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## Attendance

### 1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to encourage students to attend Uxbridge High School (UHS) every day (190 days per year). Good attendance is essential if students are to maximise their chances of success, as there is a strong link between good attendance, punctuality and academic success. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement.

In drawing up this policy, statements have been informed by either statutory requirements, as referred in the Education Acts and regulations, or by government advice, local authority policy and Ofsted expectations.

### 2. Parental responsibilities

- Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that all students of compulsory school age attend school;
- All students are expected to be punctual to school each day and to fulfil the statutory requirement of registration;
- Parents are required to provide satisfactory explanations for any period of absence (normally a medical note, compliment slip or appointment card/letter. Parents are not expected to pay for this information;
- Each student should attain a minimum attendance of 95%;
- Each student should strive for a 100% 'on time' punctuality record;

### 3. School responsibilities

- Each form tutor is required to take an attendance register at the start of the morning session;
- All teachers are required to take a class register every lesson, with the period 5 register counting as registration for the afternoon session. The register shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent;
- If the student of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised:
  - **Authorised** absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered as satisfactory justification for absence;
  - All other absences must be treated as **unauthorised**;
  - Since all absences are to be treated as unauthorised unless and until a satisfactory explanation is accepted, procedures for chasing up explanations and amending registers will be consistently applied. These include phoning and writing to parents;
- The school will intervene and support students and parents where attendance falls below 90%, with the aim of helping the family to improve their child's attendance to school (see intervention strategies below for examples).

### 4. Strategies for the improvement of attendance

- UHS has developed a culture in which regular attendance retains a high profile through positive reinforcement in assemblies and tutor time;
- UHS has raised the profile of attendance among parents through the home-school agreement, parents' evenings, newsletters and the governors' committee;



- The house admin officer runs scheduled and unscheduled attendance checks;
- A senior member of staff is responsible for attendance;
- UHS awards certificates for 100% attendance on a termly basis both at KS3 and KS4;
- Teaching and associate staff reward good attendance by using the schools reward systems;
- UHS uses an appropriate automated absence checking system;
- The senior member of staff responsible for attendance will monitor current systems and explore other IT packages to further enhance procedures.

### **5. Intervention strategies for students with irregular attendance and truancy**

Where a student's attendance is a cause for concern, a range of intervention and support strategies will be put in place to help improve their attendance. Some examples below:

- Parents will be contacted on any day an identified student is absent, without explanation, using the automated attendance checking system;
- Letters will be sent by the house admin officer to highlight concerns to parents. These letters will emphasise the legal requirements of parents and identify the levels of intervention that will be put in place if improvements are not observed. This includes an outline of the school attendance panel procedure;
- Students causing concern will be reported by the house admin officer to the appropriate head of house;
- The local authority will be informed at an early stage of students whose attendance is poor;
- Parents may receive an informal warning about the possible implementation of the school attendance panel procedure;
- In liaison with the local authority, the house admin officer will monitor patterns of unauthorised absence and, under direction from the head of house or the leadership team member with responsibility for attendance, will act upon it with parents;
- If a problem persists with an individual student, the school attendance panel procedure may be implemented;
- The head of house or the leadership team member with responsibility for attendance, will work with the local authority, police and other community groups to support truancy initiatives such as the Hillingdon truancy watch scheme;
- Students with persistent or very poor attendance will be allocated to Wessex house until their attendance improves. Whilst in Wessex house, a personalised programme of support will be implemented.

### **6. Persistent non-attendance**

Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be categorised as persistent non-attenders (PNA) and this will trigger a range of intervention strategies, some of which are outlined above, aimed at improving attendance to the minimum expected of 95%.

### **7. Wessex house**

Students who have very poor attendance will be allocated to Wessex house (see 6 above).

### **8. Children missing from education (CME)**

If a child has missed school and there has been no contact from home, the school attendance support officer will:



- on the first day of absence, send a automated phone call home;
- on the second day of absence, if there is no response from automated phone call home, then the school attendance support officer will call the parents and see if any contact can be made;
- send an emails, if there is a email address available;
- ensure a welfare check is carried out by the school attendance support officer, if no response from phone calls and emails;
- ensure a slip is put through the letter box asking for the parents to contact the school, during the welfare check.

If we are unable to establish where the child is, the school attendance support officer would inform the DSL and a CME form would be completed and emailed to the participation team at the local authority. The DSL will consider further actions/support should it be required.

#### **9. The school attendance panel procedure**

- The school attendance panel procedure involves an initial attendance panel meeting with the student and their parents;
- Appointments are made and parents are requested to attend. If the parents do not attend, the attendance panel will meet in their absence;
- Parents are informed by the head of house of the issues involved, the support on offer and the expectation that the attendance of the student involved must improve by a certain review date;
- At the review meeting the attendance of the student is evaluated. If the targets have not been met, the school may decide to follow up the concern at a higher level;
- This can involve a fixed penalty fine being imposed on the parent(s) of the student involved;
- Failure to pay this fine can result in parents being required to attend court. In extreme circumstances the court can impose custodial sentences for parents of students whose attendance does not improved.

The main aim of this procedure is to work positively with all students and parents to improve the attendance and maintain a good standard of punctuality.

#### **10. Penalty notices**

Penalty notices may be issued where attendance falls below the minimum target of 90% or where no reasonable and legitimate reason for the absence is produced by the parents. Absence that may trigger a penalty notice includes taking unauthorised holidays during term time.

#### **11. Lates before the close of registration**

Form tutors will monitor and sanction students that arrive late to school. This will normally take the form of issuing detentions in line with the school's behaviour system. They will seek support from their house guidance leader and head of house for students that are repeatedly late.



## **12. Late after registration closes**

Students arriving to school more than 30 minutes after registration closes at 8.55am (e.g. arriving after 9.25am) will receive an unauthorised late mark, unless they can produce medical evidence (e.g. dental appointment card) that explains their lateness.

## **13. Penalty notice proceedings for unauthorised lateness (code U)**

If there are 10 incidents of late arrival in a term, after the registers have closed at 8.55am, the head of house or the leadership team member with responsibility for attendance may make a referral to the local authority, which may attract a fine. The local authority can issue penalty notices for any unauthorised 'exceptional leave' to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period, but within 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid, each parent will receive a summons to Uxbridge magistrates court. The summons will be for the original offence of failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly. If unauthorised leave is repeated the local authority may summons each parent to court without a penalty notice being issued.

## **14. Holidays in term time**

The school will not authorise absence for holidays during term time.

## **15. Exceptional leave**

Exceptional leave may be requested by parents by completing and returning an exceptional leave form at least 10 school days before the leave is requested. Exceptional leave may only be granted by the principal. It will normally only be granted once in a student's compulsory period of schooling and for a maximum period of 5 school days and then only if the attendance for the academic year in which it is requested, will not fall below 95% as a result of the leave. Before granting leave consideration will also be given to any examination periods or other important calendared events that will be missed if the leave were to be granted. Exceptional leave requests should not be made for holiday absence.

## **16. Absence Codes**

The school will use the approved Department for Education national absence codes when taking registers, please see appendix 1.



## APPENDIX 1

### Absence and attendance codes

#### **Present at school**

Students must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a student were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

#### **Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Present in school during registration.

#### **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

#### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

An approved educational activity is where a student is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Students can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded. Attendance codes for when students are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

#### **Code D: Dual registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. The law allows for dual registration of students at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

#### **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code is used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Uxbridge High School will be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

#### **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code is used to record the sessions when a student is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

#### **Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code is used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

#### **Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for students in the final two years of compulsory education. Uxbridge High School will ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual students. Any absence will be recorded using the relevant code.



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### **Authorised absence from school**

Authorised absence means that the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Absence codes when students are not present in school are as follows:

#### **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The leadership team member will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

#### **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a student to continue their education whilst they are excluded, but still on the admission register, they will be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision will be arranged for each excluded student from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they will be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

#### **Code H: Holiday authorised by the school**

The principal will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the principal must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case, which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the principal will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the principal's discretion (see Page 4). A maximum of 5 days only can be granted.

#### **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Uxbridge High School will advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Uxbridge High School will authorise absences due to illness, unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, Uxbridge High School will request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Where medical evidence has been requested from a parent, this must be provided within 5 school days and failure to provide this information within this time limit will result in the child's absence being unauthorised, which may lead to a fine or legal action. Where illness occurs immediately before or after a school break, medical evidence must be provided within 5 days of the return to school. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

#### **Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Uxbridge High School will, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

#### **Code R: Religious observance**

Uxbridge High School will treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, Uxbridge High School will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. A maximum of



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3 days in one academic year may be authorised.

### **Code S: Study leave**

Uxbridge High School will record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave will be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 students during public examinations. Provision will still be made available for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

### **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code will be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision. It will not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child will attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

### **Unauthorised absence from school**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

#### **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Uxbridge High School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for the student's absence has been established the register will be amended. This code will not be left on a student's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence is not provided after a reasonable amount of time, the code N will be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

#### **Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they will record it as unauthorised.

#### **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Uxbridge High School will actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

### **Administrative codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the school census:

#### **Code X: Not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.



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### **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a student is unable to attend because:

- the school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the student's home is not within walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending school;

This code can also be used where a student is unable to attend because:

- the student is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the student is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity). This code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

### **Code Z: Student not on admission register**

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of students joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put students on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the school.

### **Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure**

This code will be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

This code can also be used when schools and local authorities agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those students not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.



## APPENDIX 2

### Attendance Roles

<b>Form tutor</b>	<b>House guidance leader</b>	<b>School attendance support officer</b>	<b>Head of house</b>	<b>Local authority</b>
Monitor am/pm attendance of Tutor group	Monitor attendance concerns	Monitor students with less than 90% attendance	Monitor the attendance for their House	Issue fines Send formal letters Start court proceedings
Monitor and sanction poor am/pm punctuality using schools behaviour policy	Implement interventions: Attendance reports Parent meetings Attend Panel meetings Plus others as appropriate from attendance policy	Implement interventions with support: Parent meetings Home visits Letters to parents Panel meetings	Decide interventions Implement or delegate interventions	
Communicate concerns with parents	Liaise with Head of House	Liaise with GL and HL and Participation Officer	Achieve the whole school attendance targets for their house	
Monitor intraday attendance and punctuality	Communicate concerns with parents	Provide information/data for: Governors' committee Safeguarding meetings or similar	Allocate students to Wessex Tutor group	
Liaise with and communicate to HGL about concern over students with less than 95% attendance	Liaise with and communicate to Inclusion Manager about concern over students with less than 90% attendance	Keep central records of interventions Provide case studies		
Collect and chase absence notes from students/parents		Run the automated attendance checking systems.		
		Produce termly attendance certificates for students		
		Attend house line management meetings as required and liaise with PO to action interventions		