

## **6.07 Attendance Policy**

### **Independent Day School for Girls September 2023**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- 6.34 Missing Child Policy
- 6.36 Non-collection of Children Policy
- 6.51 Supervision of Students Policy
- 6.10 Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy
  
- DfE School Attendance
- Children Missing Education (2016)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2022)

The Maynard School recognises, in accordance with DfE advice, that central to raising standards in education and ensuring that all pupils can fulfil their potential is a truism so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated - pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind, and children with poor attendance tend to achieve less at all stages of their school career. This has been particularly evident after the covid pandemic.

Regarding the above, the Maynard School is committed to:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Acting early to reduce patterns of absence
- Ensuring parents perform their legal duty by making sure their children of compulsory school age who are registered at this school attend regularly
- Ensuring that all students are punctual to their lessons

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- We expect all children on roll at the Maynard School to attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and schooling. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all.
- The Assistant Head and SLT administrator (Attendance Officer) is responsible for ensuring the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

### Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note, email or telephones the school to explain the absence and to report symptoms. For specific illnesses the school will follow the recommended NHS and DfE Guidance for the recommended absence period e.g., 3 days for Covid, 2 days for sickness and diarrhoea. If a phone call is made, the parent follows this up with an email. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

### Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both school and a parent. A letter is always requested, and the Headmistress/Assistant Headteacher may send a reply, stating that it is not normal policy for children to be absent and any time missed will have to be made up with work to be completed at home. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away without good reason, even with the support of a parent or carer.

## 4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

The attendance officer holds the responsibility to record whether a child is absent through various activities:

- A Junior activity
- B Educated off site

C Other Authorised Circumstances



E	Excluded
F	Extended family holiday
G	Family holiday (not agreed/excess)
H	Family holiday agreed
I	Illness confirmed by letter
J	Interview
L	Late
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
Q	Phoned but letter needed
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (After registration closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
Y	Enforced closure or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances e.g., abroad

### **Junior School attendance**

Attendance is recorded and monitored via iSAMS

The Junior School is open from 08.00 each day. Y3-6 students are allowed in the Junior Hall or on the Double Courts at this time. Reception – Y2 students are supervised in their classroom or in the Pre-Prep playground area.

The school day begins at 08.40 with registration in the girls' classrooms — girls who arrive after this time will be registered as late. Any absentees are accounted for by the school office if previous notice has not been given. Parents must phone or email the school to explain any absences.

The Junior School Day ends at 15.30 for Reception – Y2 and at 15.50 for Y3 - Y6. Girls should be collected promptly from the Pre-Prep classroom or Junior School Hall. No Junior girl is allowed to leave the school premises without a known adult (unless there is written permission from parents). Collection is supervised each day by members of the Junior School staff.

A second member of staff supervises the bus register and takes the students down to the school buses. Those travelling on the school minibuses are collected each day from the Junior School Hall.

After school care, or the Late Room as we call it, is available each day until 17.30 and is supervised in the Junior School Hall for Y3 – 6 and in the Pre-Prep classroom for Reception to Y2 (known as Owls Club). Y3 – 6 parents collect their daughters from the Junior School Hall where they must be signed out. Reception – Y2 parents collect their daughters from the Pre-Prep classroom where they must also be signed out.

Parents are asked to collect their children from Junior School Hall in person. On isolated occasions we ask that any parent wishing their daughter to walk home, or to the car, or to walk to a bus without an adult accompanying them, either on a regular basis or as a 'one off', writes to the class teacher saying that the parent takes responsibility for this. Apart from such situations, no child will be allowed to leave the school premises without a known adult. Parents must collect their daughter from Reception if the child is leaving before the end of the school day.

### **Upper 3 to Upper 5 attendance**

Attendance is recorded and monitored via iSAMS.

Main School is open from 8am each day. Students may go to their form rooms or the school library.

Morning registration takes place at 8.40 and afternoon registration at 13.50. If a pupil misses' registration for whatever reason, she should sign in on the 'signing in sheet' in Main School outside Reception otherwise it will class as an unauthorised absence. For all absence parents/guardians must phone or email in with the reason for the absence.

If a pupil leaves the premises during the school day for any reason, this absence must be approved by the school. The pupil must make sure that she has obtained permission from a member of staff and must sign out on the signing out sheet in Main School outside Reception.

#### **Late Room**

Any girl may use the Late Room after school. This operates in the Senior School Library from 16.00 to 17.30 and is supervised by a member of staff. All pupils attending the Late Room need to sign in at Reception and also in the library. They then need to sign out in both places when they leave school. Any pupil who is still in the Late Room at 17.30 will be taken down to Reception to await collection. We ask that parents collect their daughter promptly by 5.30pm. U3 to U5 students are to be collected from main reception by a parent/guardian; written parental permission must be provided if U3-L5 students are allowed to leave the site independently after Late Room. If pupils attend clubs that finish later than 5.30pm, they will be signed out by the teacher leading the club.

### **Sixth Form attendance**

Sixth Form attendance is recorded and monitored via iSAMS. Sixth Form pupils are free to sign out in any free period via the sign in app system. They must, however, register within the AM and PM slots above. If sixth form students are not registered for the AM/PM slot this counts as an unauthorised absence and U3-U5 procedures will follow. If a student has a free period P4 and misses the PM registration the period 5 lesson attendance is recorded as the PM registration. Some students will not be required for the PM registration if they have a period 4 and 5 as a free period.

#### **Signing out**

If a sixth form pupil leaves school premises FOR ANY REASON INCLUDING SCHOOL EVENTS e.g., sports teams, trips, free periods etc. between 8:40 and 3:55 it is their duty to sign out on the sign in app.

#### **Fire alarms**

The school iSAMS (School Information Management System) provides an instant record of who is on site which is then checked during the Fire Alarm line up.

## **5. IF A PUPIL IS ABSENT**

- When a pupil is absent unexpectedly, an absence is recorded in the register and the School Reception informed. The School Reception will then endeavour to contact a parent or carer on the first day of absence.
- For each day of absence, a written note or email must be provided by the parent or carer

to explain the absence and to report symptoms of an illness.

- If the pupil has persistent absence, the receptionist will phone on the first day of absence to speak to the parent/carer.
- On the second day of absence the tutor or class teacher will phone to check on the pupil's welfare
- For each day of absence an email or phone call must be provided from a parent or carer to explain the absence. If there is no parental communication, then the school Office will call the parents and ask for the reason behind the absence.
- A written note or email should be sent to the school for a planned absence, e.g., a medical appointment, prior to the day of absence.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or carer in order to check on the safety of the particular pupil.

## **6. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

- It is a statutory requirement that all students attend school. We do understand circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g., family funeral. We expect parents to request an absence from the Headmistress who will reply via email whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- We discourage parents to take family holiday in school holidays and encourage medical appointments to be done outside of school hours.

## **7. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION and PERSISTENT ABSENCE**

Children missing from education can mean either a child being unenrolled or a child with persistent absence.

The school will track punctuality and absence weekly, monthly, every half term and annually which is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher and supported by the attendance officer. Attendance figures are reported to the Governing Body in the Education Committee.

The school will speak to the child and contact the parent if there are concerns with punctuality or attendance. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences or low attendance, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem, with a formal Early Help support plan implemented. If the situation does not improve, the school will contact Devon County Council (and any other Local Authority where the child has normal residence) support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation. We have a legal duty to inform the appropriate LA if:

- A child is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave
- A child is absent for 20 consecutive days without approved leave
- A child fails to attend school regularly
- A child is deleted from the register, but the local authority is not notified of the next school attended

Parents should be aware that Local Authorities reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility to send their child/children to school on a regular basis.

With due regard for Children Missing/Absence from Education (September 2023), the Maynard School will notify local authorities when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the regulations of KCSIE 2023 (Annex A). These 15 grounds include:

- When the family has apparently moved away
- When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend

- When the child is in custody for more than four months
- When the child has been permanently excluded
- When the child has been taken out of school to be home educated

This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points and/or when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by us. When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority will include contact details as well as the reason for removal. We will also notify local authorities within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a standard transition point and/or at the start of the first year of education normally provided by us.

We will obtain written confirmation from parents/carers if and when we find out that one of our pupils is being removed to be educated outside of the school system. A copy of this will be forwarded to the appropriate Local Authority.

## **7. SAFEGUARDING**

- There are significant risks for children who regularly go missing/absence from education. Absence, as well as missing, from education can also be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation and will be referred to our Safeguarding Team.
- All children, regardless of circumstance, are entitled to full time education which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any SEND they may have.
- Procedures are in place to identify and respond to this, particularly those who are repeatedly missing or where there is an emerging pattern (see above).
- With due regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023), the Maynard School acknowledges the importance of information sharing between schools and appropriate Local Authorities to help identify children missing education and help protect children from potential harm.
- A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect (including Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, travelling to conflict zones and forced marriage) and staff must be alert to any possible signs or indicators.
- We will review information from the government's 'missing children and adults' strategy' and 'children missing education' guidance when appropriate and applicable.
- Please see the Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy for further information.

## **8. LEFT CHILD**

- If a child has not been collected at 5.30pm, Reception staff will make every effort to contact parents.
- If this is problematic, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee or arrange for supervision until collection has been made.

## 9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the tutor, Heads of Year, Attendance Officer and Assistant Head to monitor each child's overall attendance, and they will request meetings with parents of a child with persistent absence. The Headmistress is responsible for this Attendance and Missing Child Policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. Attendance patterns are monitored weekly, and an attendance report is prepared every half term, identifying any student with less than 96% attendance.

The Maynard School reserves the right to keep, and will keep, accurate attendance records for a minimum period of three years.

The Senior Leadership Team will review this policy annually, or earlier if considered necessary.

### APPENDIX 1: DfE Children missing education (September 2023)

[Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/112222/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023.pdf)

### APPENDIX 2:

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/112222/Working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-2023.pdf) (update 2023)

### DfE School attendance: guidance for schools (August 2020)

[School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90222/School-attendance-guidance-2020.pdf)

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Authorised by Governor	
Signed	
Dated	