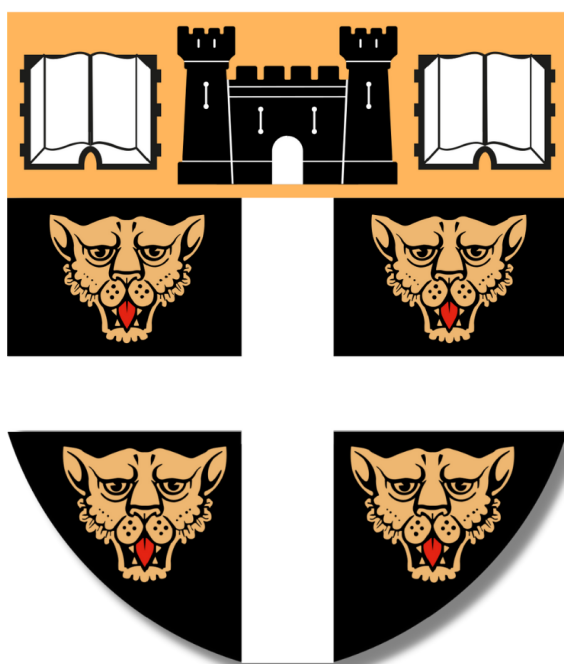


# Attendance Policy

Dover College



|                     |  |                 |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|
| Owner:              | Deputy Head (Senior)<br>Deputy Head (Prep) | Date: July 2022 |
| Approved By:        | MG   | Date: July 2022 |
| Review Frequency    | 3 yearly                                   |                 |
| Last reviewed on:   | July 2021                                  |                 |
| Next review due by: | July 2024                                  |                 |

**1. Aims & Ethos.** Dover College is committed to meeting our obligation concerning College attendance through our whole-College culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support to attend College.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

**2. Legislation and Guidance.** This policy meets the requirements of [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#) from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK](#) These documents are drawn from the following legislation, setting out the legal powers and duties that govern College attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities.**

#### **3.1 The governing board.**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of College attendance across the College's policies and ethos.
- Making sure College leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole College.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the Headmaster to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the College.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the College.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Julie Green and can be contacted via 07743 807491 and [greenj@dovercollege.org.uk](mailto:greenj@dovercollege.org.uk)

**3.4 House Staff and Tutors.** House Staff and Tutors are responsible for recording AM and PM attendance daily, using the correct codes on iSams, and submitting this information to Priory Lodge.

**3.5 Reception Staff:** The reception staff in Priory Lodge will:

- Take calls from parents about absences daily and record them in the College system.
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate Deputy Head to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Collate and monitor attendance data, following up on absences with teaching and house staff.

- Provide regular attendance feedback to staff and report concerns about attendance to the DSL and the Headmaster.

### **3.6 Parents.** Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day on time if they are a day pupil.
- Call the College to report their child's absence before 8.30 am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the College with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their children are made outside of the College day.

### **3.7 Pupils.**

All pupils are expected to attend College every day on time.

## **4. Recording Attendance.**

### **4.1 Attendance Register.**

We keep an attendance register and place all pupils on this register. We take our attendance register at 8.30am and 1.30pm of each college day, and it will show whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendments to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil cannot attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for three years after the date staff made it. Pupils must arrive at College by 8.30 am on each College day, and the register will be kept open until 9 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

#### **4.2. Unplanned Absence.**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the College of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the College Reception staff in Priory Lodge (see also Section 7).

We will mark an absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the College is concerned about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not request unnecessary medical proof.

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

**4.3 Planned Absence.** Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent notifies the College before the appointment. Parents should schedule medical and dental appointments outside of College hours. When this isn't possible, the student should be away for a minimum of time. The pupil's parents must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 details which term-time absences the College can authorise.

**4.4 Lateness and Punctuality.** A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed, they will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed, the entry will be marked as absent using the appropriate code.
- Lateness and punctuality is maintained and addressed by house staff in the first instance.

**4.5 Following Up on an Unexplained Absence.** Where any pupil we expect to attend College does not attend or stops attending, without reason, the College will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If the College cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the College may take additional steps to establish their whereabouts, such as contacting the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for the absence is ascertained. This entry will be no later than five working days after the absence.

- Call the parent each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- If the absence continues, the College will consider involving the Local Authority.

#### **4.6 Reporting to Parents.**

The College will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels where there is cause for concern..

### **5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence.**

#### **5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence.**

The Headteacher will only grant a pupil a term-time absence for "exceptional circumstances." A leave of absence is given at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time a student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as something that would significantly impact a student's life chances or emotional well-being if they missed it, such as elite sports events or family funerals, weddings, and graduations.

The College considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

Before authorising an absence, the Headteacher will consider the impact on the student's academic progress, attendance, and whether the leave falls during Key Stage national tests or exams. The Headteacher cannot grant absences retrospectively. Parents should submit any request as soon as anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for a leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more details).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the College will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes—this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people), circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller's family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed to this with the College.
- There are other possible "exceptional circumstances" where the Headteacher may grant a term-time absence, e.g., weddings, funerals, or other significant life events

that involve the child's immediate family. The application will be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis.

**6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance.** The College seeks to promote effective partnerships with parents and to provide support, advice and guidance on the importance of regular and punctual attendance of their children. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the College, parents and the pupil. To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Seek to foster and develop positive partnerships with parents.
- Invite parents into the College to discuss individual attendance concerns.
- Signpost parents to our House Staff, College Nurses, counsellors or other professionals for support and guidance.
- Expect that all pupils will achieve an attendance level of at least 95%.
- Highlight the importance of good attendance in our newsletters, class, assemblies, consultation evenings, workshops, and prospectus.
- Attendance issues may also be discussed in governors' meetings, INSET days and relevant staff meetings.
- Dover College encourages the active involvement of other agencies to support and promote good attendance, including Local Authority safeguarding officers, social services and the police.

**7. Attendance Monitoring.** The Designated Safeguarding Lead does this with SLT support. Attendance data will be collected and analysed to implement intervention strategies. House Staff and Tutors will receive regular attendance updates. SLT, Deputy Heads, House Staff, and the DSL must meet regularly to discuss and implement poor attendance and punctuality strategies.

**7.1 Monitoring Attendance.** The College will monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and annually across the College and for individual pupils to identify groups whose absences may cause concern.

Each term, we'll collect student absence data. The College will compare attendance to the national average for comparable schools and share this with Governors.

**7.2 Analysing Attendance.** The College will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. We will look at historical and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

**7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance.** The College will provide regular attendance reports to House Staff and Tutors, and other College leaders to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. We will use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.

**7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence.** A pupil misses 10% or more of school for persistent absence and 50% or more for severe absence. The College will use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence and hold regular meetings with parents of vulnerable or persistently or severely absent pupils to discuss attendance and engagement. We will provide access to wider support services to remove barriers to attendance. We will send reminder letters to parents at least annually.

### **8. Monitoring Arrangements.**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority, ISI, or DfE changes and updated at least every three years by the DSL Julie Green. The policy will be approved at every review by the Board of Governors or Council.

**9. Links With Other Policies.** This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Senior School Behaviour Policy.
- Prep School Behaviour Policy.



## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

| Code                      | Definition                  | Scenario   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised absence</b> |                             |  |
| C                         | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E                         | Excluded                    | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made         |

|                             |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>H</b>                    | Authorised holiday                | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances  |
| <b>I</b>                    | Illness                           | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness   |
| <b>M</b>                    | Medical/dental appointment        | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment   |
| <b>R</b>                    | Religious observance              | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance   |
| <b>S</b>                    | Study leave                       | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations  |
| <b>T</b>                    | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school   |
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |                                   |   |
| <b>G</b>                    | Unauthorised holiday              | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school   |
| <b>N</b>                    | Reason not provided               | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| <b>O</b>                    | Unauthorised absence              | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence   |
| <b>U</b>                    | Arrival after registration        | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed   |

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Definition</b>            | <b>Scenario</b>  |
|-------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>X</b>    | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| <b>Y</b> | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| <b>Z</b> | Pupil not on admission register                   | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school  |
| <b>#</b> | Planned school closure                            | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day  |

## Contents

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### 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs

Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#).

It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority. [Children with long-term illness - Kent County Council](#)

### 3. Responsibilities of the school

Check your local authority's guidance on providing education to children with additional health needs, to see what responsibilities it places on you in this circumstance.

Adapt the sections below as needed. You will also need to edit the text in section 3.2 if your responsibilities deviate from what we have set out, which is general good practice derived from [DfE guidance](#).

#### 3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

You may want to add more details on areas such as:

Who in your school will be responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements

What sort of arrangements could be made (e.g. sending work home, hospital schools)

How you will consult parents and pupils about these arrangements

How you will reintegrate pupils back into school

### 3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, [name of your local authority] will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

You may want to add more details about how and when your local authority would take over responsibility, such as:

How it will be decided if arrangements are 'suitable'

How many days a child would need to be absent from school

The process for referring a child to the local authority

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the school will:

Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil

Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required

Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully

When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
- Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school)
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school
- Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

## 4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by [name/job title of individual]. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

(The DfE advises that you review this policy annually, in its [list of statutory policies](#).)

## 5. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

Accessibility plan

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Add any other relevant policies you have