



SHERBORNE SCHOOL

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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**Policy Owner:** Deputy Head Pastoral

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**Policy Agreed on:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

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**Policy Reviewed on:** 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024

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**Policy to be Reviewed on:** 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025

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## Document Control Table

<b>Status</b>	Fixed
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Deputy Head Pastoral
<b>Statutory/Recommended</b>	Recommended
<b>Date Approved</b>	
<b>Review Period</b>	1 Year
<b>Latest Review Date</b>	
<b>Next Review Date</b>	
<b>Linked Documents and Policies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Culture and Ethos Policy</li> <li>2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.</li> <li>3. Home School Agreement</li> <li>4. Code of Ethics</li> <li>5. Admission Policy</li> </ol>

Version	Date	Comments	Author
1.0		Establishment of new independent policy.	Garry James
1.1		Policy Update	Monica Hamlin

### IMPORTANT

1. The English document should be seen as the original, true, and correct version.
2. Once downloaded or printed, this is an uncontrolled document. Please refer to the school website for the latest version.
3. Sherborne Senior School reserves the right to amend and update this policy at any time.

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## Introduction

Sherborne Senior School regards regular attendance and good punctuality as essential in ensuring the best possible outcomes for a child. Regular school attendance is necessary in support of learning, attainment and to enhance better life chances, while good punctuality will foster a committed and engaged approach along with strong life-long habits. The school values and expectations encourage pupils to understand and appreciate that their presence and commitment is important and that they are an important member of the school community.

This policy sets out the key principles and guidelines in which we seek to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality, raise achievement and maximise opportunities while at school and into later life.

### a. Attendance

This refers to a pupil's actual time at school. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education states that the minimum expectation is that a pupil attends 90% or 162 days of the 180 academic days throughout a school academic year. High attendance will enhance a pupil's learning, growth, and development as a young person while low attendance may have an adverse negative impact.

### b. Punctuality

This refers to a pupil's timely arrival both at the beginning of the school day and throughout the whole school day. A pupil is deemed late if they arrive 5 minutes late or more past and beyond a stipulated time as per the school daily programme.

### c. Attendance and Punctuality

There is a clear link between good attendance, punctuality, and high academic standards and success. To allow a pupil to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly, and every pupil should arrive to school on time each day that the school is open unless there is a reason for the absence which is unavoidable. Ensuring a child's regular attendance and punctuality in arriving to school is the parent's/carer's responsibility.

## 1. Roles and Responsibilities

Any form of success is dependent upon all parties taking responsibility and working together in partnership with an aligned approach and having a clear understanding of their own role and responsibility.

### a. School

School will record, monitor, report, encourage, celebrate, and offer support or intervention when required.

### b. Pupil

In the Senior School with our young future adults, this responsibility will fall on the shoulders of pupils. As young adults, they will be offered support and guidance where necessary, but must take responsibility for their own actions. Any concern which is out their control, such as driver or lack of clear parental support will be considered.

### c. Parents/Carer

The school attendance and punctuality of any child in arriving to school comfortably in advance of the school's official start time is the primary responsibility of parents. They must take full responsibility to ensure that their child attends every school day and is punctual in arriving to school at the start of the school day. Attendance must meet the Ministry of Education and Higher Education minimum expectation. Travel arrangements are the responsibility of parents unless using school transport.

## 2. School Day

Sherborne Senior School provides pupils with 5x 60-minute period lessons of dedicated curriculum learning along with a 6<sup>th</sup> period or 'Enrichment' which provides pupils with opportunities for extended learning and/or discovery via an array of clubs and activities. Pupils are expected to arrive to school promptly in advance of registration which commences at 7:10am and are permitted to depart school after the conclusion of period 5 if they do not have after-school enrichment.

### Senior School Timing

What	When	Details
Registration / Tutor Period	0710 – 0730	Pupils immediately go to their tutor room to register their attendance.
Period 1	0730 – 0830	
Period 2	0830 – 0930	
1 <sup>st</sup> Break	0930 – 1000	Morning break
Period 3	1000 – 1100	
Period 4	1100 – 1200	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Break	1200 – 1230	Lunch break
Period 5	1230 – 1330	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Break	1330 – 1335	Pupils go to tutor room to collect their <b>mobile phone</b> device. Pupils who do not have enrichment are allowed to depart.
Period 6 Enrichment	1335 – 1430	Pupils attend enrichment.
End of School Day	1445	Teachers and pupils have departed school.

## 3. Signing In Procedure

### a. Start of School Day

At the start of a school day, pupils are expected to arrive to school at 7.05am in advance of the commencement of the school day and tutor period at 7.10am. Arriving early and in good time establishes good habits and will support future lifelong learning and success. The tutor will register the pupil's arrival via iSAMS. If a pupil is 5 minutes or more late in arriving to tutor period, they will be recorded as being late along with the actual late arrival time noted from the school start time of 7.10am.

### b. During the School Day

During the school day, if a pupil has arrived at school after tutor period has concluded and period 1 has commenced, they will be expected to sign in at the main reception.

## 4. Signing Out Procedure

When a child is registered and is attending school, they are the responsibility of the school. It is an expectation that the child will depart school either at the end of school day, after the last period of learning has concluded and final bell has sounded, or they will depart following the conclusion of after-school enrichment. Pupils may also depart school following a trip or fixture past and beyond the normal school end time. Until such time, pupils will remain the responsibility of school. Pupils may also need to depart early due to medical appointment or other reason provided by parent/carer.

### a. Early Leave During School Day

Any early school departure will require the receipt of formal communication received from parents or carers via means that are recorded within the pupil's profile on iSAMS. This communication will be sent to either the Form Tutor or Head of Year dependent upon request.

#### i. Pre-Approved

A pupil will be allowed to leave school if a prior communication sent by parents has been approved by either the Form Tutor, Head of Year or a member of SLT. Any request must be shared at least 24hrs in advance of the requested departure date and time. Any late request may be declined.

#### ii. Illness

A pupil may need to leave school early due to illness. Prior to any departure being approved, the pupil must attend the school First Aid unit and speak with the school medical team. The medical team will then make an assessment as to the child's health and wellbeing and determine if any early departure is required. The medical team will make a professional and informed decision and consult with parents as necessary. When speaking with parents, the mode of transport and collection will be confirmed.

In the event of a pupil's illness, they shall not be authorised to leave the school premises unaccompanied via public transport or Uber. Should this be necessary, parental consent, conveyed verbally, is required to permit the utilisation of said mode of transportation.

#### iii. Family Emergency

In the event of a family emergency the Head of Year or member of SLT will make a decision with the best interests of the child in mind and issue approval as necessary. Consultation with parents may be required to confirm details and collection arrangements.

**\*5 late arrivals/Early Leave to school will count as 1 Day Absence which will affect the overall attendance statistics (inclusive of authorised and unauthorised absences)**

### b. End of School Day

Following the conclusion of period 6 or enrichment, pupils are free to depart school and be collected by parents/carer or family driver. The decision for pupils to commute home using public transport or Uber rests solely with the discretion of parents and is within their responsibility.

## 5. Types of Absence

There are two forms of absence, either authorised or unauthorised. The Form Tutor in consultation with the Head of Year will determine which type of absence will be recorded.

### a. Authorised

An authorised absence will be recorded if a child is on study leave, university interview or any other reason at the discretion of either the Head of Year or a member of SLT.

### b. Medical

When a child is absent from school due to illness, and this has been confirmed via the receipt of accompanying documents, this will be recorded as a medical absence.

### c. Unauthorised

Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised or until such time as an explanation and/or accompanying medical documents or other has been provided. To amend records the Form Tutor and Head of Year may need to consult to agree an outcome. Any unauthorised absence will be monitored with a response taken in accordance with the school's absence procedures.

Every half day absence from school is classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED (explained with specific codes)**, **UNEXPLAINED (N)** or **UNAUTHORISED (O)**. Therefore, information about the cause of absence is always required.

Authorised absences are sessions away from school for a reason such as illness, emergencies, or other unavoidable causes.

***Both authorised and unauthorised absences including medical absences will be counted towards the total number of absence in the attendance report.***

## 6. Absence Procedures

When a child does not attend school or parents intend for their child not to attend school, school will take necessary action as per the school absence procedures.

### d. Planned Absence (1-5 days)

If a child is going to be absent due to a medical appointment or other associated reason, parents must first seek approval by contacting the Head of Year. The Head of Year will then review and consider the request either issuing approval and recording this as 'authorised' absence or the request may be refused and the absence, if taken, will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. The Head of Year will provide clarity as to the decision taken to ensure understanding. 24hrs notice needs to be given to allow for the processing of the request.

### e. Longer Planned Absence (more than 5 days)

If parents are forced to take their holidays during school term time and require their children to be absent from school for this reason, they should inform the school well in advance.

Parents are requested to complete the Pupil Leave of Request Form and submit it for approval by their child's school Deputy Head Pastoral or Headteacher at least 10 days before the date of the proposed holiday



Pupil Leave of Absence Request Form 2024-25.pdf

Absences for family holidays will be counted in the total number of days absent on the reports.

In the case of approved absences, it is the pupil's responsibility (senior school) to find out and catch up with class work. If, due to illness or injury, your child is likely to be absent for more than 5 school days, we ask that you inform your child's Head of Year who may arrange for work to be sent home at your request.

***\* Pupils who are continually absent or late for school miss valuable lesson time. A pupil who is consistently absent is at risk of progressing to next key stage. Parent may be asked to withdraw their child from the school.***

#### **f. Unplanned Absence (1-3 days)**

If a child is absent due to illness or family emergency, parents must contact the form tutor via email, making them aware of the unplanned absence, providing the reason. The tutor will then record this absence as illness or other as per the school registration codes.

#### **g. Unexplained Absence**

- i. Any unexplained school absence will result in school sending an email notification to parents via iSAMS by the end of the day to make them aware of the concern. In addition, the email will request that parents offer guidance as to the reason for the absence. Any response needs to be shared directly with the tutor
- ii. If a pupil is found to be absent for 2 consecutive days with no response or explanation provided by parents, the Form Tutor will contact home via telephone.
- iii. Continued concern with absence attendance non-response via both email and telephone will result in the form tutor escalating the concern for the attention of the Head of Year.
- iv. A report is shared with HoY each day by the attendance officer.

\* Pupils who are continually absent or late for school miss valuable lesson time. A pupil who is consistently absent might be asked to be withdrawn from the school.

## **7. Punctuality**

It is an expectation that all pupils at Sherborne Senior School are punctual in their approach which fosters strong good habits for future life and success. Poor punctuality is not acceptable and is a breach of the school values and expectations. This includes arriving to school in advance of the official school start time, along with attending all lessons, tutor period, and enrichment in good time and not being late.

#### **a. Start and End of School Day**

Pupils are expected to arrive to school by 7.00am, well in advance of the stipulated registration start time of 7.10am. Parents must ensure that their child/ren are dropped off at school in good time and well in advance of the official school start time and are collected immediately after the conclusion of school, trip, event, or after-school enrichment.

#### **b. During School Day**

Pupils are expected to attend all lessons, tutor period, enrichment and other important school events in a timely manner and be punctual. Any pupil who arrives 5-minutes late or more will be spoken to by the class teacher to understand the reason for their lateness. If there is no acceptable reason for their late arrival, the actual late time will be recorded via iSAMS.

Any significant concern may also result in the pupil being issued with a school conduct. Follow up may include tutor conversation, record of conversation through issuance of a conduct, punctuality support card or Minor HoY reflection to after-school academic catch-up session.



### c. Concern and Response

A response to or action taken for any concern will be in accordance with the Culture and Ethos Policy and Attendance and Punctuality Policy and on a weekly basis.

Pupils who arrive after 7:15 will need to get a late slip from the front reception before entering class. Lateness and early leaves are counted towards pupils' attendance as well; our policy stipulates the following:

#### Important Note

Absence from school: 1 absence is counted as 1-Day Absence.

Late arrivals to school: 5 very late arrivals to school (Code Q) will be counted as 1-Day Absence.

Early Leave: 5 early leave will be counted as 1-Day Absence.

Concern	Response
<p><b>Very Late arrival to school after 7:30 am (Code Q)</b></p> <p>2 or more late arrivals to school (after tutor time) over a week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If a pupil is found to be persistently late, parents may be invited to school to discuss the concern along with their child. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child arrives to school on time.</li> <li>b. Additional conversation held and guidance given by Head of Year. If there is no improvement, academic catch-up session will be arranged for pupil to attend along with monitoring and tracking via a support card.</li> <li>c. If a pupil is found to be late to school <b>3 or more times</b> in 1 week repeatedly, this may lead to further academic catch-up opportunity being issued by the Head of Year. Failure to attend may result in further escalation to academic catch-up session on a Thursday after school.</li> <li>d. If the concern continues and the pupil is continually late, this will lead to an escalation in response taken in accordance with the school Culture and Ethos Policy including signing of a pledge or a contract. Concerns will be communicated through staged email and letters by the pastoral team.</li> <li>e. Persistently late and no improvement: The above continues as a cycle and in addition: MOEHE is contacted; possible non-enrolment for the following school year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Late arrivals to tutor time and lessons</b> over a week. Any pupil who is 5-minutes late or more will receive a late mark with the actual late time recorded on iSAMS for future reference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 2 late arrivals to lessons over a week without a valid reason: conversation held with tutor with guidance given. Issuance of a conduct as a record of conversation and action taken.</li> <li>b. If a pupil is found to be late to lessons 3 or more times in 1 week repeatedly, a Head of Year reflection session will be arranged.</li> <li>c. Continued punctuality concerns in lessons may lead to further after-school academic catch-up opportunity being issued by the Head of Year. Failure to attend may result in further escalation to academic catch-up session on a Thursday after school.</li> <li>d. If the significant punctuality concern continues including truancy from lessons, this will lead to an escalation in response taken in accordance with the school Culture and Ethos Policy including signing of a pledge or a contract.</li> <li>e. Persistently late and no improvement: The above continues as a cycle and in addition: MOEHE is contacted; possible non-enrolment for the following school year.</li> </ul>

## A. In Term Holidays

Taking a holiday during term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to support both the school and their child by not taking children away in term time. This includes at the beginning and end of term. All 180 school days are vital as part of a child's academic and holistic growth. Parents must understand that by taking a child out of school during term time, they are making a choice that will impact their own child's learning negatively. At Sherborne Senior School:

- a. No holidays will be authorised during term time and will be recorded as such.
- b. Pupil's attendance at University interviews will be given 5 days' approved leave from school. After this initial period, it will be classed as an unauthorised absence.
- c. **A child's attendance falling below 90% during any academic term may affect the renewal of enrolment for the next academic year or the retention within their current year group.**

## B. Start and End of Term

- a. Extended unexplained absence during the first week of any term could result in the child being removed from Sherborne Senior School and fees paid will be forfeited.
- b. Parents have a duty to make sure that their child attends regularly. Our expectation from all of our pupils is 100% attendance.

## C. Monitoring and Reporting

School will monitor all absence and punctuality thoroughly. Any immediate concerns relating to attendance and punctuality will be addressed by relevant members of the pastoral team and recorded on CPOMS.

### a. Weekly Parent Attendance and Punctuality Summary

Sherborne Senior School shares an end-of-week email summary with all parents, providing parents with information upon their child's attendance and punctuality. This summary provides actual data for the whole academic year thus far, along with current term as a helpful comparison. Parents are expected to monitor continually and take any necessary action if any concern is noted. Parents will speak with their child and/or driver and resolve any associated concern.

### b. Ministry of Education and Higher Education

Sherborne Senior School are required to share their records with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. This information is subject to review and any enquiries or concerns may be addressed with the school, for pupils who may not be meeting the minimum expectation of 90% during the academic year. In support of answering and explaining any query the school may need to share related documentation, such as medical certificates or other.

### c. Required Support and/or Intervention

The attendance and punctuality policy ensures weekly monitoring of pupil attendance and punctuality, with any concerns addressed promptly. Tutors will have conversations with pupils whose attendance or punctuality falls below expectations, and support cards may be issued to track improvement. If further intervention is required, a parent meeting will be arranged to discuss underlying issues, followed by an academic catch-up plan to help pupils keep pace with their studies. This approach provides timely support and ensures pupils meet their academic and behavioural targets.

### d. Celebration

School will take every opportunity to celebrate a pupil's performance and recognise exemplary attendance and punctuality. This may include a Head of Year celebratory postcard/email, merits or assembly award.

## D. Promotion or Retention

- a. Poor attendance and/or punctuality may result in the child being issued with an agreement or contract to try and resolve the concern.
- b. Poor attendance and/or punctuality will be treated on a case-by-case basis, and the outcome of one case does not set the precedent for another case.
- c. A related concern with the quality of lesson and learning time lost may mean that the pupil will not be promoted and retained in their current year group as it is felt that there may be significant gaps in their learning which will hinder their future progress and academic success.
- d. A concern may mean that a pupil will not be invited to attend a school trip, visit, fixture or other.
- e. Continued significant concern may result in a pupil losing their place at the school.
- f. All parents are kept informed via the weekly attendance and punctuality summary.
- g. A pupil's attendance percentage is included with all academic reports.

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