

Attendance Policy

Brooke House College

2024/25 Version

1 Policy statement

1.1 Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

1.1.1 protect the health and safety of pupils at the College;

1.1.2 ensure that College staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

1.2 This policy:

1.2.1 applies to staff (including supply teachers and volunteers), pupils and parents at Brooke House College (**the College**),

1.2.2 should be read with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures , and the Missing Pupil Policy,

1.2.3 School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities July 2019. DfE 2019; and

1.2.4 is a mandatory requirement of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Department for Education (DfE)), September 2023 and the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools*: (DfE, 2023), *Working together to improve School Attendance 2024*.

1.3 The procedures in this policy may be adapted as necessary. The Principal and the Director of Boarding have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

1.4 This policy is provided to all staff both electronically and in hard copy form, and all relevant members of staff receive training in its implementation. Parents may request a copy from the College.

2 Responsibility

2.1 Attendance is fundamental to the well-being, safe-guarding and educational development and success for all students. The College is resolute in its undertaking to ensure that all students know that attendance is of the utmost importance and will be scrutinised accordingly in order to ensure that the College policy is followed. The College will undertake to work closely with students, parents, guardians in order to support students who are struggling in this area. The College will ensure that changes to the law on Attendance in Schools are reflected in this policy as appropriate to our setting. Pupils who continually struggle with attendance will be offered an Attendance contract.

2.2 The College Directors are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its pupils. Under the terms of College policies, the Directors delegate certain day-to-day responsibilities for this to the Principal. As part of his responsibility, the Principal must ensure that all pupils are adequately supervised at all times while in the care of the College and that procedures are in place for staff to recognise at an early stage if a pupil is missing and/or has missed a registration. The Principal must further ensure that there are adequate protocols for staff to follow in the event of a missing pupil or pupils. All staff are under a duty to follow the directions, procedures and protocols laid down by the Principal and all staff must accept their common law duty to act to the standard of that of a prudent and careful parent when supervising pupils or when investigating their disappearance. Any member of staff who notices a pupil is missing must take the appropriate action as set out in this policy. Any member of staff who sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be has a duty to inform the Director of Boarding without delay.

2.3 According to the guidance, all partners should work together to:

2.3.1 **Expect:** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

2.3.2 **Monitor:** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

2.3.3 **Listen and understand:** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

2.3.4 **Facilitate support:** Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider safeguarding issues.

2.3.5 **Formalise support:** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond.

2.3.6 **Enforce:** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention.

3 Registration

3.1 Formal registration is at the following times:

Boarders registered at 7:45am in the morning and 6.30pm and 9.00pm in their boarding house.

All pupils registered for their attendance in every session from 8:15am to 5:20pm. The statutory registration times are 8.15am and 1.50pm.

Where there are additional teaching sessions or supervised prep all students will be registered via ISAMS.

At weekends we register boarders under the age of 18 at 10am, 2pm, 6pm and 9pm. Boarders aged 18 or over are not required to be registered.

3.2 Parents of day pupils are required to email Reception before 8am regarding of any known absence or sudden illness/medical appointment that means a day pupil will be missing school. Day pupil's failure to attend period 1 on the ISAMS ATTENDANCE LIST will result in a phone call to the missing pupils' parents. The protocols in the 'missing pupil policy' would then be followed should it become clear that there is no authorised reason for the absence.

3.3 A pupil who is absent for 10 days through sickness will need to be reported to the Local Authority.

4 Attendance

- 4.1 The registration is recorded directly onto the college management information system (ISAMS). Likewise, attendance at all timetabled lessons, sports training sessions and co-curricular activities is recorded on ISAMS by the teacher responsible for the lesson or activity.
- 4.2 Authorised absences are recorded as such when a pupil is ill, has a medical appointment, unforeseen immigration matters, might be unforeseen delay by aviation or has an 'exeat' agreed by the Director of Boarding.
- 4.3 The nature of the authorised absence would determine the code entered on to the attendance register on ISAMS. Where an absence is known in advance, the appropriate code will be entered on to ISAMS so that staff know the pupil is 'authorised absent' and does not need to activate the 'missing pupil policy' protocols.
- 4.4 For any unauthorised absence, the member of staff responsible for the missing pupil will contact Reception and the Director of Boarding, who will immediately set into motion the protocols for a missing pupil and will enter the relevant code on to the attendance register accordingly, once the pupil's whereabouts has been discovered.
- 4.5 For reasons of Health & Safety, when pupils are 'free' especially at weekends and wish to have leave off to go into the town, they must seek permission and sign the 'gate' list within their boarding house. Likewise, if there is an evening event such as a careers presentation, which might involve pupils not being present in their boarding house during the designated homework time, pupils must seek permission and sign in and out on the gate list.
- 4.6 All pupils are required to leave their personal mobile telephone number with the Director of Boarding for the purposes of being contactable in the event that pupil is absent. In doing so, the pupil will consent, according to the Data Protection Act 2018, for the Director of Boarding to have their telephone number on the College authorised mobile telephone issued to the Director of Boarding for the specific purpose of enabling pupil whereabouts to be known and for the welfare and safety of pupils to remain paramount.
- 4.7 Attendance is promoted throughout the school day, mentor periods and assemblies. Residential tutors and SLT actively encourage good attendance and members of SLT are visible throughout the day. Attendance is communicated to parents weekly from term week 2 by subject teachers on the weekly report published to the parent and student portals. Good attendance is rewarded with an end of term prize.
- 4.8 Poor attendance is reported as sanctions on SatchelOne and non-attendance/late more than 15 minutes has a Principal's detention at 6.30pm each evening.
- 4.9 The Director of Pastoral Care who is also the Attendance Champion, monitors attendance daily utilising reports from ISAMS. There is a clear expectation that subject Teachers and Mentors will deal with lateness between 1 and 15 minutes; will raise a detention for lateness of more than 15 minutes; will maintain accuracy of registers for non-attendance and report non-attendance to the Director of Boarding and the Director of Pastoral Care by email within 5 minutes of the start of the lesson. The role of the Mentor is to support and help students who are struggling in this area. Attendance issues which are causing concern are registered on CPOMS. The Director of Pastoral Care meets with the students to discuss and put in place strategies to remove barriers to attendance and will provide support as needed. Attendance is a standing item on the SLT weekly agenda and any pupil of concern will be discussed under safeguarding.

- 4.10 Pupils who are prevented from attending school due to physical or mental ill health will be supported through online lesson contact as appropriate to their health needs.

5 **Role of the Director of Boarding**

5.1 This role will be overseen by the College's Senior Attendance Champion (Director of Pastoral Care) who will oversee monitor, manage and support the pupils who are struggling with attendance. The Director of Boarding has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of absences of the attendance register on ISAMS, supported by the Director of Studies and the Principal/SLT.

5.2 Online attendance is monitored by Success Coaches (Lucy Clarke and Ian Smith). They are responsible, along with online Mentors, for ensuring that online pupils access online provision and are on hand to help and support students who are struggling with attendance or school access. Consideration is given to the time zones that students are working from.

5.3 The Director of Boarding will administer matters relating to attendance in line with paragraph 15 of ISSRs namely:

5.3.1 For all day pupils of compulsory school age (see below for boarders and pupils not of compulsory school age), the attendance register is completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. It must show whether the pupil is:

- present;
- absent;

attending online

- attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the 'Director' and supervised by a person approved by the Director or Principal, and including work experience or sporting activity);
- unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it through force majeure);
- taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the Principal or a person acting on the Principal's behalf; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs);
- taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

5.3.2. A pupil may be marked in the attendance register as unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances where the school site, or part of it, is closed.

5.3.3. DfE has a standard set of codes for schools to use in registers. They are not statutory for independent schools but may be used by them. Under this system, an N is first entered when no reason has yet been provided for absence, and this is later corrected (ideally within two weeks) using the appropriate symbol (in this case only, overwriting is allowable in an electronic system) and N must not be allowed to remain indefinitely. See Appendix 1 below.

5.3.4 Where the reason for absence is not initially known, under the previous system (still allowable in an independent school), an O is entered and a reason entered within the O at a

later stage if it is known (ideally within two weeks) but, if a reason is never established, the O remains as unauthorised absence.

5.3.5 Boarders – Boarding schools without day pupils are not required to keep an attendance register. Boarding schools with a mixture of day pupils and boarders must keep an attendance register for day pupils. For convenience, and to act as a check on boarders' whereabouts for reasons of welfare or health and safety, Brooke House College will register boarding as well as day pupils, but this is not a legal requirement.

5.3.6 All registers are taken electronically. These are kept and maintained on the College's MIS (ISAMS). Backups and printouts are made for added safety and retained for six years after the end of the school year in question.

5.3.7 Leavers and joiners to the college in non-transition points need to be reported to the Local Authority within five days.

6 Parents Leave of Absence Request

All weekend exeats require the permission of the Director of Boarding. Any leave of absence, affecting the school day, will require the formal approval of the Principal following the completion of the appropriate documentation accessed through the Parent Portal at the request of parents only. All forms need to be completed and returned to Reception with 72 hours prior to the date of departure. Permission is at the Principal's discretion and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

7. Attendance Action Plan

An attendance rate of less than 90% of academic lessons and mandatory sessions (not including authorised absences or Football training/matches for Football Academy students) will trigger action from either Head of Boarding or the Director of Pastoral Care and Director of Studies.

Students are expected to be in attendance from the start of term to the final day of term. Late arrival and early absence will not be authorised.

7.1 Action for non-compliance

i) In the first instance that attendance falls below 90% or effort is deemed as insufficient by academic and/or boarding staff, a verbal conversation is to take place with the pupil, with a 'red card' issued by SLT following attendance meetings. This will be recorded on Teams.

ii) If not improved within seven days, an email is to be sent to the student and the parents/guardians with expectations for rapid improvement in attendance and effort. If the student is a Football Academy student, training and matches to cease from this point on until expectations are met.

iii) After another week, if adequate improvement is not seen, a 'Student Support Meeting' is to take place with the Principal, Director of Pastoral Care, Head of Boarding and Director of Studies to support the student in meeting their attendance and effort. A letter will go out to the student and parents/guardians outlining the meeting, expectations and to notify of next steps if this is not addressed.

iv) A formal ‘Sponsorship Review’ meeting will take place with the student and parents/guardians, inclusive of staff members who attended the previous meeting, Compliance Officer and COO, to make a formal decision on withdrawal. Evidence to be provided by the College demonstrating that the student is not adhering to attendance or engagement requirements. The panel will decide on the appropriate action based on the information given. This could include withdrawal from Sponsorship or an action plan. No further action to be taken if the student re-engages.

v) If a withdrawal is decided, or the student does not meet a given action plan, a third and final letter will be issued to notify of withdrawal of Sponsorship. The student will be expected to leave the UK and return home.

Authorised by	resolution of the Board of Directors
Signed	
	On behalf of the Board of Directors
Date	September 2024

Schedule of Updates

Date document updated	Document updated by	Summary update/comments	Location of saved file
September 2019	MCO	Drawn up to meet the requirements of ISI commentary of regulations	Dropbox – SMT – Policies Final
July 2020	MCO	Updated in response to the ISA Compliance check	Dropbox – SMT – Policies Final
July 2021	MCO	Updated to reflect new tutor period structure	Dropbox – SMT – Policies 2021-2022
October 2022	IMS	Updated to include KCSIE, new mentoring process replacing tutor system	MS Teams
July 2023	IMS	Updated with new SLT roles and responsibilities, KCSIE and NBS	MS Teams
January 2024	IMS	Updated for compliance requirements	MS Teams
September 2024	NOS	Updated for 19 th August 2024 DofE “Working together to improve school attendance”.	MS Teams

Schedule of Review

Date of document review	Reviewed by	Scheduled date of next review
July 2020	MCO	July 2021
July 2021	MCO	July 2022
October 2022	IMS	July 2023
July 2023	IMS	January 2024

Appendix 1

Contents of Attendance Register

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Boarding Schools

Boarding schools without day-pupils are not required to keep an attendance register.

Schools with a mixture of day-pupils and boarders must keep an attendance register for the day-pupils.

Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil 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

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision.

Pupils 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 pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

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 pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational Establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should 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 should be used to record the sessions when a pupil 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 should be 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 pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils 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. Schools should 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 pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher 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 head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should 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, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. 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. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must 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, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils 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 should 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 pupil is attending educational provision. It should 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 should 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 G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should 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 should record it as **unauthorised**.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should 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.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil 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 pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

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

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil 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: Pupil not on admission register

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

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should 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.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils

Schools and local authorities can 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 pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

For fuller details on the DfE's guidance on attendance, the link below directs you to the relevant document.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

