

Attendance Policy

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Approved by	Head Teacher

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Introduction

This policy aims to show Guildhouse School's commitment to meeting obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through a whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students and encouraging them to maintain 100% overall attendance to promote achievement and success.
- 10% absence means the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year. The expected attendance is at least 92.9% (national average).
- When a student's attendance reaches as low as 90%, the school puts targeted support in place (see student support and sanctions)
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Providing accurate daily, weekly, and termly information and reports on attendance through efficient systems and reporting.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with parents to make sure students have the support in place to attend school.
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.
- Ensuring effective liaison with the Student Administration Team, Personal Tutors, Pastoral Directors and Boarding Staff so that proactive following up on non-attendance takes place and that there is prompt, accurate communication with the parents/stakeholders.
- Recognising special circumstances in the life of a student and ensuring the school is to be proactive to guarantee that the student is well supported so that good attendance resumes
- Judging every case on its specific circumstances.
- Complying with the UKVI's requirements for Student and Child Student visas.

In accordance with the statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*, the school policy will be made accessible on our website. The policy will also be emailed to all parents of new incoming students as a reminder at the start of each academic year.

The school recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and have a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with students, parents and external agencies where needed. The Senior Attendance Champion (Jamie Forbes- Assistant Headteacher Pastoral) is expected to set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff must support students to maintain 100% attendance.
- Teaching staff must complete the register for every lesson during the first 10 minutes and checked by the Student Administration Team. They must promptly amend the register if a student arrives late to their lesson.

- Staff are to adhere to registration codes and understand the differences between CSA, 16-17 and 18+ students.
- An attendance review is carried out for all students after Personal Tutor registration at different points of the day.
- Authorised absences are individual sessions, mornings or afternoons, or days away from School for a good reason such as illness, an unavoidable cause or appointment. Any absences to be considered for authorisation are to follow the reporting procedures (**see Appendix 1**)
- Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. Only the Nurse can permit an authorised absence due to illness or injury.
- Every day absence and punctuality reports are generated by the Student Administration Team and sent to the Pastoral Team (Assistant Headteacher Pastoral, Pastoral Directors and Personal Tutors).
- The Pastoral Team will review low attendance and punctuality on an ongoing basis, reasons for it, patterns, support and sanctions. Other relevant staff will be engaged where it is in the student's interest to receive specialist support.
- Use of the Discipline Stage Ladder and other relevant strategies will be put into place for those students at risk of falling into significantly low attendance (**see Appendix 2 Thresholds and Stage Warning Ladder**)

Teachers

- It is the teacher's responsibility to mark students as 'absent' 'late' or 'present' for every timetabled session using Shackleton. Registers are an important legal requirement.
- The register must be marked in the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Teachers must only use Present (/) Late(L), or Absent (N). Registers close after 30 mins, after which time students will be marked (U) Arrived in School after registration closed.
- The Student Administration and Pastoral Team will alter and enter other relevant attendance register codes (**see Appendix 3**).
- Teachers are not allowed to authorise absence and it is essential that only the approved members of staff are involved in authorising any absence under DfE and UKVI mandates.
- If a student is late to class before registration closes, they must be marked as late (L), and the number of minutes recorded. If a student arrives late after the register has closed, they are to be marked (U) A student must be challenged for lateness and a later conversation needs to be conducted discussing the student's punctuality.
- Excessive lateness will be dealt with by Personal Tutors or Pastoral Directors.

Pastoral Team: Personal Tutors and Pastoral Directors

- The Personal Tutor must monitor their tutee's attendance and punctuality and raise this as part of their regular 1-2-1s and keep up to date Shackleton notes. A data analysis will be undertaken and kept weekly, focusing on individuals and cohorts with attendance problems, in order to target improvement for those students who need it the most.
- Repeated failure to attend lessons or be on time will result in a Stage Warning in line with the School Behaviour Ladder.
- If a student's attendance and punctuality continue to decline the Personal Tutor must continue to raise this and liaise with the Pastoral Director and other members of staff for appropriate further follow up, monitoring and escalation up the School Behaviour Ladder.
- There should also be liaison with Boarding staff in supporting improved attendance.

- Recognition is given to students who achieve 100% attendance at the end of each term during assemblies.
- Liaison is made with the school nurse and wellbeing counsellor where authorised absence may be required due to mental ill health reasons.
- Patterns of absence or punctuality will be reviewed, and necessary focus given to individuals and cohorts in order to reach an improvement.

Student Administration Team

- Ensure all registers are marked and recorded on Shackleton correctly at the important daily review checkpoints by running an unmarked register in accordance with the Absence follow up process
- Reiterate Absence reporting procedures to students
- If unauthorised absence is identified, the Student Administration Team is to follow the Absence follow up process (**Appendix 4**)
- Compile daily and weekly absence and lateness reports for the Pastoral Team to follow up and identify patterns or trends of absence or punctuality
- Engage with Students/Parents/stakeholders accordingly in line with the Absence follow up process, making use of communications templates (**Appendix 4**)

Student responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they attend every lesson or other session on their timetable.
- If students are aware in advance that an event will result in them missing lessons, they must seek authorisation in advance.
- Students must follow the absence reporting procedures and during Student Induction at the start of the academic year these are communicated (**Appendix 1**)
- Students must provide appropriate evidence for any absences. There is a sickness/attendance procedure that students must follow for relevant staff to consider authorisation in line with the absence reporting procedures (**Appendix 1**)
- Student parents must obtain permission for their child to be absent for more than two days from the Headteacher

The designated senior leader attendance champion (Assistant Headteacher Pastoral) responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school and implementing this policy
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Ensuring teachers receive an induction on their role in attendance matters, the marking of registers and subsequent training on any changes or important updates
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/guardians and agents/salespersons, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues

- Directing, delivering and assisting with intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with Pastoral Directors, students and their parents
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents through all available channels

Student Support and Sanctions

For any students identified as late or truanting, the first instance is to issue a sanction and follow the School Behaviour Disciplinary process as per the Student Behaviour Policy (**Appendix 2**) and Absence Reporting follow up process (**Appendix 4**)

Additional examples of support that could be offered in addition to sanctions may include:

- Meeting with Personal Tutor/Pastoral Director/Pastoral Staff for target setting and ongoing review (Pastoral Intervention Plan)
- Communications with parents/guardians
- Daily wake up calls and specialist support with Boarding Staff e.g., sleeping patterns
- Time management support
- Peer mentoring
- Meeting with the Nurse or Wellbeing Counsellor

Incentivising Good attendance

Certificates or public acknowledgement are given, and an entry is made on Shackleton for 100% attendance over at least a term. Such acknowledgement is made and displayed at the end of every term during assemblies with the aim to motivate students through friendly competition. Similarly, positive communication is sent to inform parents about their child's excellent attendance.

Special circumstances

- There will be special consideration and recognition of critical events in the life of a student which may incur significant absences. Absence procedures must be followed as closely as possible and parental engagement sought.
- It is equally important that after such absences students are supported back into the good attendance routine.
- Term dates must be adhered to and late return to school or early departure by flight schedules will be sanctioned by the school on an individual case by case basis.
- Any prolonged absence of more than two days must be communicated to the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral in advance who will discuss any cases with the Headteacher for approval and liaise with parents/guardians where necessary.
- The school will make sure that any students missing school because of mental, physical ill health or those with SEND, will be given support by considering the individual needs of students.
- The school recognises that certain multi-cultural and mixed faith community religious festivals will fall in term time, however, they cannot be considered as authorised absence. Only English public holidays are recognised, not public holidays of any territory outside of England. We recognise that students may need to fast during some religious holidays, and we will make arrangements to support students at this time.

Stage 4/5 of the Disciplinary Process

- The Senior Leadership Team, including the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher Pastoral and Head of Boarding will implement Stage 4 of the disciplinary process.
- It is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral/DSL to inform the Police of any serious absences where necessary.
- The Deputy Headteacher will intervene at Stage 5 in absence of the Headteacher for the disciplinary process.
- The Headteacher is responsible for making the final decision on whether a student will be expelled for continued poor attendance.
- Progress will be tracked carefully from Stage 4 and failure to improve will be dealt with in first instance by the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral.
- While we support students to improve their attendance, a continual failure is unacceptable and taken very seriously.
- The visa sponsorship of a student will be withdrawn if they are expelled.

UKVI

UKVI state that authorised absence should be 'reasonably granted'. This means we should actively consider the intentions of the student, i.e., whether they are genuinely intending to continue their course and the impact of any absence on the student's ability to complete their course.

If either of these factors is in any doubt, we may need to consider alternative action, such as withdrawal or deferral.

The school will observe the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration organisation (UKVI).

Maintaining satisfactory attendance is part of the visa conditions for students studying under a visa in the UK. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up occur across all courses.

We will cease to:

- Sponsor students who repeatedly fail in meeting attendance requirements.
- Sponsor any student on a Child Student Visa or Student Visa who misses 10 consecutive contact points*. The school will also withdraw students who miss 10 contact points and are on any other visa type (Dependent Visa, Visitor Visa etc.)

**A contact point is defined as an entire day (Monday to Friday). In addition to timetabled classes, contact points may also include meetings with residential staff or welfare/pastoral staff, if necessary, in welfare cases.*

A student who has missed 10 missed contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the school. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

When the school ceases to sponsor a student, this will be reported to UKVI via the SMS and the Child Student Visa or Student Visa will then be curtailed by UKVI.

Monitoring and review

Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically, and all entries in these registers will be preserved for 6 years. The Local Authority have the right to examine and take extracts of attendance registers from the school if required.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated. The review will include the views of all stakeholders, including parents and students.

In developing and implementing this policy, the School has considered its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Related documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Senior Attendance Champion Contact details:

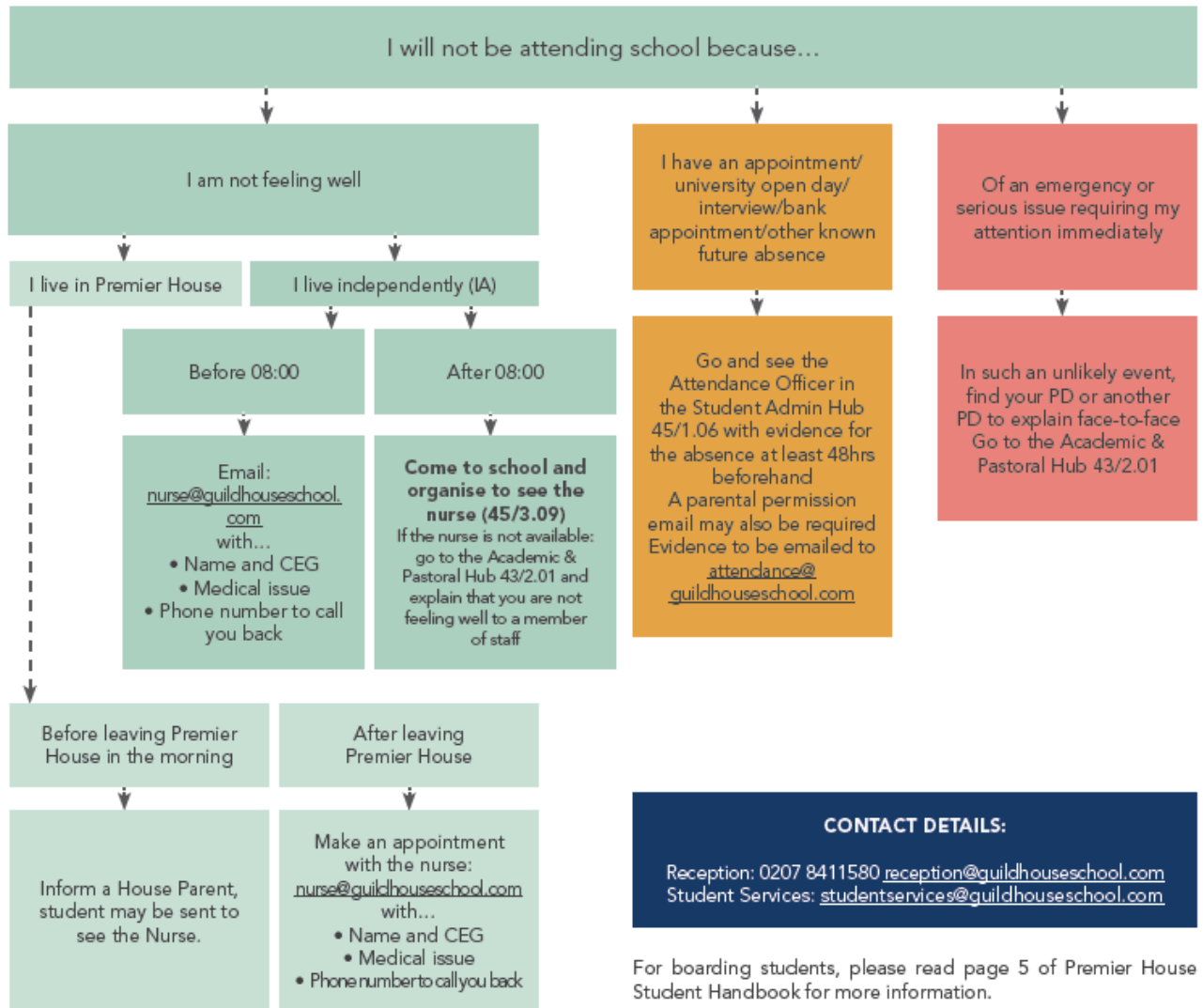
Jamie Forbes

Assistant Headteacher Pastoral/Designated Safeguarding Lead

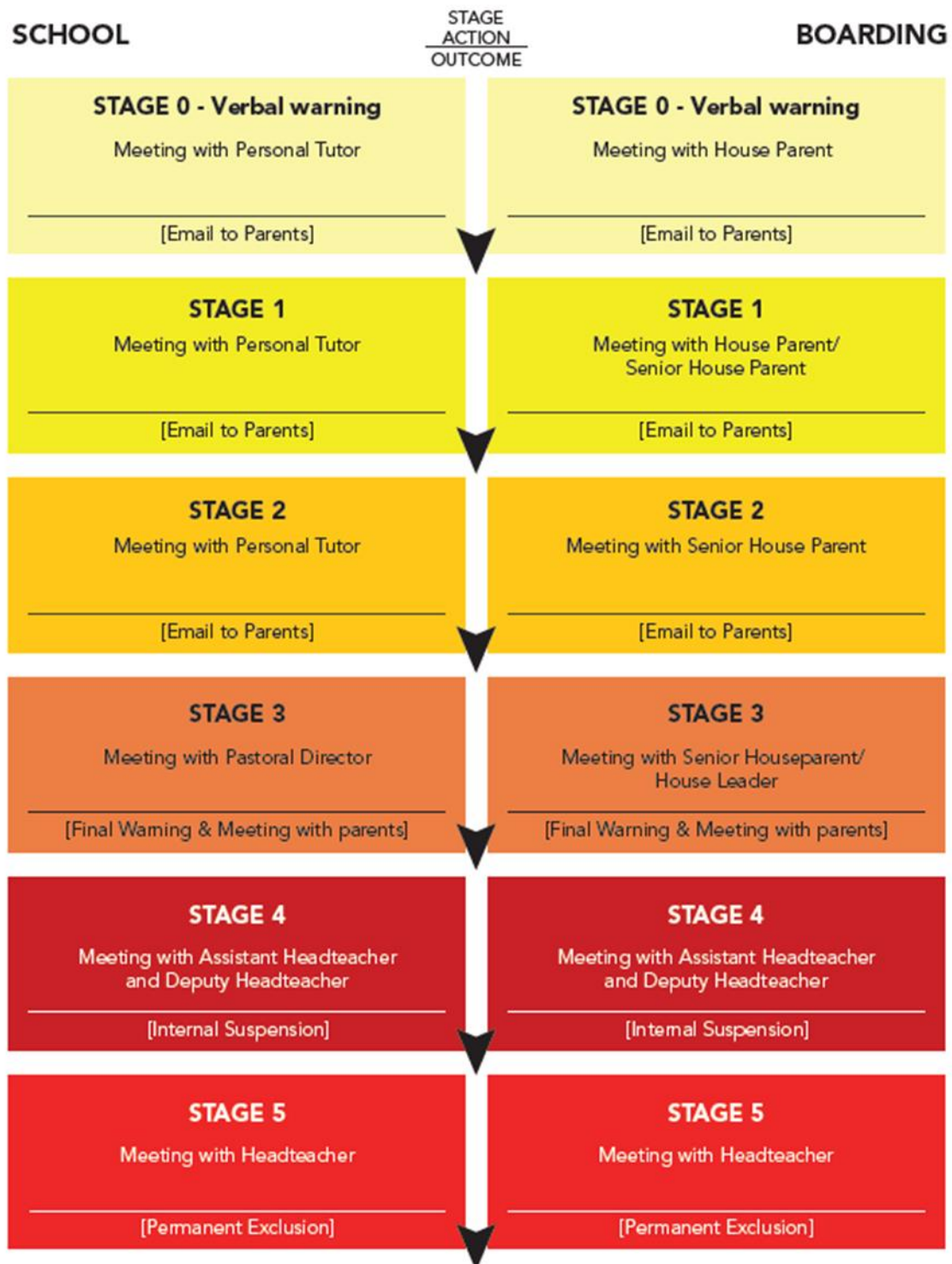
jforbes@guildhouseschool.com

020 4576 1697

Appendix 1: Student Absence Reporting Procedures



Appendix 2: Stage Warning Ladder and Attendance Thresholds



STAGE 0

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failing to submit homework on time.
- Lack of engagement in class.
- Lateness to timetabled sessions.
- An unauthorised absence from a timetabled session.
- Rudeness to staff/students.
- Lack of preparedness for class.
- Inappropriate use of digital devices.
- Smoking outside designated smoking area.
- Persistent lateness in Boarding

Consequences: Reduced curfew time in Boarding. Support Study time during school day.

STAGE 1

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failure to meet all targets at Stage 0.
- Continuous low-level issues while on Stage 0.
- Smoking outside designated smoking area.
- Persistent lateness in Boarding

Consequences: Reduced curfew time in Boarding. Support Study time during school day.

STAGE 2

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failure to meet all targets at Stage 1.
- Continuous breaches of school/boarding rules while on Stage 1.
- Persistent lateness/unauthorised absence.
- First offence of academic dishonesty.
- Fraudulent EXEAT submission.
- Absence without official leave.
- Possession of prohibited item.
- Bringing an Independent Accommodation student into PH without permission from staff
- Going into other clusters or bedrooms

Consequences: Reduced curfew time in Boarding. Support Study time during school day. Refusal to grant EXEAT

STAGE 3

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failure to meet all targets at Stage 2.
- Continuous breaches of school rules while on Stage 2.
- Persistent lateness/unauthorised absence.
- Repeated cases of absence without official leave or authorisation.
- Fighting/bullying or racism with mitigating circumstances.
- Repeated academic dishonesty or serious case of

academic dishonesty in assessment and/or coursework.

- Persistent lying or dishonesty.
- Underage possession of smoking/vaping related paraphernalia.
- Possession of alcohol in Boarding
- Bringing a non-Guildhouse person into Premier House without permission from staff

Consequences: Reduced curfew time in Boarding. Support study time during school day. Refusal to grant EXEAT

STAGE 4

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failure to meet all targets at Stage 3.
- Continuous breaches of school rules while on Stage 3
- Fighting, bullying or discriminatory behaviour without mitigating circumstances.
- Smoking, drinking or under the influence of alcohol.
- Petty Theft.
- Wilful damage to school property
- Serious repeated incidents/prolonged absence without official leave.
- Causing damage to school's reputation.
- Misuse of fire/smoke alarms.
- Possession of a dangerous item.
- Possession of prohibited item.

Consequences: Suspension.

STAGE 5

Examples of misbehaviour/breaches:

- Failure to meet all targets at Stage 4.
- Continuous breaches of school rules while on Stage 4.
- Further illegal behaviour.
- Repeated dangerous behaviour.
- Serious assault, threatening or bullying behaviour.
- Possession of dangerous item
- Illegal drugs/substance use: possession/use/supplying/dealing.
- GDPR breach.
- Theft.
- Serious breach of Health and Safety rules.
- Supplying alcohol or smoking/vaping paraphernalia to under 18s.
- Accessing/making/possessing/distributing indecent images.
- Serious incidents that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Possession of prohibited item.

Consequences: Expulsion.

The School Behaviour Ladder (as per School Behaviour Policy) is to be followed and adhered to in terms of issuing the necessary sanctions for poor attendance below expectations. The below % threshold in line with Stage Warnings is to be followed:

Stage 0- 98%
Stage 1- 95%
Stage 2- 92%
Stage 3- 89%
Stage 4- 85% and below
Stage 5- 80% and below

Appendix 3: Attendance register codes and Register Opening and Closing

Teaching staff		
Teachers are to use the morning and afternoon session marks appropriately:		
/	present morning session	
\	present afternoon session	
Student arriving more than 30 minutes late for class must receive a 'U' mark after a register is closed.		
New absent mark will be 'N'.		
'L' can only be used up to 30 minutes late before the register is closed. Thereafter 'U' is used to record significant/extreme lateness to a session.		
Marks to be used by Teachers for recording attendance in class		
Code	Usage	Type
/	present morning session	Present
\	present afternoon	Present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Present
N	Absent	Absent
U	Arrived in school after registration closed (used to record significant lateness after registers close after 30 minutes)	Present
Marks to be used by Student Administration Team to record student attendance at another place		
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Absent
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Present (external)
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Present (external)
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present (external)
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Present (external)
Marks to be used by Student Administration Team to update registers with reasons for student absence		
D	Dual registered at another school	Authorised absence
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	Authorised absence
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
J	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence

S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Authorised absence
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Authorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Null
#	Planned whole school closure	Null
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
Y	Any unavoidable cause	Null

Appendix 4: Absence Reporting Follow-up Process

Daily Attendance Absence follow-up Process 2024-2025

The Student Administration Team should follow the recommended step-by-step process to effectively manage and chase student attendance and punctuality. They should ensure all teachers submit attendance records promptly. Review absences of students who are absent without prior notice at the start of day is to occur **at 9:10**.

First Contact

→ Contact any students who are absent from school/lessons without prior notice via MS Teams- a call and a message.

→ Attendance note added to record attempted contact or response to contact and therefore updating of registers.

Second Contact

→ If there is no response from the student following first attempts, phone MS Teams again and Mobile number.

→ Attendance note added to record attempted contact or response to contact and therefore updating of registers.

Third Contact

→ If there is no reply received from the student. Send a MS Teams message saying that if the school does not hear from you, the school will be sending an email to your parents.

→ Attendance note added to record attempted contact or response to contact and therefore updating of registers.

Fourth Contact

→ Contact to the parents/guardians/agent/salesperson needs to be made to communicate and enquire about the absence, requesting assistance (using the Parental email 1 template)

→ Log Communication- Record communication made externally by means of the Shackleton 'Contact Home' note and internally on the G Drive storing any email communications.

Escalation Procedure on Day 2

→ Repeat the process of Day 1.

→ Send the **Escalation email** (using the Parental email 2 template) via Student Services

→ Home Visits: If phone calls are unsuccessful and prolonged absence, circumstances, or age of student, it may be deemed necessary for a home visit by a designated staff member.

**If at any time in the process the student notifies that they are coming in, the Student Administration Team will add an Attendance Note on Shackleton explaining the reason why. The teacher may well update the Register accordingly with Late on arrival (L)*

School Behaviour Ladder follow-up

The School Behaviour Ladder (as per School Behaviour Policy) is to be followed and adhered to in terms of issuing the necessary sanctions for poor attendance below expectations. The below % threshold in line with Stage Warnings is to be followed:

Stage 0- 98%

Stage 1- 95%

Stage 2- 92%

Stage 3- 89%

Stage 4- 85% and below

Stage 5- 80% and below

Support and Intervention

- Arrange meetings with parents/guardians to discuss persistent attendance issues.
- Develop Action Plans to improve the student's attendance, involving the student, parents, and relevant school staff.
- Regular Check-ins and monitoring of the student's attendance closely and communicating regularly with the student and parents regarding updates on progress or any ongoing concerns.
- Providing any necessary support such health meetings, wellbeing counselling, mentoring or academic intervention
- Involve School Nurse: Engage with the School Nurse at any stage if information is received that absence is due to a medical/wellbeing reason.

Logging and Reporting and Documentation

- Maintain Records: Keep accurate records of attendance, communications, and interventions on Shackleton and each student file.
- Daily reports of absence and punctuality are run and forwarded to the Pastoral Team (PTs/PDs) for necessary follow-up and intervention.

Ongoing Review and Adjustments

→Evaluate Effectiveness: Regularly review the effectiveness of attendance policies and procedures.

→Adjust Strategies: Make necessary adjustments to strategies based on feedback and outcomes and where necessary individual student needs.

Communication Templates

Third Contact point- MS Teams message to be sent by Student Administration Team

Dear Student/Hi **

I hope this message finds you well. We have noticed that you are not present at school today, and we have not received any communication regarding your absence, which is worrying. Please reply to this Teams message or call as soon as possible to inform us of the reason for your absence. It is important that we have this information to ensure your safety and well-being. If we do not hear from you within the next hour, we will be contacting contact your parents to discuss your absence.

Thank you

Fourth Contact point: Parental Email 1 to be sent by Student Administration Team

Dear Parents,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to inform you that your child, [Student's Name], is not present at school today, [Date of Absence], and we have not received any communication regarding their absence. We have tried numerous times to contact them with no success and we are naturally concerned.

Please reply to this email as soon as possible to inform us of the reason for [Student's Name]'s absence and assist the school in chasing their absence. It is important that we have this information to ensure their safety and well-being.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and I hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes,

[Your Name]

Escalation/Emergency email: Parental Email 2 to be sent by Student Services

Dear Parents,

I hope this message finds you well. We are writing to express our concern regarding your child, [Student's Name], who has not still been present in school since the start of yesterday. Despite our previous communications to both you and [Student's Name], we have not received any contact or updates from you regarding [Student's Name] 's absence.

It is crucial that you contact the school immediately to inform us of the reason for [Student's Name]'s absence. Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students is our top priority.

*If we do not hear from you by the end of the day, we will have no option but to contact **the Police** and report [Student's Name] as a missing person. We sincerely hope that it does not come to this and that we can resolve this matter promptly.*

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Best wishes,

Student Services



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LONDON



Creating tomorrow's change makers.