



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL
HUNSTANTON

ATTENDANCE POLICY
from September 2020

Next Review Date: September 2021

STRENGTH - INTEGRITY - EXCELLENCE

Smithdon High School Attendance Policy

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Ratified by the Governors on _____ 2020

Chair of Governors' Signature _____

Smithdon High School Attendance Policy

Aims

Smithdon High School, as part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust, is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We are committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from opportunities presented to them. One of our key principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience - enabling good learning, positive attitudes and maintaining continuity in their education and friendships.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable. While some absence will be inevitable, permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence by a parent and the school has a key role in encouraging and sustaining excellent attendance reducing absence patterns. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students, and we use a variety of awards to encourage good attendance and punctuality. We endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome – if this is not the case, we invite parents to engage with us, to enable us to resolve the issues and remove any barriers to attendance.

Parental Responsibility

Throughout this policy, 'parent' refers to anyone with parental responsibility.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes puts students at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Parents should be aware that if their child has a significant amount of unauthorised absence, they may be guilty of an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and legal action may be taken against them.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe. Parents should regularly update the school and clearly inform when their child will return to school.

Students are expected to arrive and be in their tutor room by 8.30am (the warning bell is sounded at 8.25am). The pedestrian gate is locked at 8.30am precisely. All students who arrive late must report to the School Reception, where the reason for lateness is recorded and they will be able to enter the school site.

A Parents' Guide to Attendance will be issued every September (and to the parent(s) of any child when they join the school, if that is mid-year), along with the legal notice to parents from Norfolk County Council, informing them of their responsibilities and offering advice for maintaining good attendance.

Key Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for students' attendance and punctuality to ensure their safety, wellbeing and academic progress. The Headteacher ensures that members of staff with responsibility for attendance and punctuality are held to account.

Deputy Headteacher/Head of School

The Head of School leads on establishing and maintaining effective whole school systems and interventions to reduce absence and persistent absence by monitoring and analysing whole school absence. Persistent Absence (PA) refers to when a student's absence drops below 90%. The Deputy Headteacher ensures that the Assistant Headteachers (KS3 and KS4), Pastoral Managers and the Attendance Officer are held accountable for ensuring the accurate recording of absence, coding of absence and analysis of year group and individual data, as well as the timely implementation and review of supportive interventions. This is achieved by:

- Weekly meetings with the Attendance Officer
- Monitoring the outcomes of meetings between the Attendance Officer and AHTs, the Attendance Officer and all Pastoral Managers and the Attendance Officer and the SENDCo/DSL
- Overseeing and holding targeted 1:1 meetings with individual and small groups of students who are at risk of becoming PA
- Monitoring the outcomes of meetings between the Attendance Officer/AHTs/Pastoral Managers and parent(s), alongside the student(s) to address declining attendance and/or PA
- Overseeing the decision of when is appropriate to put an Attendance Panel Meeting with Governors and parents in place

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for inputting and updating accurate attendance data on SIMs, by:

- Retrieving messages regarding absence emailed to attendance@smithdonhigh.org.uk or left on the school's telephone Absence Line and recording the information accurately on SIMs
- Following the school's procedures for first day InTouch messaging and/or calling of parents to ascertain reasons for absence where no message has been left via email or answerphone
- Issuing the relevant attendance letters where required
- Issuing the relevant punctuality letters (and consequences) where required
- Collating weekly and termly attendance reports
- Ensure the Head of School, AHTs and/or Pastoral Managers are aware of any emerging patterns of attendance across individuals, families or year groups
- Checking absence notes that are received and ensuring the details are recorded accurately through categorisation of absence in the SIMs register (passed to the Pastoral Managers for filing)
- Providing tutors, Pastoral Managers and AHTs with explanations for absent students to minimise unexplained absence
- Monitoring and notifying any member of staff who has not completed their registers
- Challenging any member of staff regarding missing or inaccurate register marks in their registers
- Raising concerns about any regular missing or inaccurate register marks in staff registers with the Head of School

The Attendance Officer is also responsible for collating and analysing weekly, termly and annual data on attendance, absence and PA for the whole school, as well as for liaising with the Leadership Team and Pastoral Managers, as well as form tutors and teaching staff, where relevant to reduce absence and promote good attendance, by:

- Monitoring the attendance data at whole school, year group and individual student level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Pastoral Manager, AHT and/or Head of School, as appropriate
- Holding weekly meetings with the Head of School regarding the attendance data and progress in reducing absences
- Arranging meetings with students whose attendance is decreasing and at risk
- Arranging phone calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues (requesting and attending Home Visits, where necessary)
- Coordinating and tracking the issuing of attendance and punctuality letters

- Building positive relationships with families how find it difficult to engage with the school, as well as families of PA students
- Liaising/meeting weekly with the SENDCo/DSL:
 - regarding an attendance concern related to Special Educational Needs and/or Child Protection concerns
 - regarding an attendance concern related to a student who has or needs put in a place a medical plan
 - in order to monitor the attendance of students who are involved in full and part-time Alternative Provision programmes
 - in order to monitor the attendance of students who are on Part-time timetables
- Holding fortnightly meetings with each Pastoral Manager (and AHT where appropriate) to decide on and implement interventions, and draw on their knowledge of the students and their families
- Organising and holding regular meetings (with the Head of School) with students whose attendance is declining and are at risk of becoming PA
- Organising and holding meetings with students, their parents and the Pastoral Manager/AHT/Head of School to address declining attendance and put a support plan in place
- Recommending to the Head of School and AHTs those students who would benefit from an Attendance Panel Meeting
- Initiating appropriate legal action, including penalty notices and Fast Track procedures
- Collating evidence and liaising with the Head of School to support court hearings
- Reporting students with unexplained absences which exceed 10 days to the CME team
- Holding, and recording notes from attendance concern meetings

Assistant Headteachers (KS3 and KS4)

AHTs are accountable for reducing absence and PA by monitoring data for their Key Stage and ensuring that the Pastoral Managers and Form Tutors are held accountable for accurate recording of attendance and coding of absence. This is achieved by:

- Weekly meetings with their pastoral manager(s)
- Fortnightly meetings with the Attendance Officer
- Reviewing weekly and termly attendance reports and providing challenge regarding patterns/intervention that has been put in place
- Regular attendance/punctuality concern meetings for students of increasing concern
- Awarding the rewards/recognition for tutor group attendance
- Following up students who fail to attend detentions for punctuality
- Effective use of assemblies and communication with parents to reduce absence
- Directing staff to monitor the attendance and punctuality of their tutor groups and targeted, specific individual students
- Visiting form time to ensure tutors are promoting high levels of attendance and good punctuality with their tutor groups

Pastoral Managers

Pastoral Managers are responsible for working with the Attendance Officer and AHTs to reduce absence and PA by monitoring data for their year group(s) and implementing effective interventions by:

- Using weekly attendance reports and SIMs to monitor year group and target individuals' attendance, supporting the Attendance Officer in implementing interventions to improve attendance
- Using weekly lesson attendance reports and SIMs to monitor punctuality to lessons, identify patterns and address these with relevant staff and students – including issuing detentions or creating a support plan as needed

- Using their knowledge of students and their families to support the Attendance Officer in addressing concerns regarding attendance and together arriving at the most suitable intervention support to reduce absence
- Attending attendance concern meetings with the Attendance Officer and students and parents
- Providing their AHT with attendance and punctuality updates for their year group(s)
- Filing copies of letters, absence notes and other relevant attendance-related paperwork associated with students in their year group(s)

Form Tutors

Form tutors meet with their tutor group every day from 8.30 – 9.00am during Form Time and are responsible for accurate daily recording of attendance. They are also responsible for promoting the school targets for attendance and encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality for individual students and the whole tutor group. Form tutors should identify attendance patterns for students in their tutor group and liaise with their pastoral manager, AHT and/or the Attendance Officer where this is the case. Form tutors are expected to be proactive in reducing absence and lateness by:

- Daily recording of attendance during Form Time, by 8.45am at the latest
- Accurate use of SIMs lesson monitor to record attendance and absence, using / , O , L codes accurately
- If a student is late, noting the number of minutes late using the SIMs minutes late option and addressing the reason(s) for lateness, and the need to improve this in future, with the student directly
- Displaying attendance information in the tutor room – such as the year group League Table

All Teaching and Support Staff

Ensuring that students attend school and are punctual is seen as the responsibility of staff at school. This is achieved by:

- Taking registers within **the first 10 minutes of every lesson** and recording attendance accurately, including later adjustments, to ensure recording of punctuality is accurate
- If a student is late, noting the number of minutes late, using the SIMs minutes late option, and noting the reason given for lateness in the SIMs 'comments' option
- Being vigilant in monitoring absence rates for any students they have specific responsibility for
- Raising concerns regarding attendance of any student promptly and via the appropriate channels
- Promoting whole school attendance
- Promoting punctuality and directly addressing any student who is late to lesson, impressing the importance of punctuality
- Ensuring any student who has been absent is supported to catch up missed work as soon as possible (rather than admonished for their absence) – the focus on positive steps forward, not negativity to past actions

Reception Team

The reception/admin team will:

- Log the students who arrive late to school, but before 9am, as L on SIMs and will have a conversation about the importance of punctuality and potential consequences for continuous lateness
- Register the students who arrive late after 9am (after registration has closed) on SIMs, including the time of arrival
 - If an appropriate reason is provided, along with evidence (such as a medical appointment card), the evidence will be copied if needed and the appropriate code recorded
 - If no adequate reason is given, the team will log the pupil as U.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance and punctuality at school by making sure they:

- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Comply with the Smithdon High School Home-School Agreement
- Take an interest in their child's education, asking about schoolwork and encouraging them to get involved in school activities
- Discuss any problems their child may have at school and inform the Pastoral Manager about any concerns
- Do not let their child take time off school for minor ailments which would not prevent the student from coming to school
- Arrange appointments and outings outside of school hours (i.e. after school, at the weekend or during school holidays) to help prevent disruption to their child's education
- Do not take holidays during term time
- Notify the school on each day of absence (unless a medical note has been provided in advance which details how many days their child will need to be absent for)
- Seek medical evidence when a health condition is likely to negatively impact on attendance so that appropriate support can be put in place and communicate this with the school
- Make every effort to support their child in building resilience and leading a healthy lifestyle
- Ensure their child is organised and has good routines at home, including sleep routines, so that they arrive punctually to school each day
- Ensure that their child arrives to school on time, especially if driving them to school, to be in their form room by 8.25am (8.30am at the very latest, when registers open)

Students

Students are responsible for:

- Following the Smithdon High School Home-School Agreement to ensure that they attend school every day
- Arrive to school on time, especially if walking, cycling or disembarking at school on a bus (coming straight into school)
- Attend Form Time on time – arriving by 8.25am (8.30am at the very latest, when registers open)
- Arrive punctually for every lesson

School Procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register. (See [Appendix 1](#) for the DfE attendance codes)

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session (the lesson immediately after lunch). It will mark whether each student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

On the first day of unplanned absence, parents and carers must contact the school (for example if their child is unable to attend due to ill health). This can be done by telephoning 01485 536123 or emailing attendance@smithdonhigh.org.uk before the registration period closes at 9.00am. If no contact has been made, the Attendance Officer will contact parents via the automated messaging service called InTouch and/or via telephone.

We will continue to make daily contact until a response is received or if no updates are received regarding the child's wellbeing/projected date to return to school. We may make general enquiries during this time. **This will include trying other contact numbers and/or email addresses**, if we receive no response from the main contact number.

If we have had no response within 3 days of continued absence, we may use staff or the local Police to visit the home address to make a welfare check.

Lateness and punctuality

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.30am and the registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Students arriving after the start of school but before the end of registration period will be treated as present but will be coded as late before the register closes (L).

Any student arriving after 30 minutes will be marked as having an unauthorised absence and late after registers closed (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation, such as delayed school transport.

Afternoon registration is taken at the beginning of the lesson immediately after lunch – the majority of the time this is 2pm (Period 5). At times, including any external and formal mock examination seasons, the school day is adapted with lunch being an hour earlier, and the afternoon registration is taken at 1pm (Period 4).

Procedures for addressing lateness:

If a student is late to school **3 times** without good reason:

- The Attendance Officer will contact the parents of the pupil to discuss how best to address the lateness
- On each occasion of lateness, following this contact, the student will serve a C1 after-school detention of 30 minutes

If a student is late to school **6 times** without good reason:

- The Attendance Officer will send a warning letter to the parents of the pupil
- A punctuality plan may be put in place with the student and parent to assist in punctuality
- On each occasion of lateness following this letter, the student will serve a C2 after-school detention of 45 minutes

If a pupil reaches **10 late arrivals**:

- the Attendance Officer will issue a **final warning letter**
- A punctuality plan **will** be put in place (or reviewed and adapted if in place previously)

If there is limited improvement in punctuality a **Fixed Penalty Notice** will be issued to the responsible parent(s) – Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the *Norfolk County Council Code of Conduct for issuing Fixed Penalties regarding School Attendance*, effective from September 2020.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absences

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Parents will be asked to provide medical evidence, where possible, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Long term/persistent absences due to **illness, including mental health**, must be supported by a letter from a medical professional, stating that the student is not fit for school or requires an adapted timetable. If these are not forthcoming, the Attendance Officer may ask the parent(s) of the student to complete a Medical Consent form ([Appendix 3](#)), for the school to contact the relevant medical professional and request the information directly.

Other absences that may be authorised include:

- Failure by the Local Authority to provide transport
- Days used for Religious Observance
- Attendance at a family funeral

Requests for Absence in Term Time

Requests for authorised absence should be made using a Leave of Absence form ([Appendix 2](#)) which is also available from the school reception.

Truancy

If a student is found to be truanting a lesson within the school site or off school site then they will be disciplined in line with the school's Behaviour policy. This policy can be found on the school website.

If a student goes missing during the school day, the Attendance Officer and Pastoral Manager will try to locate the student. This will mean checking they are not in any meeting or music lesson, etc. Toilets will be checked and a general walk of the site will be conducted. If the student still cannot be located then parents will be notified. Parents will be asked to try to contact the student on their mobile and update the school if successful. If the school has not heard from the parent within 15 minutes, the school will try to call again but if the school cannot confirm the student is safe, the school is obliged to contact the police to maximise the student's safety.

Children Missing in Education

Any student who is absent without explanation for ten consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing Education', by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Children in Need Team. This is a legal requirement and the school will include details of the action they have taken. A referral is made in the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school have failed to locate them
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (student file) has been requested by another school

Students who are deemed to be at risk of being CME when they:

- Fail to attend school for 5 days or more without any explanation
- Are expected to start at school but do not arrive
- Fail to return from a planned holiday

If a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan and stops attending without warning, the school will immediately notify the student's Social Worker.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns.

We monitor attendance closely and if a student's attendance falls lower than the national average, their parents will be contacted by the school. We will look for patterns and reasons for absence making parents aware of the number of absences and the importance of good attendance. If absences continue to increase, the school's primary focus will be in supporting the student and their parents to address the reasons for poor attendance and to put a plan in place to improve attendance moving forward. Interventions may include any one or more of (but not limited to) the following:

- A punctuality report card
- A supportive daily checklist guide
- An attendance plan
- A student and/or parent interactive action plan
- A parenting contract

In the event of continued absence, where other interventions are having limited or no impact, the school may organise an Attendance Panel Meeting, to which the parent(s) and student will be invited to discuss the attendance concerns and form a possible way forward. The meeting will be chaired by a school governor and also attended by at least one other governor, a member of SLT and the Attendance Officer.

In other cases, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority Attendance Team where action may include a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) and/or an Attendance Fast Track process through the courts.

Fixed Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance/Unauthorised Absence

FPNs will be issued according to the *Norfolk County Council Code of Conduct for issuing Fixed Penalties regarding School Attendance*, effective from September 2020. An FPN can be issued:

- When at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) have been lost to unauthorised absence by the student during the last 6 school weeks
- When the student has been absent for a holiday during term time, not authorised by the school
- When a student has accrued unauthorised absence from school and the Local Authority Service has agreed that issuing an FPN is an appropriate early intervention tool
- When a student has been given a Fixed Term Exclusion (or during the first 5 days of a Permanent Exclusion) and the student has been present in a public place during school hours, with no reasonable justification

The Attendance Officer will retain records of all penalty notices issued.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all students are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the students receive help to catch up on missed work and updated on any important information that may have been given out during their absence.

Promoting Attendance

Smithdon High School works actively together with the West Norfolk Academies Trust to improve attendance in our area and give consistent messages about the importance of good attendance. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers of their responsibility to ensure their children receive a good education and will make clear links between attendance and attainment.

The school will use a computerised system for maintaining attendance records. Information regarding attendance and procedures can be found on the school's website.

Tutors, subject teachers and school leaders take every opportunity to praise students whose attendance and/or punctuality is excellent – or improving, in the case of students who struggle to attend/be punctual.

Attendance Awards

Smithdon High School will reward students who have good or improving attendance, in particular through praising the individual child and by awarding certificates, badges and reward points.

Reward points will be issued for attendance on a half-termly basis:

- 100% attendance for the half term – R4 (4 reward points)
- 95-99% attendance for the half term – R3 (3 reward points)

Certificates and badges are awarded for 100% attendance on a termly basis:

- One term at 100% = Bronze
- Two terms at 100% = Silver
- Three terms at 100% = Gold

Students who have had an attendance intervention and who then demonstrate improving attendance will be issued letters and reward points to recognise their improvement:

- Improving Attendance letter = R1 (1 reward point)
- Continued Improvement letter = R2 (2 reward points)

Smithdon High School also runs a regular year group competition for tutor group attendance figures with a 'travelling' award and prizes for the winning Tutor Group in each period.

Planned Absences

Medical or dental appointments

Missing school for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences, including evidence of the appointment. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Holidays in Term Time

Leave will not be granted for the purpose of a family holiday, which will be recorded as unauthorised.

Latest Government guidelines do state that Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave but only in exceptional circumstances.

Government guidelines also states that 'Parents can be fined for taking their child/children on holiday during term time without consent from the school', Department for Education July 2013.

Requests for holiday absence should be made using a Leave of Absence form (Appendix 2) which is also available from the school reception.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness (incl. confirmed Covid-19)
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed
Other		
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend Student isolating under Covid-19 Guidance
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Application for Student Leave of Absence From School During Term Time

Important Information for Parents

- Headteachers must comply with the Statutory Regulations, meaning they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the Headteacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not – they may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Headteacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance, before any arrangements are confirmed/money committed
- This form MUST be completed by the parent who intends to remove the student from school during term time
- Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised
- **Parents/Carers need to be aware that if a holiday request is not authorised by the school, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.**

Full name of child/ren:

Year & Tutor Group(s):

Address:

Date of application:

Please outline the exceptional circumstances for the leave of absence:

(attach any relevant supporting evidence to this application form before submission)

Will your child/ren miss any mock or national examinations during the absence?

Yes / No

Is their attendance above 95% (or a previously agreed individual target)?

Yes / No

Have they already had leaving during term-time this academic year?

Yes / No

If yes, please give previous date(s):

Did they take leave of absence during term-time in the previous academic year?

Yes / No

From (1st day of absence): _____

To (last day of absence): _____

Total number of school days absent: _____

Expected date of
return to school: _____

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that I have no legal entitlement to take my child/ren on holiday during term time and I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence. I accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I undertake to make sure that my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s):

Print Name(s):

YOUR REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME HAS BEEN:

Agreed (Days agreed) NOT agreed

Signature of Headteacher:



Name of Child:		Date of Birth:
Parent/Carer's Name:		
Address:		
Doctor's Name:		
Doctor's Surgery / Practice Name and Full Address:		
<p>I _____ (parent/carer) confirm that I have parental responsibility for _____ (child's name) and give my permission for my GP to be contacted with regard to my child's medical needs and give my consent for any relevant information to be shared, in relation to their attendance at school or otherwise.</p>		
Parent/Carer's Signature(s):		
Date of Signature(s):		
Signature of Smithdon School staff member:		
Name of Smithdon School staff member:		
Position of Smithdon School staff member:		

Dear Dr

The above-named child is registered at Smithdon High School. Between _____ (date) and _____ (date) has attended _____ sessions out of a possible _____ sessions (one session is equal to half a school day) and their attendance is currently _____%

Other agencies involved in supporting this child are:

As a school, we are requesting information, because:

We have concerns that there are medical reasons for _____ (child)'s absences, we would like to support in the best way we can so would appreciate any advice or information you can share.

GP Comments (please delete as appropriate)

CHILD'S NAME: _____ **DOB:** _____

a) I have insufficient evidence to make a judgement regarding this child

or

b) I have considered the attendance and contextual information provided and make the following comments regarding this child:

GP Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

GP Name (please print): _____

GMC No: _____ **Practice Code:** _____

Appendix 4 – Smithdon High School Attendance Phases

100%	Outstanding Attendance	Half-termly reward points (R4) Termly Reward Certificate/Badge
99-97%	Excellent Attendance	Half-termly reward points (R3)
96%	Good Attendance	Half-termly reward points (R3) Tutors will discuss declining attendance with student and identify any need for additional support
Monitoring Phase 95-93%	Satisfactory Attendance	Attendance Officer and Head of School will meet with student to discuss concerns and any support that can be put in place – with further monitoring review meeting(s)
Phase 1 93-91%	Below Satisfactory Attendance	Student placed onto Phase 1 Pastoral Manager and Attendance Officer will meet with student and parent(s), raising concerns and offering an appropriate support plan/attendance target – fortnightly review meeting(s) follow
Phase 2 91% or below	Unsatisfactory Attendance	Student moved onto Phase 2 Assistant Head (Key Stage) and Attendance Officer meet with student and parent(s) with clear SMART targeted action plan , including supportive interventions and fortnightly review meetings Review meetings may also lead to recommendation of a Governor Attendance Panel meeting with parent(s) and student
Phase 3 Below 90%	Significantly Below Satisfactory Attendance	Student moved onto Phase 3 If not already taken place a Governor Attendance Panel meeting will be organised No absences will be authorised unless medical evidence is provided Head of School and Attendance Officer will meet with parent(s) and student to review progress. Formal Fast Track proceedings are likely to begin
Phase 4 Failure to improve	Attendance level has continued to fall	At Phase 4 If not already started, Formal Fast Track procedures through the courts will begin – if found guilty, parents face a fine of up to £2500 per parent and the court can decide to sentence each parent to imprisonment for up to 3 months.

Appendix 5 – Staff Handbook Guidance of Procedures:

Lateness and Attendance Procedures

Late to morning Registration

The Reception admin team will log the pupils as 'L' on SIMS and will have a conversation with the pupils about the importance of punctuality and potential consequences for continuous lateness

Late after Registration

Pupils must sign in at Reception, where the admin team will register the pupil on SIMS (including the time) and allow the pupil into school.

- If an appropriate reason is provided, along with evidence (such as a medical appointment), the evidence will be copied and the appropriate code recorded.
- If no adequate reason is provided the admin team will log the pupil as 'U' - late after Registration has closed.

Continued/persistent lateness will be addressed by the Attendance Officer through a meeting with parents and pupil and the Pastoral Manager/SLT Key Stage leader (AHT)/Head of School, during which an appropriate support plan will be put in place

Lateness overview

Pastoral Managers will monitor incidents of lateness to lessons for their year group(s), identifying any patterns or general concerns.

Pastoral Managers will ensure SLT Key Stage Leaders (AHTs) are regularly informed of any concerns.

Absence Procedures

The Attendance Officer will monitor pupil absence, with the support of the Pastoral Managers, SLT Key Stage Leaders(AHTs) and Head of School. When safeguarding concerns are raised there will also be support from the DSL/SENCO or Alternate DSL/HoS. A series of interventions are possible, depending on previous attendance records and persistence of the absence.

Medical

For absences due to medical concerns (including mental health concerns), contact with parents will include requests for medical evidence and offers of any support available and if any work is to be provided.

Holidays

For absences attributed to holidays lasting 4.5 days/9 consecutive sessions (whether applied for by parents and unauthorised by Head of School or 'discovered' during follow-up of InTouch), Attendance Officer will complete FPN applications, to be signed by Head of School and sent to County.

FPN applications (including date) will be logged on SIMS by Attendance Officer.

Daily Absence Procedures

The Attendance Officer will oversee day-to-day absences and contact with parents to monitor these absences. They will receive phone messages and will check the attendance@smithdonhigh.org.uk email for messages from parents regarding absence, before completing the daily Truancy Call process below. Any stage can be skipped, if concerns.

NB: After 10 consecutive days' absence with no explanation, the pupil is reported to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing in Education'

Day One – Absence

- InTouch message will be sent if required
- No/Response from parents will be logged on SIMS

Day Two – Consecutive Absence

- InTouch will be sent if required
- No/Response from parents will be logged on SIMS
- If no response has been received from InTouch for 2 days, the Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact via the main number(s).
 - If contact is made, this is recorded
 - If no contact is made, see Day Three process

Day Two – Pupil Returns

Tutor has a quick 'welcome back' conversation with pupil and discusses cause of absence – noting on SIMS if no truancy response

If a pattern emerges, Attendance Officer will contact home

Day Three – Consecutive Absence

- InTouch message will be sent if required
- No/Response from parents will be logged on SIMS
- Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact home...
 - If Truancy responses have been received, using the main contact number(s)
 - If there has been no response to InTouch, attempting all possible numbers and if still nothing, then via email with a warning of a next-day welfare check if no contact received

Day Three – Pupil Returns

If no response to InTouch. Attendance Officer has a quick conversation with pupil re cause of absence and notes any concerns on SIMS.

If there is a concern or a pattern, Attendance Officer will contact home, e.g. to check contact details

Day Four – Consecutive Absence

- InTouch message will be sent if required
- No/Response from parents will be logged on SIMS
- **If no response for four days: Home Visit welfare check**

Day Four – Pupil Returns

If no response to InTouch. Attendance Officer has a conversation with pupil re cause of absence, notes any concerns on SIMS and will contact home to confirm

Daily Monitoring of Attendance/Registers

The Attendance Officer will monitor teachers' completion of registers and send reminders for incomplete registers. (Period 5 the Data Manager will monitor teachers' completion of registers and send reminders for incomplete registers.)

The next morning the Attendance Officer will run an 'N' report for and email relevant teachers to address queries.

Teachers who regularly fail to complete registers on time will be referred to the Head of School for follow-up.

Weekly Absence Procedures

A weekly attendance meeting will be held to discuss attendance concerns and review the data.

The Attendance Officer will provide the following reports for review for each year group:

- 6 sessions absence
- 12 sessions absence
- % attendance, ranked by lowest %

The Attendance Officer will ensure the following interventions are put in place:

- 6 sessions absence = phone call home
- 12 sessions absence = Warning Letter to be sent (and logged on SIMS)
- Declining % attendance
 - monitored for patterns / continuous decline
 - if no previous contact, contact with home and possible meeting arranged
 - check for any relevant evidence for absence
- Attendance drops to 96.5%
 - Contact home and meeting arranged
 - Support plan put in place
 - Inform PPCo or SENDCo if pupil is PP or SEN registered
- Attendance drops to 95% or below
 - Referral to school nursing team, if appropriate
 - Further meeting arranged and probable opening of Fast Track Process (logged on SIMS)
 - Update PPCo or SENDCo as appropriate
- Attendance drops to 85% or below (supportive interventions clearly not working)
 - DSL/Alternate DSL alerted and a referral will be made to Early Help or CADS

Part-time Timetables

If it becomes necessary to set up a part-time timetable to support a student's attendance in school (for PSP, SEN, Safeguarding or medical reasons), this must be agreed and signed off by the Key Stage Leader (AHT) before the details are completed and submitted to the Norfolk County website.

A copy must also be made available to the office staff, including clear instructions about procedures to follow if a student does not attend at the agreed times, regarding truancy/attendance follow up.

Registers

It is vital that lesson registers are taken within the first 10 minutes.

If any pupils are absent but have been marked present earlier in the day, the staff member **must send a pupil to Reception with a note of the named pupil(s)**. Reception will send a note back if the pupil has signed out or will contact the Attendance Officer/Pastoral via walkie-talkie and the on-call SLT member to alert them of the absence and enable a search for the missing pupil.

Appendix 6 – Smithdon High School Attendance Panel Meeting Record



Date:		Governor Panel:	
Student Name:		DoB:	Year & Form Group:
Parent/Carer name(s):		Attend?	Relationship to student:
1.		Y / N	
2.		Y / N	
3.		Y / N	
4.		Y / N	

Current Attendance: _____% Unauthorised Absences: _____

It is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for a parent to fails to ensure his/her child attends school regularly. No offence is committed if the parent proves any of the following:

- That the student was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- That the student’s absence was authorised by the school
- The absence was on a day of religious observance of the child/family
- The local authority’s policy to provide transport applies to the child but that transport was not provided

Does any of the above apply? If so, please comment:

Reasons given by parent(s) for child’s absence (*delete/add comments as necessary*):

- Health
- Bullying
- Transport-walks
- Family circumstances – previous issues?
- Curriculum issues

Would the parent find it helpful to attend parenting support sessions? Y/N

Any other relevant notes:



Attendance Panel Outcomes Agreed Action Plan



Student Targets and Actions agreed: *(highlight/delete as appropriate)*

- To attend school every day
- To be punctual (on time) to school every day
-

Signature – Student:

Parent Targets and Actions agreed: *(highlight/delete as appropriate)*

- To ensure _____ attends school every day and on time
- To continue to keep the school informed of any absences or issues
- To provide medical evidence to support illness absences, in the form of an appointment card, dated prescriptions or medication, for every absence
- To provide a letter from a medical professional supporting the impact of the child’s identified medical issues on attendance
- To complete a Medical Consent form to enable the school to contact the relevant medical professional(s) and gain further information
- To continue to attend any future meetings
- To talk to the Pastoral Manager, Assistant Head for the Key Stage or the Attendance Officer if _____ is having any problems in school
-
-

Signature – Parent(s):

School Agreed Actions:

- To no longer authorise illness absence without medical evidence
- To continue to support _____ if having any problems in school
-
-
-

Signature – School:

REVIEW DATE AND TIME SET:

Appendix 7 – Covid-19 Addendum

Following national lockdown and school closures (except to Key Workers' children), the government have made it clear that from the Autumn Term (September 2020), pupil attendance will return to being mandatory and the usual rules on attendance apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- The ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

A new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' – has been added to Code X. This should be used only during sessions in the 2020-2021 academic year, where:

- A pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:
 - Contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care
 - Prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus
- A pupil is self-isolating with symptoms, awaiting test results
 - *If a negative test and feeling well, student should return to school*
 - *If a negative test and feeling ill, student may remain off school until well enough to return (coded I)*
 - *If a positive test, student should continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms (coded I) and **return to school once no symptoms, other than a cough or loss of sense of smell/taste** (as these can last for several weeks once the infection has gone).*
- A pupil is self-isolating, while someone else in the house with symptoms awaits test results
 - *If a negative test, student returns to school*
 - *If a positive test, student continues to self-isolate for the full 14 days*
- A pupil's non-attendance is in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC *Shielding advice has ended; however if rates of the disease rise in the local area, children (or those in their family who have been shielding) may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home/shield during the period where rates remain high. Under these circumstances, families will receive a letter that parents can share with the school. Once measures in the local area are lifted the school should contact parents to set out the expectation that the students can return to school. (Once this advice has been issued, Code X should not be used)*
- Local lockdown measures are introduced by PHE or DHSC – such as limiting attendance to certain groups or on a rota-basis – all those students asked not to attend will be coded X.

Remote education should be offered in the event of pupils not able to attend school in circumstances related to Covid-19 and schools should keep a record of and monitor engagement with this, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

NCC Support

- During the Autumn Term all schools will have access to advice from a named Attendance & Entitlement Officer from NCC to discuss any cases where attendance is of concern. Once allocated, the officer will be in contact with allocated schools during the first full week of the Autumn Term
- The focus is on clear communication with families and where concerns arise, early intervention and targeted support plans based on individual student need in the first instance
- Where a referral for a prosecution or FPN (other than for term-time holiday) is being considered, a conversation should take place between the school's Attendance Officer and the NCC Attendance & Entitlement Officer so that all possible avenues of support be explored, prior to any formal referral being submitted

DfE Attendance data collection

- The Attendance Service will continue to track the attendance of vulnerable pupils
- An Educational Setting Status Form must be completed online by **midday** each day, confirming:
 - The school is open to all students
 - Number of pupils on roll (incl. numbers of those with an EHCP and numbers of those with a social worker)
 - Number of pupils present (incl. numbers of those with an EHCP and those with a social worker)
 - How many classroom teachers are unable to attend work (who are timetabled to be working)?

Smithdon High School Covid-19 Attendance Plan

Supportive measures in advance of student return to school:

- Clear information published and sent to parents before school return
- Video of routes around school and tutor group information shared before school return
- Identification of those anxious about returning or who have become disengaged from school
- Early contact (before term begins) by Attendance Officer and Pastoral Managers with students and families who have previously expressed concern regarding returning to school after lockdown
- Early contact (before term begins) by Attendance Officer and Pastoral Managers with students/families who became disengaged or distant during lockdown
- Immediate contact with students (& families) who fail to return to school on the first day of term
- Supportive Tutor programme in place for first two weeks of term to address potential worries/fears and subtly encourage positive mental health, building on the relationships developed between tutors and tutees during lockdown
- Quick intervention with students whose attendance falls in the first weeks of the new term

