts of the case.

College monitoring, support and accountability for attendance and punctuality

The College monitors and analyses attendance and punctuality regularly to identify early indicators, individual students, cohorts, year groups, recurring reasons and wider patterns requiring support or improvement. Analysis takes place weekly and through half-termly, termly and full-year review, and is used to evaluate the impact of support and the College’s attendance strategy. It includes:

- Individual, cohort, year-group and whole-College attendance and punctuality, including weekly trends and changes over time
- Daily, session and lesson-by-lesson attendance and punctuality, including patterns by day and, where appropriate, subject

- Reasons and national codes for absence, including recurring or unusual patterns and broken weeks
- Unauthorised absence against the national threshold and any pattern suggesting deliberate avoidance of that threshold
- Half-termly, termly and annual comparisons with local, regional and national data and, where useful, similar schools
- All levels of emerging and established absence, not only persistent absence below 90% or severe absence below 50%, so that support can begin before patterns become entrenched

Attendance analysis and support will pay particular attention to the College's context and to students or cohorts who may face additional or entrenched barriers, including:

- Students with safeguarding needs, a social worker, a Safety Plan or a Youth Offending Team worker
- Students who are young carers, whose caring responsibilities may affect regular attendance
- Students with SEND, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Students with long-term or recurring physical or mental ill health, students eligible for pupil premium or free school meals, and any other cohort whose attendance data identifies a need for focused support

Relevant analysis will be shared with tutors, Pastoral Leaders, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, pupil premium lead, senior leaders and trustees as appropriate. Where absence risks becoming persistent or severe, the College will share information and work with the local authority, other schools and relevant partners in the student's interests and in accordance with data-protection law.

At the College, various key staff members, along with parents and carers, play essential roles in monitoring, supporting, and improving student attendance and punctuality:

Trustees

- Ensure compliance with statutory attendance requirements
- Approve and oversee the school's attendance policy
- Monitor attendance trends and school performance in this area
- Support strategic initiatives to improve attendance
- Hold school leadership accountable for attendance targets and interventions
- Review and evaluate attendance-related reports and data

Headteacher

- Provides overall leadership for attendance
- Ensures attendance policies meet statutory requirements
- Sets high expectations for attendance and punctuality
- Oversees strategic attendance initiatives and interventions
- Supports senior staff in complex attendance cases
- Communicates attendance priorities to the school community
- Engages with external agencies on attendance matters
- Reviews and approves Attendance Legal Intervention cases

Deputy Headteacher (Attendance Lead) & Assistant Headteacher (Attendance Lead Support)

- Develops attendance strategy
- Oversees systems and processes for attendance management
- Monitor whole school attendance and punctuality data
- Ensures policy compliance

- Manages Notice to Improve cases
- Oversees Attendance Legal Intervention referrals and cases
- Attendance reporting to trustees

Attendance Officer

- Maintains the Attendance Register
- Manages data and monitoring of attendance
- Leads Broken Weeks and Stage 1–3 interventions
- Alerts the Safeguarding Team and Behaviour Support Team of attendance concerns
- Prepares penalty-notice referrals and case information in line with Hampshire's local process; any notice is issued only by a legally authorised officer
- Signs students in and out of school

Welfare Officer

- Advises on medical issues impacting attendance and punctuality
- Oversees Individual Health Care Plans
- Signs students in and out of school

Pastoral Leaders and Deputy Pastoral Leaders

- Oversees Broken Weeks and Stage 1–3 interventions
- Addresses attendance and punctuality issues promptly

Tutors

- Provides weekly praise and rewards for good attendance and punctuality
- Take the AM tutor register promptly and accurately and, where a student arrives late during tutor time after being marked N, update the register from N to L.

Parents/Carers

- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality
- Notify the College promptly of any absences
- Inform the College of any issues affecting attendance and seek support where needed
- Fully engage with the support and interventions offered to improve attendance
- Support College policies and reinforce the importance of attendance
- Provide complete, honest and accurate reasons for absence and respond promptly to reasonable requests for clarification or evidence
- Maintain accurate contact details and, wherever reasonably possible, provide more than one emergency contact number
- Support healthy sleep, nutrition, activity, morning and screen-use routines that help their child to be ready to attend
- Where anxiety affects attendance, communicate confidence, maintain the expectation of attendance and work promptly with the College to identify and overcome the barrier

Students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive to College on time
- Attend all tutor times, assemblies and lessons on time
- Take responsibility for registering at the Student Services desk if they are late
- Sign out at the Welfare Office if leaving the College site during College hours

Broken weeks monitoring, support and accountability

The College monitors broken weeks—instances where a student does not complete a full week of attendance—through the Attendance Officer and Pastoral Teams. These teams regularly review attendance patterns to identify any concerning trends that may indicate underlying issues. If multiple broken weeks are recorded, the College may issue a Broken Weeks letter to notify parents and make them aware of the emerging pattern.

This proactive approach enables the College to address potential attendance concerns early and offer support where needed, helping students to maintain consistent attendance and achieve their full potential.

Cumulative attendance monitoring, support and accountability

The College closely monitors students' cumulative attendance to ensure consistent attendance and timely support for those falling below expected levels. When a student's attendance drops below 94% (more than 6% absence), the following actions may be initiated, though movement between steps is subject to the professional judgement and discretion of College staff. While guided by the thresholds below, staff will consider each student's individual circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

- **Stage 1 Letter:** A formal letter is sent to inform parents that their child's attendance has fallen below 94%, identifying it as an area of concern.
- **Stage 2 Letter:** If attendance continues to decline, dropping below 90% (more than 10% absence), a second formal letter is sent expressing further concern. The Pastoral Team will contact the parents to discuss reasons for the absences and offer support.
- **Stage 3 Letter:** If attendance remains below 90% for an extended period or falls below 80% (more than 20% absence), a third formal letter is issued. The Pastoral Team will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer and student to agree a support plan. Where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about illness, or illness is prolonged, repeated or frequently recurring, the College may request proportionate evidence to understand needs, plan support or establish the correct code. Evidence will not be required automatically from every student at Stage 3, and an absence will not be made unauthorised solely because one specified form of medical evidence is unavailable; all relevant information will be considered.
- **Notice To Improve Attendance Planning Meeting:** Should attendance not improve, a formal Notice To Improve letter will be issued, and the parent will be invited to meet with a Senior Leadership Team member to review attendance concerns. This meeting represents a final opportunity for support before further legal measures are considered.
- **Penalty Notice:** Where the national threshold has been met, the College must consider a penalty notice in each individual case. If support is appropriate, it will normally be continued or formalised through a Notice to Improve before a penalty notice is issued. Where support is not appropriate, as is usually the case for an unauthorised term-time holiday, a penalty notice may be pursued without a Notice to Improve, subject to the National Framework and Hampshire's local code of conduct.
- **Attendance Legal Intervention Team Referral:** If two Penalty Notices are issued within a three-year period and attendance does not improve, the College may refer the case to the local authority's Attendance Legal Intervention Team. The local authority will then decide whether to pursue prosecution or other measures to address the attendance concerns.

This structured approach provides support at each stage while allowing flexibility to account for individual student needs, ensuring attendance is addressed effectively before legal intervention is pursued.

Unauthorised absence monitoring, support and accountability

Separate from cumulative attendance monitoring, the College reviews unauthorised absences based on the national threshold to determine whether a Penalty Notice should be issued. If a student's number of unauthorised absences meets the threshold, the College will assess whether to issue a Penalty Notice or, if two notices have already been issued within a three-year rolling period, whether to refer the case to the Attendance Legal Intervention Team.

The national threshold for Penalty Notices is defined as **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**. This threshold can be met by any combination of unauthorised absences, such as:

- Consecutive absences (e.g., 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday taken in one week)
- Non-consecutive absences (e.g., 6 sessions in one week and 1 session per week over the following 4 weeks)
- Absences across terms or school years (e.g., 2 sessions in the Summer Term and 8 sessions in the Autumn Term)

Each school day comprises two sessions (AM and PM), so this threshold equates to 5 full days of unauthorised absence within 10 school weeks.

Penalty notices

The national threshold requires the College to consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate; it does not create a blanket rule that one must always be issued or never be issued. The decision will consider the individual facts, whether support is appropriate and has been provided or engaged with, whether a notice is the best available tool, and relevant Equality Act duties. A first notice to a parent for a particular child is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days; a second within three years is £160 with no reduced rate. A third notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within that rolling three-year period, so alternative action, often prosecution, must be considered.

For further information, please refer to the local authority *Guide to Penalty Notices* available on the attendance page of our College website: [Attendance - Wyvern College - Think Grow Care](#).

Attendance Legal Intervention Team referrals

If a student's attendance does not improve despite extensive support efforts, the College may consider a referral to the Attendance Legal Intervention Team at the local authority. This referral is generally made only after all other collaborative support and interventions have been exhausted. The Attendance Legal Intervention Team works with schools to address persistent absence through targeted support and, if necessary, legal measures. Each case is considered individually, with the decision to involve the Legal Intervention Team based on the specific circumstances of the student and family.

When a referral is made, the local authority has a range of options to promote improved attendance, including:

- **Attendance Contracts:** Agreements with parents and students outlining attendance expectations.
- **Education Supervision Orders:** Court orders placing students under local authority supervision to ensure school attendance.

- **Attendance Prosecution:** Legal action taken against parents who fail to secure regular attendance for their child.
- **Parenting Orders:** Orders requiring parents to participate in counselling or guidance sessions to support attendance.
- **Penalty Notices:** Fines issued to parents for unauthorised absences.

The objective of any intervention is to support students and families in addressing attendance barriers, ensuring each student can fully engage with their education.

Safeguarding considerations

In accordance with DfE guidance, the College recognises that persistent absence and children missing in education can serve as vital warning signs of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation. We remain vigilant to potential safeguarding concerns as part of our attendance monitoring and are committed to proactive action where needed.

The College must provide the local authority with attendance returns for students of compulsory school age who fail to attend regularly and for any student who has been continuously absent for ten school days where one or more sessions are recorded using unauthorised codes G, N, O or U. This duty is not conditional on contact with the parent/carer having failed. A student who remains on the College roll is not, solely for that reason, a 'child missing education' in the statutory roll-status sense; however, unexplained or prolonged absence may indicate that a child is missing from education and will be followed up promptly as an attendance, welfare and safeguarding concern.

The College maintains a safeguarding duty to all students, including those who are absent. Working with the Safeguarding Team, we will assess extended, unexplained or concerning absence and may conduct home visits to establish the student's safety and wellbeing. Where necessary, we will work with parents/carers, the local authority and agencies such as Children's Services or the Police. Social workers and Youth Offending Team workers will be informed of unexplained absence and kept appropriately updated about attendance concerns.

In cases where all support avenues have been provided, yet severe unauthorised absence persists, this may constitute neglect. Persistent and severe absence may lead to statutory involvement from Children's Services, who may conduct a full social care assessment to address any safeguarding concerns.

This comprehensive approach ensures that student safety and wellbeing are prioritised, supporting students at risk and maintaining their engagement with education.

Publication, communication and review

This policy will be published on the College website and made accessible to leaders, staff, students and parents/carers. It will be provided or signposted when a student joins the College, and families will be reminded of it at the beginning of each academic year and whenever a material update is made.

The policy and the College's attendance practice will be reviewed as circumstances, barriers, legislation and statutory guidance change.

Other relevant legislation and guidance

Relevant legislation

The Education Acts 1996 and 2002

The Children Act 1989

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Sentencing Act 2020

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

The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended

The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013

The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963

The Equality Act 2010

Relevant government guidance

Children missing education

Keeping children safe in education and Working together to safeguard children

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Elective home education

Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities

Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Preventing and tackling bullying

Providing remote education

Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026)