



St Dunstan's
— College —

SENIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES

1. The school day

All students are required to be in school by 0820 and should not arrive before 0745. The normal school day ends at 1600, with afterschool activities beginning at 1615 and ending at 1715. All students are expected to be away from the College site by 1730.

Students are registered at both the start of the morning and at the start of each lesson. Although teachers and tutors follow up all absences from lessons, the 0820 registration and the 1440 (Period 7) registration are entered onto the College attendance register.

It is the Form Tutor's responsibility to register pupils at 0820 and the Subject Teacher's responsibility to register students at all other times.

All students must be registered at the start of each lesson, either in class or with the teacher supervising a study session.

In the event that a Year 12 or 13 student has an unsupervised study period during period 7, they must register with the supervising teacher in the Library at 1435.

2. 'Fobbing' in and out

All pupils are issued with a fob which allows them to gain access to security-controlled doors and gates on the College Site. All students **must** 'fob in' whenever they enter the College and 'fob out' whenever they leave the College. 'Fobbing' in and out generates the Fire Register for the College, and is therefore critically important, as it allows us to count the students on- and off-site, should a fire or other emergency occur.

Forgetting to 'fob out' will result in a student being listed on the fire register when they are, in fact, off-site. This puts rescue workers' lives in danger as they will search the site for any unaccounted-for students. Repeated failure to 'fob' in and out will result in sanctions, depending on the circumstances.

3. **Absence due to illness**

If a student misses school due to illness, the parent or guardian should phone the College Office (020 8516 7200) or email the pupil's Form Tutor before 0900 each and every day of absence. If the College has not heard from a parent or guardian, we will always try to telephone or send a text message requesting contact to ensure the student is safe and to verify his or her whereabouts.

It is important that parents make contact with the College each day their child is absent in order that we can keep our records updated, and importantly, so that we can keep abreast of his or her progress to full health and anticipated return date.

4. **Late arrival**

By 0850 each day, all students will be marked present, late or absent. It is therefore essential that if a student arrives late, he or she signs in at the College Office so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the College is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every student is at all times.

Our systems are again updated at 0930 when we compile a final Registration for the morning. At this point, if parents have not contacted the College by telephone or email, a list will be generated of students who are not present and this will prompt our Office to endeavour to contact parents or guardians.

5. **Leaving school early (during the school day)**

Students are not normally allowed to leave the site during the school day, with the following exceptions:

- Year 13 students may leave after 1435 registration if they have unsupervised study periods during periods 7 and 8.
- Year 12 and 13 students may leave the College during the lunch period, if they have earned the privilege to do so.

If a student has to leave the College during the day for illness if a parent or guardian is collecting the student for a medical appointment, he or she is required to sign out at the College Office.

Students are not permitted to sign themselves out for appointments or illness without approval from the Tutor.

6. **Requests for absence**

6.1 **Requesting absence**

Any request for planned appointments or events should be made by the parent/guardian in writing via email sent to the student's Form Tutor. The Form Tutor will forward the request to the appropriate Head of Section, as necessary.

The Heads of Section can grant permission for missing part of a school day due to medical appointments and for missing a school day for educational purposes (e.g. University visits). The Headmaster must approve any absence of more than half a school day.

6.2 Compassionate grounds or exceptional circumstances

Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds or in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Headmaster in advance of the proposed absence when possible, via an email to the student's Form Tutor. Absence in exceptional circumstances does not ordinarily include the following:

- Birthdays
- Holidays
- Festivals
- Days out as a special treat
- Other family celebrations

6.3 Authorising absence

The Government has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. The main areas where the College will authorise absence are given below:

- **Illness.** Where the College accepts that a student is ill, we will authorise the absence but can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.
- **Appointments.** Dental and medical appointments are authorised absences but, where possible, such appointments should be made out of school hours.
- **Holidays.** The Regulations state that time off for family holidays is not a right. Parents do not have the right to take a child out of school during term time. By law parents must ask prior permission for their child to miss school. The Regulations do not allow the College to give retrospective approval.

The Headmaster is only able to authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If the Headmaster grants a leave request, it is for him to determine the length of time that the student can be away from school. Authorised leave is unlikely to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday and parents could face prosecution if they take their child(ren) out of school without permission.

Holidays which are taken for the following reasons will **not** be authorised:

- Availability of cheap holidays
 - Availability of desired accommodation
 - Poor weather in school holiday periods
 - Overlap with the beginning or end of term
- **Religious observance.** The College treats days of holy obligation with an understanding that befits its diverse, multicultural community. Each request is taken on a case by case basis.
 - **Exceptional circumstances/unavoidable causes.** Authorised absence can be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement.

7. Poor attendance and persistent absence

The Department for Education (DfE) expects every student attending school to maintain an attendance level of approximately 90 per cent and above; any figure below this is deemed as ‘poor attendance.’

Students whose attendance is below 85 per cent are classed as ‘persistently absent’. The College is obliged to contact the parents/guardians if their child’s attendance drops below that figure. If attendance does not improve and absence continues to be persistent, the College will contact the appropriate Attendance, Welfare and Inclusion Team from the child’s local authority.

8. Summary of the law taken from the guidelines for ISI inspection

All independent schools – Regulation 3(17) “The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006”.

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the “School Roll” and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met.

The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

9. Attendance registration system

Reviewed – September 2017

Next review – September 2018

The College uses SchoolBase, an electronic student information management system, which enables the College to record, report and monitor student attendance and absence. The registers use the following attendance codes (in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006:

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| / | Present (morning registration) |
| \ | Present (afternoon registration) |
| L | Late (before registers close) |
| U | Late (after registers close) |
| N | Reason for absence not yet provided (will be followed up by tutor – this code must 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) |
| O | Unauthorised absence |
| Y | Enforced closure or exceptional circumstances (e.g. snow, national emergency, the pupil is in custody, etc.) |
| B | Off-site educational activity (where the pupil is educated off-site) |
| D | Attending other establishment (for example a hospital school or special school on a temporary basis) |
| J | Pupil at interview (with prospective employers or another educational establishment) |
| P | Approved co-curricular activity (for example a sporting activity approved by the College and supervised by someone authorised by the College) |
| V | Educational visit or trip (including day and residential trips of strictly educational nature arranged by the College or an organisation approved by the College) |
| W | Work experience (for pupils in Years 10 and/or 11; the work experience placement provider must notify the College of any absences by individual pupils, which will be recorded using the relevant code) |
| C | Other authorised circumstances (exceptional circumstances, leave granted by the Headmaster) |
| E | Excluded – fixed term suspension (with no alternative provision made; must be no more than 5 consecutive days) |
| H | Family holiday agreed by the Headmaster |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointments) |
| M | Medical or dental appointment |
| R | Religious observance (agreed by the Headmaster) |
| S | Study leave (only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations) |
| G | Family holiday NOT authorised by Headmaster (unauthorised absence) |
| X | Untimetabled for non-compulsory pupils |
| Z | Pupil not on roll (for administration purposes; 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 – this code is used to cover the time between the pupil being added to the admission register and starting school at the College) |
| # | School closure (planned whole or partial school closure including between terms, half terms, occasional days (e.g. bank holidays), curriculum planning/training and use of schools as polling stations) |

10. Maintaining records and reporting to the authorities

The College's attendance register kept by means of a computer is backed up, in the form of an electronic copy, at least once a month and records are retained for three years after the end of the school year in question.

There is no longer a requirement for independent schools to return absence data to the DfE, therefore absence statistics are not published in the DfE Achievement and Attainment Tables or in the annual Statistical First Release.

As schools in membership of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) take part in that organisation's annual census of students, staff and expenditure etc. From January 2009 it has been mandatory to include pupil ethnic monitoring data using the same methodology as the maintained sector.

Local authorities have a legal responsibility to identify children of compulsory school age who are not in education. Schools may therefore receive an enquiry about whether they are educating a specific child. Schools are required to alert their local authority after a pupil of compulsory school age has:

- Been absent without authority for 10 consecutive school days, or
- Failed to attend school regularly, or
- Been removed from the school without the school being informed formally, in writing.