

# **SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE**

## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

**Mission statement:** We deliver high quality teaching and learning in an environment that meets the needs of our students, so that all achieve and enjoy.

### **Philosophy**

Shirley High School Performing Arts College promotes a learning environment where it helps children achieve more.

We believe that if students are to benefit from their education and achieve their potential, good attendance and punctuality are crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students and we identify and address any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance as speedily as possible.

All parents / carers have a duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 which states that, 'if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at school, the parent is guilty of an offence.'

Under the terms of the education related provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, parent/carer(s) may be issued with a Penalty Notice of £60 if:

- You fail to ensure that your child attends school, or other education provision regularly
- You allow your child to take leave of absence in term time without a school's authorisation
- You fail to return your child to school on an agreed date after a leave of absence
- Your child persistently arrives late for school after the register is closed

We recognise, therefore, that parents / carers have a vital role to play in establishing regular and punctual attendance and therefore strive to work in partnership with parents / carers in promoting and encouraging 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

If there are problems that affect a student's attendance or punctuality we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times. A similar approach will be adopted with students whose punctuality is considered to be an issue.

### **Rationale for good attendance**

- 90% attendance = ½ day missed every week
- 1 school year at 90% attendance = 4 whole weeks of lessons missed.
- 90% attendance over 5 years of secondary school = ½ a school year missed.
- It is suggested that 17 missed school days a year = a one GCSE grade drop in achievement.
- It is suggested that 10 missed school days a year = a one AS/A2 grade drop in achievement.
- It is suggested that if a school can improve their attendance by 1%, they will see a 5-6% improvement in the whole school attainment.

### **Rationale for good punctuality**

- 5 Minutes late = 3.4 school days missed per year
- 10 Minutes late = 6.9 school days missed a year
- 15 Minutes late = 10.3 school days missed a year
- 20 Minutes late = 13.8 school days missed a year
- 30 Minutes late = 20.7 school days a year

## Principles

The school will ensure:

- that staff receive CPD to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures as well as school attendance and punctuality levels;
- that staff convey the importance of good attendance and punctuality for a successful education;
- that regular liaison between the Heads' of Year (HOY), Attendance & Welfare Officer (AWO) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member with responsibility for Pastoral regarding attendance and punctuality takes place;
- that students and their parents/carers understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality through positive reinforcement and working in partnership with us;
- that clear, open channels of communication are established to inform students, parents/ carers and staff of any issues with attendance and/or punctuality;
- realistic targets for whole school and individual attendance and punctuality are set;
- regular evaluation of attendance and punctuality procedures, systems and interventions;
- effective reintegration programmes are implemented following a period of absence (that is longer than two weeks) from school due to illness or injury, alternative education off site or fixed term exclusion and that they promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after such absences;
- students with poor attendance and/or punctuality are challenged and students with good attendance and/or punctuality are rewarded.

## Attendance procedures

- On the first day of absence parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence either by direct telephone contact with the Attendance Office on 020 8 656 9755 ext 163 or by e-mail to 'attend@shirley.croydon.sch.uk'. When the student returns to school after an absence, parents/carers must complete an 'explanations for absence' slip in the student planner.
- If electronic registration indicates a student to be absent and no contact has been received from the parents/carers, a text will be sent to the parents/carers informing them of their child's absence from school and asking for verification of the absence. This text will be repeatedly sent on that day until the parent/carer responds. This process will be repeated for every day the student is absent.
- If no response is received regarding the absence after three school days, the Attendance and Welfare team will try to make contact. If this is unsuccessful, a home visit will be undertaken. If the home visit is unsuccessful further contact will be attempted until either a response is received or it is judged that a Police Welfare check or Child Missing from Education referral is required.
- If attendance drops below 94% a poor health letter (reminders that the student is approaching the monitoring point of 93%) will be issued by the Attendance Team.
- If attendance drops below 93% a doctor's certificate letter (request that any future absences will now need medical evidence) will be issued and the student will automatically be subject to monitoring by the AWO, HoY and SVP – Pastoral.
- If there are issues with persistent and/or patterns of poor attendance, staged intervention will be implemented and the AWO will contact the parents/carers, reminding them of the legal requirements regarding school attendance. Parent/carers will be informed of the following as required:
  - Stage 1; letter will be issued re-iterating the need for medical evidence and that the student's attendance will be closely monitored for 4 weeks.
  - Stage 2; letter will be issued stating that if there are any further unauthorised absences the parents/carers will be invited to an Attendance Panel Meeting. At this meeting the following can be implemented; a Parenting Contract (Formal written agreement to support an attendance action plan); a Medical Consent Form (permission for a letter to be sent by AWO to GP to determine the medical need) completed by parent/carer; exploration into initiating an individual Health and Care Plan (IHCP), referral to the Croydon Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for an Early Help assessment through completion of a Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF); referral to the Educational Psychologist (EP); referral to the Child

and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS); referral to alternative education providers e.g. Springboard or Cotelands following medical diagnosis.

- Stage 3; letter will be sent stating that the school has been unable to work in partnership with the parent and student following the implementation of Stages 1 & 2 and that as a result they believe the legal requirements of the parent are not being met and initiate prosecution.
- Students are encouraged to attend medical appointments outside of school time but where this is not possible parents/carers must complete a 'medical appointment slip' in the student planner and provide evidence of the appointment e.g. stamp, medical appointment card, medical appointment letter.
- If a student has been absent for two school weeks or longer a reintegration meeting may be held with the student, parents / carers, HOY and AWO to support the student in returning to school.
- Principals' may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, this regulation came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. Should a school not agree to grant leave and parents/carers take their child on holiday regardless, then this will be counted as unauthorised absence (truancy). The school can then issue a Penalty Fine of £60 for this period of unauthorised absence.

## **Punctuality Procedures**

- Students should arrive to school between 8.15 am and 8.25 am. Morning registration starts at 8.30 am.
- If a student is going to be late to school, parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's lateness either by direct telephone contact with the AWO on 020 8 656 9755 ext 163 or by e-mail to 'attend@shirley.croydon.sch.uk'.
- If a student arrives after 8.30 am but before 8.45 am, their names will be recorded in the late book by a member of SLT on duty at the gate and they must then report to their form room. Students are marked as late (L) if they arrive to their form room after the 8.30 am bell. The register will be closed by the Form Tutor at 8.45am.
- If a student arrives after 8.45 am they should go to the Attendance Office where they will be signed in, marked as late (L) and receive a late stamp in their student planner. Following which they are to report directly to their lesson. Any student that arrives late and does not have a late stamp in their student planner must be sent to the Attendance Office to get one.
- In the event of exceptional circumstances e.g. major transport disruption in the surrounding area the AWO will make a decision regarding dispensation for lateness on that day.
- Students will automatically be given a form tutor detention of 15 minutes for the fourth and then every subsequent late up to nine lates.
- Students will automatically be given a Middle Leader detention of 60 minutes if they are late ten or more times.
- Students will automatically be given a Middle Leader detention of 90 minutes if they are late fifteen or more times.
- Students will automatically be given an SLT detention of 120 minutes if they are late twenty or more times.
- Students will automatically be given an SLT Saturday detention of 3 hours if they are late twenty five or more times. An SLT Saturday detention will then automatically be scheduled for every 5 lates after the 25 lates i.e. 30 lates, 35 lates etc.
- Students will automatically be given a period of respite and reflection in the Seclusion Room, if they fail to attend an SLT Saturday detention. If students ~~or~~ remain persistently late in an academic year, a parent / carer meeting will be arranged.
- Students may be asked to undertake community support detentions (e.g. litter picking, chewing gum removal, recycling) during break time or lunch time in response to poor punctuality to school and / or lessons.
- Persistent issues with poor punctuality will be referred to the AWO. The AWO will contact the parents/carers directly making them aware of the legal requirements regarding school punctuality

and that penalty notices may be issued and / or court proceedings pursued. Attendance at compulsory parent/student meetings and / or panel meetings will be expected.

## **In school Attendance and Punctuality**

Students and staff should ensure that good punctuality and attendance to lessons and registrations is expected by all and is a high priority.

Staff must ensure that they arrive to lessons on time to meet and greet their students. Sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) should be issued to any student who arrives late to the lesson. Persistent poor punctuality should be dealt with by the Head of Department (HOD) and then the Senior Line Manager if the problem persists. If the poor punctuality is across subject areas the form tutor will place the student on Tutor report. If the problem persists it will be referred to the HOY who will place the student on HOY report. If the problem persists it will be referred to the AWO who will liaise with the SLT member with responsibility for Pastoral regarding the action needed.

Sixth form students, for whom travel between school sites is necessary, must sign in with the Attendance Office on arrival and departure from the school.

Staff should take an accurate register of their students every lesson and follow up absences to verify they are genuine. Sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) should be issued to any student who truant a lesson. Persistent truancy from a subject should be dealt with by the HOD and then the Senior Line Manager if the problem persists. The HOY should be notified in the event of any truancy in case it is an issue across subject areas. If truancy is persistent the HOY will contact the parents / carers and apply a sanction (according to the behaviour policy). This action will be as well as the action taken within the subject areas. If the problem persists it will be referred to the AWO and the SLT member with responsibility for Pastoral.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Parents / carers will:

- ensure regular attendance is maintained throughout the student's time at Shirley High School. Students' average yearly attendance should not fall below 96%;
- contact the attendance and welfare office if their child is to be absent or late to school;
- complete the student absence request form should an emergency absence be required and supply the necessary supporting information;
- ensure that their child regularly arrives at school on time. Students' average yearly punctuality should be good with no more than 3% lates;
- ensure that the contact details we hold on our records are up to date;
- support the school's policies and procedures regarding attendance and punctuality.

Students will:

- attend school regularly and be at registration on time. Students' average yearly attendance should not fall below 96%;
- arrive to school on time; Students' average yearly punctuality should be good with no more than 3% lates;
- arrive to all lessons on time;
- obey the rules regarding attendance and punctuality and ensure they are aware of the procedures involved.

Form tutors will:

- register their students electronically at the start of each morning session in accordance with school procedure and follow up any initial issues with attendance and punctuality to registration;
- ensure students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school and reinforce that poor attendance and punctuality has a detrimental effect on the learning of all students. Students' average yearly attendance should not fall below 96%, Students' average yearly punctuality should be good with no more than 3% lates;
- work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued through sending a clear message that if a student is absent and/or late, she/he will be missed;
- ensure that students are automatically given a form tutor detention of 15 minutes for the fourth and then every subsequent late up to nine lates in academic year;
- place the student on tutor punctuality report if punctuality to lessons becomes an issue;
- refer students to their HOY if a problem with attendance and/or poor punctuality persists.

Subject teachers will:

- register their students electronically for each lesson in accordance with school procedure;
- arrive at their lessons on time to meet and greet their students;
- take an accurate register and follow up on absences to check if they are genuine;
- apply sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) to any student who arrives late without a note of explanation;
- apply sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) to any student who truant their lesson;
- refer students to their HOD if a problem with attendance and/or punctuality persists;
- operate procedures which allow absentees or late comers to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members;
- work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued through sending a clear message that if a student is absent and/or late, she/he will be missed.

Head of Year will:

- reinforce the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school and reinforce that poor attendance and punctuality have a detrimental effect on the learning of all students. Students' average yearly attendance should not fall below 96%;
- display year group attendance and punctuality figures and reward good and improved attendance and/or punctuality of students;
- reinforce with staff the importance of ensuring that all students feel supported and valued through sending a clear message that if a student is absent and/or late, she/he will be missed;
- provide details of students on reduced or bespoke timetables, excluded, secluded, undergoing respite and reflection, placement in the school house or attending an alternative education provider to staff concerned;
- work with the AWO to monitor the attendance and punctuality of the students in their year group and improve the attendance and / or punctuality of identified students.

Attendance & Welfare Officer will:

- regularly analyse attendance and punctuality data and provide HoYs and the SLT member with responsibility for Student Wellbeing with this information as required and to the whole pastoral team at pastoral meetings;
- liaise closely with the HOYs and the SLT member with responsibility for Student Wellbeing to improve the attendance and/or punctuality of identified students for whom there are concerns and organize necessary action promptly;
- monitor (along with the HOY) any student whose average yearly attendance falls below 96%;
- monitor and target, via half termly Vulnerable Students' Meetings, any student whose average yearly attendance falls below 93%;

- ensure prompt follow up action is taken regarding students identified as persistent absentees and maintain rigorous monitoring of the situation (student are classed as persistent absentees at 90%);
- record carefully, all telephone messages and other communication with parents/carers;
- write letters to the parents/carers of students who are persistently absent and/or late reminding them of their legal requirements;
- arrange to meet with parents/carers and students to discuss strategies for improving attendance and/or punctuality; to undertake a staged intervention process starting with Stage 1 and progressing through to referral to the Local Authority for the issue of penalty notices and court action;
- refer or signpost families to external agencies who can help support persistent poor attendance and/or punctuality;
- provide CPD opportunities for staff to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures.

Attendance and Welfare Assistant will:

- have overall responsibility for electronic registration monitoring and initiating truancy call (absence notification text service) for absent students;
- send postcards to students with improved attendance and/or punctuality following intervention.
- support the Attendance and Welfare Officer as required.

SLT member with responsibility for Pastoral will:

- monitor and evaluate the implementation of the school attendance and punctuality policy;
- provide reports for the Senior Leaders and Governors on whole school attendance and punctuality;
- meet with the parents/carers, student, HOY and AWO regarding issues with persistent poor attendance and punctuality, as required;
- oversee the rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality.

SLT member with responsibility for Staffing will:

- ensure that the school bells are set to ring at the appropriate times to ensure that staff and students can get to registration or lessons on time;
- monitor the attendance and punctuality of all staff.

## Rewards

To support the schools emphasis on the importance of regular attendance (96% average over the year) and good punctuality (no more than 3% lates over the year), the following rewards have been established:

- Students will be awarded with 100% attendance certificates in assembly on a termly basis by their HOY.
- Students will be awarded with 100% attendance certificates for the year in assembly by a member of the SLG.
- Students who achieve 100% attendance stage attendance (end of KS3, end of KS4, end of KS5) are awarded a certificate and prize at the Celebration of Success Evening.
- Students who achieve 100% attendance over 7 years are awarded a certificate and prize at the Celebration of Success Evening.
- Tutor groups who achieve 100% attendance and punctuality in a week will be awarded a tutor group mufti day.
- Students' attendance and punctuality will form part of the criteria for invitation to the end of year reward trip.

## Glossary

Expected attendance away	-	yearly average attendance of 96% (= no more than 8 school days from school) expected from all our students
Expected punctuality	-	no more than 3% lates (= no more than 6 lates to school per year) expected from all our students
Persistent absence attendance, is	-	any student falling below the Government threshold of 90% classed as a persistent absentee
Authorised absence	-	absence is acceptable and approved by the school
Unauthorised absence	-	no acceptable reason is given for absence
Truancy call	-	absence notification text service
Medical evidence receptionist	-	evidence to prove that an absence is due to illness e.g. GP's medical practice stamp in the student planner, GP appointment card, copy of prescription given, evidence of visit to and / or copy of advice given from a pharmacist.
Medical consent form student	-	form allowing the school to obtain medical information regarding a student direct from a GP
Staged intervention	-	intervention used by the school, in distinct stages, to effect an improvement in a student's attendance and / or punctuality. If no improvement is made this is used as evidence for the Local Authority Education and Welfare Service to take legal action.
Penalty notice	-	fine issued by the Local Authority

### **Links with other policies**

This policy has been developed and evaluated with a view to helping children achieve more. It links with the following policies which can be read in conjunction:

- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.