

ATTENDANCE

Policy applies from EYFS to Sixth Form and to all Staff	
Date of review:	09.01.2024
Date of next review:	09.01.2025
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Author:	Mr Chris Collins

Version	Date	Paragraph	Material change	Approval
11.22 v1	1.11.2022	All	Policy redrafted to meet the requirements of DfE guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance.	Mr Luke Goodman
01.24 v1	09.01.2024	1 and 2 7 and 9.6 9.1, 9.5, 10 and 11	Sections updated. More detail added re. support for poor attendance and parents' responsibilities. New sections added.	Mr Chris Collins

Clifton High School is committed to child protection and safeguarding children and young people and expects all staff, visitors, and volunteers to share this commitment.

Related policies

Child Protection and Safeguarding
Code of Conduct - Infant and Junior
Code of Conduct - Senior
Data Protection
Data Retention
School Terms and Conditions

1. Introduction

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

The aims of this policy are to:



- encourage a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- encourage and facilitate the regular attendance and punctuality of all pupils to allow them to benefit from and make a full contribution to the life of the School;
- recognise the links between attendance/absence and pupil wellbeing and ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding; and
- set out the School's approach to the management of absence/non-attendance.

The School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils, and all members of staff to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Clifton High School endeavours to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given proper attention and appropriate support. The School has an effective system for the monitoring of attendance, and parents will be notified of any suspected problems relating to non-attendance to protect the pupil from any potential harm and to identify any underlying causes so that the attendance issues can be quickly resolved.

The Deputy Head: Pastoral is responsible for promoting attendance and for developing, implementing and reviewing the strategic approach to attendance at Clifton High School.

2. Legal framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's statutory responsibilities and follows statutory and non-statutory guidance and advice, including [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#), and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

3. Using data to monitor and support high attendance

The School will accurately complete attendance registers electronically on the School's Management Information System (SIMS). All pupils will be accounted for by being either present, absent (either authorised or unauthorised), or attending an approved educational activity.

The Deputy Head: Pastoral is responsible for ensuring that attendance data is regularly reviewed to identify any emerging attendance issues and will proactively use data to identify pupils (and cohorts) at risk of poor attendance and seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent.

This will include identifying the individual needs of pupils; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and working with the Local Authority



where a formalised approach is required in line with the DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

4. School arrangements for Attendance

The School's arrangements for attendance are set out in the Appendix to this policy.

5. Barriers to attendance

The School recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who have social, emotional, physical or mental health issues or who have special educational needs and disabilities. The School is mindful of these barriers and will try to remove them by building strong and trusting relationships with those pupils and their parents and by making reasonable adjustments and/or by offering additional support where necessary to help those pupils to access full-time education and ensure a high level of attendance.

In exceptional circumstances the School may approve a reduced timetable, but that timetable will only be permitted for a limited period to support the pupil reintegrating back into education and to access fulltime provision.

6. Safeguarding and attendance

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for reviewing the monitoring and recording of pupil attendance to improve safeguarding systems. Sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) the School will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of the School's safeguarding duty and its standard procedures, it will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the School cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare. The School has a legal duty to report pupils to the Local Authority if they fail to attend school regularly or are absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of ten school days.

7. Support for poor school attendance

Persistent lateness or non-attendance may result in the School taking further action, including:

- offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
- communication with parents;
- sanctions against the pupil in line with the School's Behaviour policies; or
- reporting to other agencies such as children's social care (where the attendance issues are significant and the pupil requires external support).

If the School has concerns about the attendance of a pupil (and in any event if attendance drops



below 90% without prior explanation), it will discuss its concerns with the pupil and the parents to understand the barriers to being at school and to agree actions to address them, including recommending any internal or external support services if appropriate.

If the attendance issues continue and there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the Deputy Head: Pastoral to discuss the matter and to agree what further support can be put in place to address the causes of the attendance issues (including engaging external agencies). The Deputy Head: Pastoral may also decide to put in place a more formal action plan.

If parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions, the Head of School may at his discretion require the parents to remove their child from the School.

If the School has any safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, it will share those concerns with external agencies as it deems necessary.

8. Removal from the school roll

In accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will be removed from the admissions register when one of the specific, recognised circumstances apply including:

- permanent exclusion has occurred, and the hearing/appeals procedures have been completed;
- death of a pupil;
- pupil attending another school;
- when a parent informs the school in writing that the pupil is to be withdrawn to be educated at home; or
- a medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The role of the School

The School will:

- Take proactive steps to encourage excellent attendance across the School.
- Consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.
- Work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities where there are challenges to attendance.
- Respond to non-attendance and/or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care.



Have robust systems in place to track, record, monitor and analyse attendance data to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

The School is required to:

- Send a copy of this policy to all parents of new children starting at the School and to all parents at the beginning of each school year.
- Ensure that admissions and attendance registers are accurately maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Report to parents the numbers of sessions of authorised and unauthorised absences their child has had (via the parent portal).
- Inform the Local Authority within 5 days of a pupil's name being added or deleted from the admissions register at non-standard transitions and enter the name of the destination school on SIMS.
- Inform the Local Authority of any cases of persistent unauthorised absence.

9.2 The role of the Members of Council of Governors

As part of the whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Council of Governors will:

- Annually review the School's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and pupils to implement the rules effectively.
- Ensure that all legislation and statutory guidance regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated.
- Ensure that the Deputy Head: Pastoral makes the necessary referrals to the Local Authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance.

9.3 The role of the Deputy Head: Pastoral

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Deputy Head: Pastoral will be responsible for:

- Championing and improving any attendance issues at the School.
- Developing, implementing and evaluating the School's expectations, processes and strategic approach to attendance.
- Monitoring attendance data and identifying any issues.
- Meeting with parents and pupils if there are any attendance issues and developing support plans for those pupils.
- Liaising with the Local Authority and any other wider partners, as and when necessary.

9.4 Role of the Senior Leadership Team

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Senior Leadership team will:



- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensure that the School's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Coordinate with the Council of Governors, through the Pastoral Committee, to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual review.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the School's attendance policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them.
- Ensure that the Deputy Head: Pastoral has sufficient time and resources to fulfil his responsibilities.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.
- Develop and engage with external agencies to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend.
- Document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

9.5 The role of the Form Tutor/Class Teacher

Form Tutors/Class Teachers should:

- Follow the School's procedures by taking the register accurately each morning and afternoon.
- Make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with the pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School.
- Look out for trends in a pupil's attendance and inform the Deputy Head: Pastoral of any specific concerns.
- Inform the Deputy Head: Pastoral of any known future absences for pupils.
- Deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly.
- Consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the Codes of Conduct and Behaviour policies.
- Discuss non-attendance and/or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the School's members of staff will also:



- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families.
- Ensure that the School's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement.
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the School's attendance policy and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue.
- Take a paper copy of the register should a technical problem arise, and return it immediately to the School Office who will upload it to SIMS once the problem has been resolved.
- Contribute to pupil strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed.
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

9.6 Role of the Parents

The School expects parents to:

- make any applications for an authorised absence at the earliest opportunity; and
- notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible,

in accordance with the procedures set out in the Appendix.

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- Engage with their child's education and promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment.
- Avoid unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours.
- Enforce a regular routine at home for homework and bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine.
- Do not take their children out of school during term time, and if they are taken out follow the procedure set out in this policy.
- Keep the School informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance.
- Use the School as a support if they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the School so that there is easy communication when a problem arises.
- Cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.



- If their child has attendance issues, work with the School and Local Authority (if applicable) to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance, and proactively engage with the support offered.

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

9.7 Role of the Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- Are aware of the School's attendance rules and that they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day and to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons, and that they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules..
- Speak to their form tutor/class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable.
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late or miss a registration period for a reason agreed by a member of staff, for example participating in an assembly or attending a club or activity. Pupils are held responsible for this, and it is made clear to all pupils what this procedure is by their form tutors. This will help the School to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the pupil's individual attendance and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

10. Information sharing

Personal information on attendance will only be shared with third parties in line with the School's legal obligations and having regard to Government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

11. Record keeping and confidentiality

All admissions and attendance records are managed in accordance with the School's Data Retention Policy.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. Personal data will be held and processed in accordance with data protection law and the School's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices.



Appendix

1. Being present at school and lateness

1.1 Arriving at school

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school on time. All pupils should be on the School site by 8.40am. Class registers for the Hive Pre-School to Year 6 are taken at 8.45am and form group registers for Years 7 to 13 are taken at 8.40am. Registration finishes when period 1 starts.

If a pupil is going to be late for school and will miss morning registration, wherever possible, parents must inform the School that their child is safe and give an estimated time of arrival either by email to absence@cliftonhigh.co.uk and copying in the class teacher/form tutor, or by telephone 0117 9730201. On arrival at the School, the pupil must go immediately to the School Office (with a parent if they are in the Hive Pre-School to Year 4) and register in the School Office.

Any unjustifiable reason for lateness or absence will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

1.2 During the school day

All registers are monitored centrally by the School Office. The School Office monitor the morning and afternoon registers, chasing any incomplete registers and contacting staff to ensure each pupil is accounted for.

Afternoon class registers for Hive Pre-School to Year 6 are taken at 1.30pm and form group registers for Years 7 to 13 are taken at 2.15pm. Any unjustifiable reason for lateness or absence will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

1.3 The end of the school day

The school day finishes at 3.30pm in the Hive Pre-School and the Infant School, at 3.35pm in the Junior School and at 4.00pm in the Senior School. Sixth Form students may leave the School site during lunch time and after period 5 if they do not have any afternoon lessons.

2. Absences

When a pupil is absent and there has been no notification from the parents regarding the absence, the School Office will contact the parents to confirm the reason for the absence. This procedure is repeated for every subsequent day of absence. When the School establishes the reason for the absence, it will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence.



If the School is unable to establish the reason for absence within two school days, it will mark the absence as unauthorised. If the School is concerned about a pupil's absence and is unable to contact the parents, it may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who the School reasonably expect may be able to advise it of the pupil's whereabouts.

3. Authorised absences

An authorised absence means that the School has given approval in advance for a child to be away from school, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards. The following may be classed as an authorised absence:

3.1 Illness

Parents must inform the School by 8.40am on the first day of absence if their child is ill and cannot attend school and should also notify the School of the nature of the illness. This should be done by sending an email to absence@cliftonhigh.co.uk, copying in the class teacher/form tutor. This must be repeated on any subsequent days of absence unless the number of days of absence is known in advance and the School has been informed. If a parent does not report an absence due to illness to the School on the first day of the absence, the School may treat the absence as unauthorised.

For prolonged or repeated absences due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the School with medical evidence such as correspondence from the child's GP, an appointment letter, or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request, it may result in the absence being classed as unauthorised.

3.2 Medical and dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure medical and dental appointments are made outside school hours. Where this cannot be done, pupils should attend school for as much of that day as possible. Parents must inform the School in advance of any medical or dental appointments that their child needs to attend, by email to absence@cliftonhigh.co.uk, copying in the class teacher/form tutor. Children should sign out using the electronic 'sign-in/out' device located in the School Office on leaving and sign in if they return later that day.

3.3 Religious observance

Clifton High School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends. In accordance with the law, the School will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent and pupil belongs. Any additional days off will need to be requested as a leave of absence and it will be at the School's discretion whether it authorises such requests.



3.4 Study leave

The School has a period of study leave leading up to GCSE and A Level examination where pupils are granted authorised absence to revise at home.

3.5 Exclusions

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence.

3.6 Leave of absence requests – “exceptional circumstances”

Only exceptional circumstances would warrant an authorised leave of absence being granted by the School, for example a family bereavement or a funeral, and parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time.

Requests for a leave of absence should be sent by email to the Deputy Head: Pastoral in good time before the planned absence. The School will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The Deputy Head: Pastoral will decide whether or not to grant the leave, and the decision will be made entirely at the School’s discretion.

3.7 Approved educational activity

Pupils attending educational activities off-site which have been approved by the School will be marked as being at an approved educational activity.

4. Unauthorised absence

An absence is unauthorised if a child is absent for a reason that is not included in paragraph 3 above.