



Internal Policy

Attendance Policy

This policy is consistent with DfE guidelines and the legal requirements for school attendance.

General Principles

Sale Grammar School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education and we will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil meets the legal requirements of attending school regularly and punctually.

The school has a system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping. However those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality will be challenged using appropriate agencies and legal processes.

Sale Grammar School will establish for stakeholders the link between attendance and attainment, communicating with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. It is hoped that any problems associated with poor attendance and punctuality will be resolved quickly.

Aims

- To ensure that attendance and punctuality are a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- To provide a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.



Internal Policy

- To promote effective partnerships with the relevant services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Supporting Parents and Pupils

The importance of attendance and punctuality is highlighted in curriculum lessons and assemblies. The work of school counselling services and Peer Mentors reinforces the message that attendance matters. The school is able to support parents and encourage attendance through the provision of the Learning Resource Centre and Extension Study Clubs in the evening and a Breakfast service in the dining room from 8am.

The Attendance Officer, Key Stage Leader, and the Head of Progress and Learning for each year group are available for parents to contact for advice and are able to supply up-to-date attendance information for parents. A parenting contract or support plan can also be helpful when addressing attendance issues.

Classifying Absences

By law only the Headteacher can approve absence, not parents, and it is for the school to judge whether a parental explanation for absence is a satisfactory justification. Where parentally condoned unauthorised absence is apparent, the school will involve other agencies and could result in prosecution.

The school is required to inform the LA (Local Authority) if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days and the absence is treated as unauthorised. The Headteacher can notify the LA earlier if there are areas of concern or to request prosecution.

Authorised absence

This is absence with permission from the Headteacher or authorised representative. This includes instances of absence for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (e.g. illness). In all cases, reasons for absence must be given in writing by the parent/carer. Parents must apply for permission well in advance for a leave of absence and a form is available from the Attendance Officer. Without permission (which cannot be guaranteed especially during examination periods; or other significant times in the academic year or if the attendance of the student has previously caused concern), absence will be recorded as unauthorised and could result in prosecution.

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Review Date:



Internal Policy

Examples where absence **may** be authorised are:

- Persistent illness. Parents should make every effort to arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours.
- Days of religious observance
- Interviews with prospective employers, or visits to a secure place at another school (including entrance examinations)
- Leave for examinations, which is granted at the discretion of the Head teacher
- Family bereavement
- Taking part in an approved educational activity e.g. Work Experience, field trip, school sporting event.
- Fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion (until ratified)
- Exceptional circumstances, duration to be agreed with the Head teacher e.g. wedding of a close relative
- Public performances including film or TV work (considered along with the relevant local authority licence).

Family holidays during term-time

- Government guidelines state that parents should **not** take pupils on holiday during term time. It is at the school's discretion whether or not a period of absence is authorised.
- If the Head teacher does not agree to the absence, the absence will be classed as unauthorised and could result in a penalty notice being issued. Requests for absence due to holidays will not be authorised in an examination year.
- If parents keep a child away for longer than the agreed period, any extra time will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date.



Internal Policy

Unauthorised absence

This is absence without permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences e.g. absence which is not explained by letter/telephone call from parents; looking after other children; shopping trips.

Registration and Absence

- It is a legal requirement that pupils are registered twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent.
- The register will be marked by staff according to the agreed notation.
- Pupils who do not attend school will have their absence classified as authorised or unauthorised in the register.
- Where pupils have not arrived at school by 9.30am, telephone contact will be made with parents by Student Services (unless previous notification received) confirming the absence and reason. A letter is required on the pupil's return.
- All pupils will be expected to arrive at school in the morning in time to register with their form at 8.35am.
- Morning registers will be kept open for fifty five minutes from the beginning of registration. If the pupil arrives before the register closes then the pupil will be marked present but late, but arrival after the register closes will be marked as absence. In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, school will keep the register open for a longer period.
- Pupils may be asked to provide documentary proof of an absence e.g. appointment card, interview letter.

Lateness

- Morning registration starts at 8.35 and form tutors mark pupils present in the register. Any pupil arriving late during the registration period will be marked accordingly in the register and the lateness will be recorded by the Attendance Officer. If a pupil is late they must sign in at Student Services. Three late marks will result in a detention on a Friday evening.

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Internal Policy

- Any pupil arriving late in the morning but within 50 minutes of the end of registration will report to Student Services where the lateness and reason will be recorded and the register completed.
- All late pupils must sign in at Student Services . A pupil arriving later than 50 minutes after morning registration will be recorded as absent and contact will be made with home to seek an explanation for the lateness (unless previous notification received). The Home-School agreement states clearly the need for punctuality.
- **Punctuality is a legal requirement. Consistently late arrival will be recorded and used by other agencies and may result in legal action including penalty notices.**
- A sixth Form Board monitors the progress of Key Stage 5 students. Students and parents are asked to attend where there are more than 10 lates per term for school or lessons, or where attendance has fallen below 95%.

Lesson Monitor

Teaching staff are responsible for taking a register in each of their classes. This is recorded via Lesson Monitor on SIMs or informing Student Services of those pupils present/absent in their class.

Monitoring Attendance

The Attendance Officer will provide a weekly record of lateness and absence to the Head of Progress and Learning and Key Stage Leaders.

Where a parent is unaware of absence, the Attendance Officer will inform the Head of Progress and Learning immediately.

All teachers will take a class register during each lesson. Punctuality or attendance concerns must be reported to the individual's Head of Progress and Learning on the same day.

The Attendance Officer and Key Stage Leader/ Head of Progress and Learning will meet regularly to discuss pupils with poor attendance.



Internal Policy

Intervention as a result of poor attendance / punctuality:

The school will undertake a number of steps to address a pupil's non-attendance or punctuality concerns, these include action by the Attendance Officer e.g. checking data, contacting home, working with Head of Progress and Learning/Key Stage Leader. The Intervention Practitioner becomes involved once :

- a pattern of irregular or non-attendance has developed despite contact home.
- letters sent by the school have met with little or no response
- there is a lack of co-operation in ensuring the pupil's regular attendance
- a pattern of post registration truancy is identified.
- a pattern of persistent lateness develops
- there are specific welfare issues which are preventing a pupil from accessing education
- a pupil is withdrawn from school by Parents / Carer who are moving to a new area and the school does not receive a request for the pupil's records from a school in the area.

The Intervention Practitioner will

- Provide one day per week of attendance and behaviour support to pupils within the school.
- Undertake assessments with pupils and parents who are referred as below 90% attendance
- Provide individual or group intervention and support to raise attendance rates.
- Review and evaluate the impact of the interventions, liaising with other agencies, to use contract based agreement to bring about behaviour change.

The Local Authority (LA) maintains statutory responsibility for prosecutions for non-attendance at school. The core duties of the LA are:

- To promote and support a whole school approach to attendance by recommending good practice.
- To work within Trafford's Common Assessment Framework and Safeguarding procedures.
- To liaise regularly with the school's Attendance Officer to identify cases which require Education Welfare Officer intervention
- To keep up to date with latest guidance and policy

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Review Date:

Appendix 1

Class Teachers must :

- Ensure that all students within lessons are able to access learning in accordance with the curriculum policy.
- Ensure that underachieving students within each class are identified and inform the Curriculum Leader and Head of Progress and Learning. This will enable the identification of those with the potential to become poor attendees.
- Complete a class register for each lesson
- Monitor carefully the attendance of individuals within a class and alert the Curriculum Leader and appropriate Head of Progress and Learning where patterns of non-attendance are detected.
- Enable any work missed through absence to be caught up.
- Ensure that appropriate work is set and marked for long-term absentees and those on exclusion, so that return to school is made as easy as possible.
- Welcome back students from long-term absence in a professional manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other students. Actively discourage any adverse comments about the absence from other students within the class.

Schools are legally obliged to maintain daily registers of attendance and these are subject to audit by external authority.

The Form Tutor will :

- Ensure that registers are accurately completed and maintained.
- Alert the Head of Progress and Learning to any students with attendance or punctuality concerns.
- Keep registers up to date using the required codes with reasons for absence as identified within absence notes.
- Use attendance information provided by the Attendance Officer to encourage pupils towards individual or form targets for improvement.

Student Services will :

- Remind returning students of the requirement to produce an absence note. Where absence notes are not provided within a week of the absence in spite of your actions, alert the Attendance Officer
- Collect and scrutinise absence notes and alert the Attendance Officer if judgement suggests that these are forged.

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Internal Policy

The Head of Progress and Learning together with their Key Stage Leader should:

- Monitor carefully the attendance of students within the year group, taking note of any patterns amongst students from particular groups, particular times of the week or particular subject areas. Inform the Head of Key Stage of any identified patterns in order to determine the appropriate action to be taken.
- Regularly keep Student Services updated and assist referrals to outside agencies.
- Liaise with their SLT link to ensure that students with poor attendance are receiving appropriate levels of support.
- Use information from the Attendance Officer to monitor the attendance rates of forms within the year group, taking action alongside form tutors where particular students are identified as having poor attendance.
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within the year group through assemblies, the year group notice board and constant reinforcement with students. Encourage a spirit of healthy competition between forms and individuals.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to ensure that appropriate work is set for long-term absentees and those excluded from school.
- Work with the curriculum staff to identify ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively, involving form staff, agreeing timescales and including social workers, parents and pupil.
- Implement sanctions where there have been instances of truancy.
- Keep form tutors informed of action taken in relation to particular students.
- Following liaison with the Head teacher or Student Services, decide upon students to remove from roll and inform Student Services.