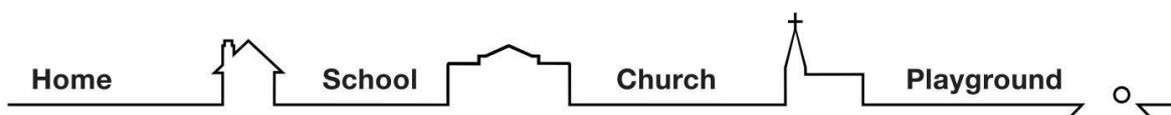




# ATTENDANCE POLICY

|                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Date of Last Review             | September 2015 |
| Recommended by CGS Committee    | October 2018   |
| Ratified by Full Governing Body | December 2018  |
| Date of Next Review             | September 2021 |



Thornleigh Salesian College recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy, therefore, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance (190 days per year) for individual students within the school. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential in order for students to maximise their chances of success.

In April 2017, the Supreme Court held that attending school “regularly” means attendance in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school and not “sufficiently frequent attendance”. This means that a child **must attend school on every day that the school requires him or her to do so** and failure to do this may lead to the commission of an offence. There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent GCSE results and excellent attendance.

In order to achieve this, all members of the school community have an important contribution to make. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Procedural Framework.

### **Aims**

- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at Thornleigh Salesian College
- Reduce the number of persistent absentees
- Raise the profile of attendance amongst the school community
- Ensure the provision of appropriate guidance for parents, students and staff
- Develop and monitor clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registers
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon data
- Develop a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies

### **Rights, Roles and Responsibilities**

We will develop a procedural framework to complement this policy that will define agreed roles and responsibilities for:

- Parents and Carers
- Students
- School staff
- Governors

This framework will identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance. This procedural framework will include guidance on:

- Registration
- What constitutes unauthorised absence
- Leave of absence requests and Penalty Notices
- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for students
- Systems for dealing with absence
- Systems for identifying and tackling poor attendance
- Systems for recognising and rewarding good attendance
- Systems for monitoring whole school attendance

### **Leave of Absence**

Government legislation states that the Headteacher should not approve any requests for absence unless in exceptional circumstances.

## **Holidays in Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence. We ask all parents not to book holidays during term time. Any savings that parents/carers may make by taking holidays in school time may be offset by the cost to their child's education.

If a child is absent from school for a holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we are obliged to pass this information on to the Early Intervention Service which will result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

## **Religious Observations in Term Time**

The school will authorise absence that is due to religious observance, but the day must be exclusively set apart of religious observance by the religious body.

The school may only allow one day of authorised absence under these circumstances. All requests for leave due to religious observance must be made in advance and in writing to the Headteacher.

## **Emergency closure, eg, snow days / pandemic**

It is extremely rare for the school to shut for emergencies such as snow. If in doubt, students are advised to check the school website: [www.thornleigh.bolton.sch.uk](http://www.thornleigh.bolton.sch.uk) or listen to TowerFM for an update. Parents/carers are asked not to telephone the school. If parents/carers have not heard otherwise we will expect all students to be in school. Absence will not be authorised if the school is open.

## **Use of Penalty Notices**

School is obliged to pass on information to the Early Intervention Service which will result in a Penalty Notice being issued in respect of unauthorised absence in accordance with the local code of conduct.

## **Partnership Working**

School will work with the Local Authority and support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school.

## **Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning**

School will adopt systems for monitoring attendance at both individual students and whole school level to inform future Action Planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

### **School:**

- Students are registered accurately and efficiently
- Attendance targets are set for individual students and year groups
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly reviewed

**Parents or Carers:**

- Ensure children attend regularly, and punctually and promote good attendance (97% and above)
- Contact expected on first day of absence
- Contact expected each day for continued absence
- Parental notes expected on return from absence
- Discuss planned absences with the school in advance and seek the appropriate leave of absence in good time
- Requests for leave of absence to be submitted on the authorised documentation and for the attention of the Head Teacher
- Attendance at meetings if concerns are identified
- Support the school in agreed interventions/action plans

**Students:**

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences
- Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration

**School staff:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all students
- Promote regular attendance and punctuality
- Be aware of the factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To be aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all students
- Monitor daily attendance and support the implement of interventions as appropriate
- Work with Pastoral Teams to ensure the students attend
- Ensure that all absence notes are stored in a secure place
- Where parents/carers fail to make contact providing a reason for absence, the School Attendance Officer and/or Student Progress Co-Ordinator will endeavour to contact them
- Teachers will only use A, N and L codes in registers

**Governors:**

- Agree adoption of Attendance policy and review
- Primary responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with Governors of the Care, Guidance & Support Committee
- Monitor Attendance figures
- Lead Attendance Panels as required
- Appoint a link Governor for Attendance

**Governor Approval and Review dates**

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the full governing body in December 2018 and will be reviewed every 3 years.

## **Attendance Procedural Framework:**

### **Registration:**

The Senior Attendance Lead should ensure that staff responsible for marking registers are aware of the codes to be used and that registers are marked accurately and consistently

- The school day begins at 8.45am for students
- At 8.45am when the “Registration Bell” is sounded students should go immediately to line up or to form rooms for Yr11
- Students entering the school premises after the “Registration Bell” are late for school. ‘L’ code to be used by the Form Tutor and the minutes late should be logged on SIMS. Students to make up minutes late in a lunchtime pastoral detention the same day. Failure to attend will lead to an afterschool detention.
- Students arriving after registration has ended at 9.05am **MUST** report to the main school reception where they must sign in and explain the reason for lateness
- Students late for school after form time will be issued with an after school pastoral detention that week. Yr11 will have an extended detention at lunchtime in the hall the same day
- If students arrive after the register has closed they are marked with a ‘U’ code
- Afternoon registration takes place during Period 5 at 1.30pm
- Staff will ensure that registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations
- If a student needs to leave school during the day they must provide confirmation from parents either verbally or by letter/ as to the reason why
- Students must get an exeat signed by the appropriate member of staff and sign out at the main reception and back in on their return to school
- Students are expected to return to school following any medical/ agreed appointment taken during the school day

### **Unauthorised Absences:**

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

- Any absence that the school has not given permission for
- Truancy from school, with or without parent’s knowledge
- Parentally – condoned absence (i.e. parents know their child is absent from school but do nothing about it)
- Delayed return from a period of absence
- Arriving late at school after the register has closed

### **Internal Absence from Lessons:**

Children should never be allowed to leave the premises during school time without permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Care, Guidance & Support Team. It is possible however, that on some occasions a child will leave the premises without the knowledge or permission of a member of staff.

- If a child does not arrive at their lesson the class teacher should enter ‘N’ on the register and change this to ‘L’ once the student has arrived and log the number of minutes late on SIMS

- If an 'N' code remains on the class register, the Attendance Officer must then check if the child has been sent to First Aid and check reception to see if they have signed out and left the school site officially
- If they have not signed out officially and are believed to be still on the premises, members of staff not supervising students may be directed to search the school site and immediate vicinity
- If the child is not found within a short period of time, the parents/carers should be contacted by the Attendance Officer
- If a member of staff finds the child, a senior member of staff must be told at once. Parents/carers, and external agencies will be notified where appropriate

### **Children who run:**

- If a child runs away from school and is in the eye line of adults. The adult should call after the child or try and talk to the child to try and get them to come back. Under no circumstances should a member of staff physically restrain or grab the child, unless the child is in immediate danger of hurting themselves or putting themselves in a dangerous situation.  
A member of staff should never put themselves at risk in the process and should not attempt to intervene without assistance unless it is an obvious emergency.
- The member of staff should ring the Attendance Officer who will contact parents/carers

### **Leave of absence including Holidays in term time and Religious Observance:**

- Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their child out of school, for any reason, during term time
- All requests for leave of absence will be declined unless parents can evidence exceptional circumstances
- Parents must apply for leave of absence using the school's application form which can be downloaded from the website
- If a student fails to return from an agreed period of absence, investigations will be made by staff (Telephone calls/Home visits where appropriate)
- Following continuous absence and without parental contact with school, a referral will be made to the Children Missing Education Team
- Penalty Notices will be issued in line with Local Authority guidelines

### **Penalty Notices:**

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution and as from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018, the criteria for issuing a penalty notice will be reduced and a fine will be considered where a student has had 10 sessions (equivalent of five days - consecutive or otherwise) of unauthorised absence over the period of two consecutive half terms.

This change has been introduced because of:

- Requests from Head Teachers to strengthen sanctions for unnecessary absence from school
- Increasing numbers of students who are classed as persistently absent
- An increase in the amount of absence due to family holidays in term time

In law, an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school and that absence is not authorised by the Head Teacher

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority to the family home. The fine for unauthorised absence currently stands at £60 per parent, per child. Non-payment of the Penalty within the 28 day time limit will trigger the prosecution process under the Provisions of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

## **Systems for dealing with Attendance issues**

### **Lateness:**

- All students are expected to be punctual to school (8.45am) and to lessons
- Students arriving after the registration bell at 8.45am will be marked as late by the Form Tutor and the minutes late should be logged and recorded on SIMS. Students to make up minutes late in a lunchtime pastoral detention the same day. Failure to attend will lead to an afterschool detention.
- Students arriving after registration ends at 9.05am **MUST** report to the main school reception to sign in and explain the reasons for lateness. Students late for school after form time will be issued with an after school pastoral detention that week. Yr11 will have an extended detention at lunchtime in the hall the same day
- Students arriving after the register closes will be marked with a 'U' code

### **Absences:**

- Parents/carers are expected to telephone school on the first day of absence to notify us of a child's absence or send a message via Gateway. Failure to comply will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- Authorised absence, e.g. illness, must be supported by a letter/ verbal contact from the parents/carers explaining the reason for the absence
- Students who wish to leave the premises during the school day will be expected to bring a letter/verbal confirmation from their parents/carers notifying the Lead Learning Mentor /Student Progress Co-Ordinator for the reason for this. The Student Progress Co-Ordinator/Lead Learning Mentor should record this on SIMS and issue students with an Exeat. Students **MUST** sign out at the main school reception when leaving the premises.

### **Identifying and Tackling Poor Attendance:**

- Attendance levels and patterns for individuals, form groups, year groups and the whole school are monitored and action taken to address poor attendance at each level
- Long term absentees are provided with appropriate support to enable them to make a positive return to school (examples may include; phased return, agreed start and finish times, alternative curriculum provision)
- Early identification of potential poor attendees is part of the school's primary liaison work prior to transition
- Appropriate strategies are put in place to support students and parents where appropriate

## Recognising and rewarding good attendance

- Ensure good attendance is acknowledged and rewarded
- Weekly, monthly and termly opportunities for individual students' good attendance will be celebrated and rewarded

## Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Action Planning

The Senior Attendance Lead has responsibility for monitoring whole school attendance and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's policy and procedures.

- Data on attendance will be collected and analysed regularly throughout the year by the Senior Attendance Lead and daily by School Progress Co-Ordinators
- Patterns of absence
- Patterns of lateness
- Patterns of medical appointments
- Regular checks will be made to ensure the correct and consistent use of absence codes across the school
- Trends in particular groups (SEND, PP, CP, Gender, Year Groups)
- Attendance data will inform action planning
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions
- Frequency and feedback of analysis of attendance data to:
  - Governors- termly
  - Designated staff – weekly as part of Attendance meetings
  - Identified students –via face to face contact when required (daily for monitoring cohort, attendance meetings with parents/carers as part of Staged Intervention Process)
  - Parents -via verbal contact (telephone- where required), attendance meetings as part of Staged Intervention Process

For daily, weekly, monthly, termly procedures see Appendix: **Attendance Monitoring Procedures 2018 -2019**

