



Selston
HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed: July 2020
Next review: July 2021

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Nottinghamshire LA Attendance guidelines and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2018.

By 'parents' it is understood to be anyone with legal responsibility for a child, so also includes carers.

Personnel:

All Tutors

Heads of Year J Bird, J D'Laryea, L Rowland, R Andrews, , N Coleman,

Assistant Headteacher L Greasley

Outside Agencies where appropriate

Admin Support C Green/Z Scott/ A Brough

Statement:

Selston High School is committed to supporting parents/carers and students to ensure that the latter achieve the highest level of attendance in school and fully embraces the Nottinghamshire LA Attendance Policy. Regular attendance is given a high priority and is recorded on reports to parents.

Daily:

Subject teachers use electronic registration to record attendance at the start of morning sessions (8.30am). There is no morning registration and students are registered by their subject teacher at the start of period 1. These are then sent to the school receptionist and the SSC who send a text to parents of any students who are absent. This is then followed up with a phone call to parents from someone in the Student Support Centre. Electronic registration is also used for all 5 periods of the day. If students who are marked present in the morning registration and then fail to attend any subsequent lessons, they are investigated by the school receptionist, who will contact parents if they cannot be located on site. Arrangements are then made by the relevant Head of Year to keep the student behind after school to make them catch up on learning missed through the use of Ed Lounge, an ICT based learning resource.

Lates:

Students who arrive late to any lesson or pm registration are dealt with initially by the subject teacher or tutor if it is pm registration. Students are expected to attend a 15 minute break or lunch detention to make up the time lost. If the problem persists they will be referred to a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) for a Friday after school detention from 3pm – 4pm. If punctuality becomes a regular and serious problem which Friday detentions are not solving, then parents will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.

The morning register closes at 9am in the morning and 14.05pm in the afternoon. Students who register after this time are recorded as U in the register (Late after register closed – unauthorised absence unless supported by a note)

Late Gates:

Daily late gates give morning punctuality a high profile are run by the Student Support Centre (SSC). The school operates a staged response to students arriving late for school. Students who receive 3 lates within a half term will be given a 30 minute after school, if the same students receives another 3 lates in a half term (6 in total) they will be issued an SLT detention and a letter sent home to parents. If the problem persists students could be placed in isolation for persistent lateness or parents could be referred to the Local Authority for a £60 Fixed Penalty Notice per parent, for failing to ensure their son/daughter attends school regularly and on time.

Weekly Procedures:

The school receptionist communicates with Heads of Year on a regular basis to discuss attendance issues regarding individuals or specific groups of individuals. Heads of Year/SSC then work with tutors to action appropriate interventions which may include some or all of the following:

- Attendance report
- Letter/phone call to parents
- Home visits
- Issuing 'medical evidence only' letters
- Attendance Panel meetings
- Referral to Targeted Support
- Referral for a £60 Penalty Notice

Where necessary and if appropriate the Student Support and Learning Support Centres will be consulted if it is felt that the student would benefit from spending some time in the Student Support Centre (SSC) or Learning Support Centre (LSU) if the student has exceptional special needs which are playing a major role in his/her attendance problem. The SSC and LSU personnel have achieved a great deal with such students and have been successful in using mentoring

programmes with school phobics/refusers. Safeguarding issues such as bullying or neglect will be explored with any student/family whose attendance is causing concern.

The school receptionist checks registers twice daily and contacts students' homes if they are absent without a note or telephone call from parents. She then informs tutors/Heads of Year of any concerns.

The school receptionist produces weekly attendance reports for the Heads of Year, and members of the Senior Leadership team responsible for overseeing attendance, showing the up-to-date unexplained absences. This information is also used to produce the termly Local Authority returns.

Persistent Absence

Students who are below 90% attendance are classed as being persistent absentees. Where the persistent absence is supported by medical evidence the school will not pursue a fixed penalty notice from the local authority, but will endeavour to work with the family to support the child's education. Depending on individual circumstances the following support may be offered:

- Work provided to be completed at home.
- Access at home to Ed Class coordinated by our Alternative Provision team
- Phased return to school with support from the SSC
- Referral to Early Help
- Referral to Family Service (Consent from parents not needed)
- Referral to Ed Psych Service
- Referral to the Health Related team at the local authority

Where there is no medical evidence to support the persistent absence the school will pursue the Penalty Notice route but will also work with the family to support successful return to school.

Request for term time leave of absence:

The Government states that parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child (aged 5-16), if registered at a school, attends that school regularly and on time.

As per the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 which came into force on 1st September 2013 if parents take an unauthorised term time holiday a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued to both parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school - £60 if paid within 28 days and £120 if paid within 42 days. (The school's definition of 'regular attendance' is as follows. 'The school expects all students to attend school on time, every single day, unless this is prevented by serious illness or other exceptional circumstances')

The Head Teacher will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Purely taking a family holiday in term time is not in itself considered to be an exceptional circumstance. The application must be made 4 weeks in advance and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that there are **exceptional circumstances** which warrant the leave. In order to achieve consistency and fairness across our Family of Schools we have agreed common criteria for what constitutes **exceptional circumstances**. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Head Teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion. The school will consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought, the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advanced notice and the ability to catch up on missed schooling.

On their application for leave of absence during term time, which they have to sign, parents are made aware of the fact that if the leave of absence is declined by the Head Teacher, but parents still take their son/daughter out of school then they may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Throughout the year:

At special evening events such as Year 6 Induction Evening and Progress Review Day staff stress the importance of regular attendance and explain that parents are no longer allowed to take students out of school during term-time for holidays. At the start of the school year parents are given a calendar with term-times, events, etc.

At the end of each term Heads of Year send out letters to parents of those children achieving less than 96% attendance, encouraging them to improve the following term. Students who fit into the 'Persistent Absence' category (Below 90%) are also closely monitored with attendance targets being set which are shared with parents/carers.

Rewards:

Badges for 100% attendance are awarded on a termly basis.

There are prize draws at the end of each term for students who have achieved excellent attendance.

Heads of Year organise inter-form attendance competitions with the winning forms being rewarded with such things as Non Uniform Days at the end of each term, and special lunches in the Conference Room.

Selston High School aims to improve attendance year on year and sets itself rigorous targets through the School Improvement Plan and Appraisal systems to achieve this goal.

Reintegration following prolonged absence:

Following prolonged absence we meet with parents in order to plan for the return of students to school. Each case is unique, but is often likely to involve some kind of phased return, where appropriate support is provided from staff in the Student Support Centre. When reintegrating back into school students may work in the SSC with either work from their subject teachers, or via Ed Lounge, catching up on missed work where appropriate.

Students Missing from Education

All students, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. The local authority have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of students of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. We recognise that a student going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

When a student is absent from school without authority we will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with students that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future. We have an admission register and an attendance register which supports the school in safeguarding students who may be at risk of missing education.

We will discuss and agree actions with regards to individual cases with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within the local authority for students who are to be removed from the admission register where the student:

- has been taken out of the school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective team
- does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- has ceased to attend the school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the students missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school
- has been certified by a medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded

The actions that will be taken by the school are in the Guidance for Headteacher and Business Managers where students are at Risk of Missing Education. The link is: <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/113023/school-attendance-flow-chart-april-2016.pdf>

The above flow chart summarises that every student should be accounted for, their whereabouts should be known or we will make a referral to the relevant service. We will not remove a student from our role unless we can evidence an agreement with the local authority to do so.

Where a student who fails to attend our school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more we will follow Nottinghamshire County Council's Guidance for Headteachers Schools and Business Managers where Students are at Risk of Missing Education

The link is:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/113023/school-attendance-flow-chart-april-2016.pdf>

Absence

If a student is absent from school parents are expected to inform school before the start of the day. If this does not occur school will ring parents to see why a student is missing education as set out in our attendance Policy. Students can register in the morning and then go missing throughout the day without a satisfactory explanation. If a student is 'missing', their whereabouts cannot be established within the school. The school will need to identify whether the student is at significant risk.

Students are more vulnerable who:

- are on a plan (student protection plan, student in need plan, looked after child, early help) □ have specialist educational needs and or a disability
- are using substances
- have an education health care plan
- There are indications that the student is at risk of CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc.

There may be other contributing factors that should be taken into consideration when determining if the student is at significant risk such as the student's emotional health, known issues at home etc.

School staff will always try to locate the student and attempt to establish the whereabouts of the child. Once a student has been identified as missing and cannot be located within school, the designated safeguarding lead will be informed. Staff will use their professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the student's whereabouts before notifying the police. Parents/carers will always be informed before contact with the police is made, unless a student is at immediate risk of harm and a police response is needed. This will be judged on a case by case basis.

When a decision has been made to contact the police, the police will require information from the school to assist in locating the student and returning them to a safe environment.

If a student has a social worker or case manager (e.g. early help) then they should also be informed. Where a student is known to regularly go missing from the school, a risk assessment for the student will be undertaken.

For further guidance on 'missing' protocol the school may speak with Glen Scruby, Student's Missing Officer. Missing.CME@nottscgcsx.gov.uk / 0115 8041045.

Attendance during the Covid Pandemic

Attendance expectations from Sept 2020

It is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the current advice on shielding
- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should monitor engagement with this activity (as set out in the section below).

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Pupils and families who are anxious about return to school

All other pupils must attend school. Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we recommend schools discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. Schools should be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).