



# Attendance Policy

Version Control			
Date		September 2022	
Review Date		September 2023	
Authorised by Governing Body			
Version	Author	Date	Changes

## **Attendance Policy**

Excellent school attendance and punctuality is imperative to student wellbeing, progress and performance. Studio School & Sixth encourages every student to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance in order to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them. We recognise the strong link that exists between a student's level of attendance, their achievement and overall attainment.

*'A transformational journey from school student to young creative professional'* is the ethos of Studio School & Sixth. Outstanding attendance and punctuality are key factors in the journey students embark on when joining the school. Studies have shown the negative impact of poor attendance on attainment and social mobility, at Studio School & Sixth we aim for 100% attendance for all of our students and ask for 95% attendance as a minimum.

## **Legislation and Guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance set out by the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

The law relating to school attendance is detailed in the Education Act 1996. Part 1, Section 7

In brief, parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive an "efficient full-time education" which is suitable for their "age, ability and aptitude" and "any special needs" they may have "either by regular attendance at school or otherwise"

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of everyone in the school to promote, celebrate and challenge attendance in line with annual performance targets set by Studio School & Sixth, Walsall Local Authority and DfE. This is achieved by close partnerships between the Local Authority, parents and support agencies.

- **Students Responsibilities**

All students are expected to arrive on time and attend all lessons. Be punctual to lessons and appropriately equipped and ready to learn. Not leave the school premises without permission. Inform a member of staff of any problem that may hinder their attendance or punctuality at school.

- **Parents/Carers Responsibility**

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, on time, in full school uniform and equipped for learning.

Parents are expected to notify school promptly and a reason must be given for absence before 9:00am and each day subsequently. We cannot assume absence you may send your child back to school and they do not arrive.

Parent will keep in contact with school and inform the appropriate staff member of any problem that occurs which may hinder their child's regular attendance, punctuality discipline or behaviour in school.

Parents should not book holidays and medical or dental appointments during school time and are only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period of time when this is unavoidable.

- **School Responsibility**

Attendance is the responsibility of all, especially that of the Attendance Officer, Pastoral Leader and Form Tutors. These teams will closely monitor and communicate regularly with students, staff and parents. The school encourages good attendance and punctuality through a variety of strategies. We

also promptly follow up absence and lateness daily. Support and challenge will be provided via Form Tutors, Pastoral Leads and the Attendance Team (consisting of Hannah Smith, Senior Attendance Lead and the Attendance Officer). Outstanding attendance will be rewarded regularly, while unacceptable attendance and punctuality will be monitored closely and challenged.

### **Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality**

The Attendance Officer monitors student absence and punctuality on a daily basis. Parent/Carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health and on each subsequent day until the child returns to school. See section below titled 'Unplanned Absence'.

Student non-attendance will trigger actions as different thresholds are met. See Appendix 1: Attendance Protocol.

Student-level absence data is collected and monitored each term and published at national and local authority level. We compare our attendance data to local and national averages and share this data with Studio School & Sixth's governing body and more broadly across The Mercian Trust.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child arrives late to school, they will be missing out on crucial learning which will impact their learning and outcomes. Students arriving late can disrupt lessons and it can be embarrassing for the student, which could also encourage absence.

The school day begins at 8:30am and students can arrive from 8am and enjoy our free Breakfast Bagel Bar from 8:15am. Students who arrive late to school and/or lessons will be marked with an L code on the register and issued with the appropriate sanction. Parents will be informed via text message if their child arrives to school late.

A student who arrives late (after 8.30am) but before the register has closed (9.00am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).

A student who arrives after the register has closed (9.00am) will be marked absent for that period, using the appropriate code (U).

When a student is persistently late or absent, -pastoral staff will contact parents/carers by telephone in the first instance. They will be invited into school to meet with the Pastoral and Attendance Team to discuss issues impacting upon their child's attendance and punctuality.

- Registration

All staff must ensure registers are completed and saved within 10 minutes of the start of the session. If the electronic register cannot be taken during the lesson, a paper register will be taken and sent to the Attendance Officer. Tutors take registers for their form group using the online system and will notify the Attendance Officer of any concerns. Further registers are taken in every lesson thereafter.

The Attendance Officer will update registers following communication from parents/carers where students will be absent. The Attendance Officer will contact every absentee with no reason provided on the same day via phone call.

- Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of any unplanned absence. For example: If their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible school should be notified.

When a student is absent from morning registration, unless a message explaining the absence has been received, the Attendance Officer will make a telephone call to the parent/carer of that student. If no response is received a message will be left along with a communication via our text alert system, asking the parent/carer to contact school.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Attendance Team may ask parents to provide medical evidence. This evidence can be in the form of, doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parent/carer will be notified of this.

- Persistent Absence

Any student who has attendance below 90% is categorised as a persistent absentee. Studio School & Sixth has an obligation to intervene when a student's attendance falls below this threshold. This may include a referral to the Local Authority to pursue a Fixed Penalty Notice or Court Action after work has been done to support parents/carers to enable their child to attend. Parents/Carers will be alerted when attendance falls below 95% so we can work together to ensure good attendance.

- Medical Appointments

We expect parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Parents/carers should notify the Attendance Officer of any medical appointments as soon as possible in advance of the appointment. If evidence is provided for the appointment an M code will be used on the register to authorise the absence. Students are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents/carers are expected to return their child to school following the appointment.

- Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance figures are presented to parents/carers as part of the annual progress report and termly student tracking cards.

Students whose attendance falls below our expected minimum of 95% will receive timely notification by letter. [See Appendix 1: Attendance Protocol](#)

### **Authorised and Unauthorised absence**

The Principal may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Examples of absence that could be authorised are;

- A funeral of a direct family member
- Participation in a sporting activity/representation of the school
- Time off for religious observance
- International Dance Competitions
- Stage Performances- Music Gigs, Drama Societies

A leave of absence request form must be completed and will be considered on an individual basis. The school will aim to be fair and consistent for all students. A written response will be provided on the decision for the leave of absence. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion. [See Appendix 4: Leave of absence form.](#)

- Legal sanctions

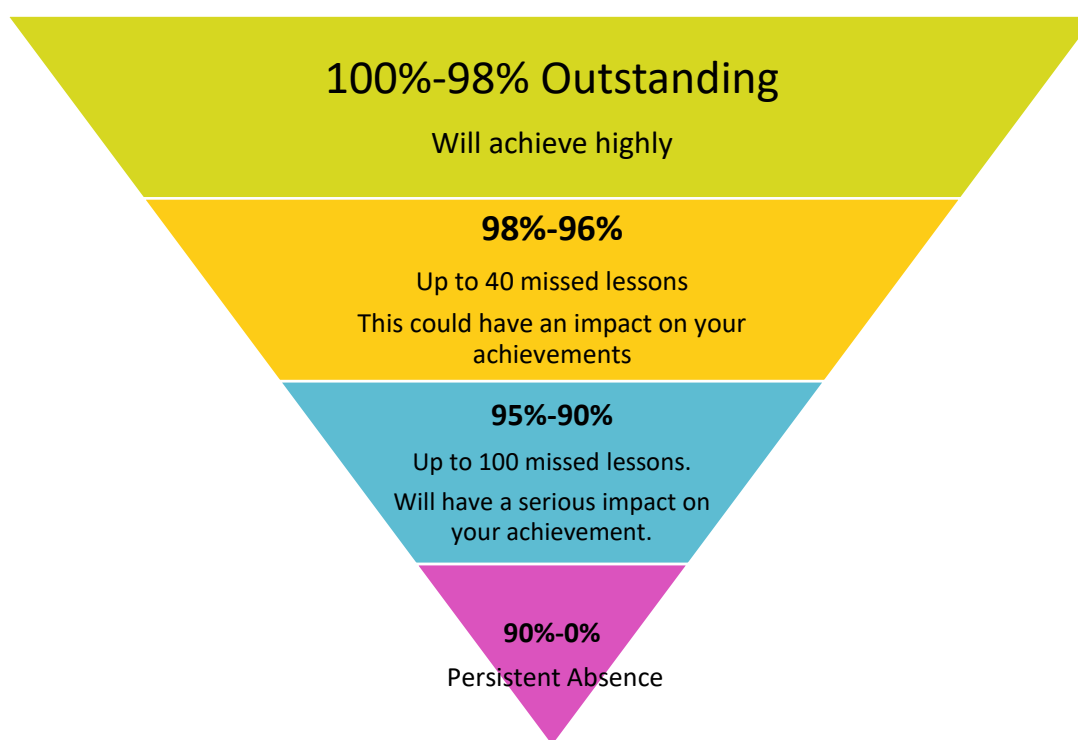
A student is required by law (under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010) to attend regularly at the school where they are registered. The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. It is expected that the parent/carer will contact school to inform them concerning absence. However, it is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers LA officers, Head-teachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school, and for parental failure to ensure that their child is not in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of an exclusion.

### **Strategies for promoting attendance and punctuality**

Studio School & Sixth will provide an environment in which students feel safe, valued and welcome. Our ethos demonstrates that students feel their presence is valued and it is important to be in attendance daily to ensure progress on their journey of 'transformation from school student to young creative professional'.

Regular school attendance and good punctuality is important in giving students the best possible start in life. Students who miss school frequently will fall behind on work and this will impact on examinations. Good attendance and punctuality portray a particular type of character to potential employers and the industry. Studio School & Sixth promote and build the skills required to prepare students for the real world of work and ensure they are positive and active citizens within the community.



### **Elective Home Education**

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child, school will contact the parent/carer and discuss their reasons in more detail, offering support to deal with any issues raised. If after this time the parent still wishes to home educate their child, the school will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register.

Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record. Prior to deciding to home educate, parents are requested to contact Walsall Local Authority Elective Home Education department.

## Appendix 1 | Attendance Protocol

