

Poole Grammar School	Policy Recommended	PGS/P/5
Attendance Policy – Information for Parents/Carers		Issue 5
		July 2016

The Principles

The School places a high priority on achieving excellent attendance, believing that this enables students to take full advantage of their education and to gain habits and skills appropriate later for their working life. Any absence from school can potentially impact on an individual's progress in school and affect their ultimate outcomes.

Responsibilities

As parents of a child who has gained a place at Poole Grammar School, you have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that they attend school regularly and punctually. However, we believe that helping to create an excellent pattern of attendance is a shared responsibility. We will, therefore, work with you, your child, the Outreach & Attendance Service and other appropriate agencies in order to achieve the best attendance possible for each individual. Specifically, we will

- register students in tutor groups at am registration (08:30)
- register students in all teaching lessons (Period 5 includes pm registration);
- monitor attendance and punctuality, intervening without delay, if a problem is identified;
- include attendance figures in our reports to you;
- recognise excellent or improving attendance through the award of certificates.

You have a role in emphasising to your child the value of full attendance. **Specifically, we ask you to:**

- **notify the School by telephone (01202 692132 and selecting the appropriate attendance line) or via the form available on the school website by 09:00 on the first day when your child is ill and each subsequent day that your child will not be in attendance;**
- **give details of symptoms of illness in the initial contact with the school if the absence is due to illness;**
- **request permission for medical/dental appointments by completing an appointment notification form prior to the appointment (available at the end of this policy and from the school website);**
- **not take your child out of school for family holidays during term time;**
- **contact the tutor or Head of Year, if you have any concerns about your child's attendance.**

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the school day, they may miss vital information and news for the day plus participation in tutor group or assembly activities with his peers. Good habits in this area are also particularly important in the world outside school. Where a pupil arrives into school culpably late, they will receive an appropriate sanction to ensure that they recognise the importance of arriving in a timely manner.

Students should arrive in their tutor rooms by 08:30 in the morning. Registers are completed by your child's tutor by 08:35. Should your child arrive into school after 08:35, they should proceed to the main office, where they should sign in using the relevant signing in book. This will then be recorded as a late mark but they will be regarded as present for the session.

At 08:55, the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows that they have arrived late to school. However, if your child arrives after 09:55, they will receive a mark that shows him to be on site, but this will not count as a 'present' mark and it will mean that they have an 'unauthorised absence'. If lateness becomes a regular problem, you will be asked to meet with the appropriate Head of Year with a view to resolving the problem. If this was not successful, the School Attendance Worker from the local authority will take the matter forward.

We aim to have all boys accounted for by 09:30 for safeguarding reasons, whether present in school or absent due to illness. This is also to ensure that the registers as legal documents are accurate. If a pupil has not received a mark during registration and has not signed in, and we have received no word that they are absent due to illness or for other reasons, the PGS School Attendance Officer will check teaching rooms for the pupil. If they are found to have failed to sign in having arrived into school late, they will receive an appropriate sanction. Where no word has been received, and the pupil cannot be located in school, the School Attendance Officer will make contact with parents/carers to ensure the pupil is safe.

Afternoon session attendance marks will be recorded at the start of the period 5 lesson, at 14:30. If your child is not in the classroom at this time, but turns up during period 5, then they will receive a late mark. Sixth formers not attending a class will register in the link block.

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences would be for illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school considers unreasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' has been given. This could include:

- children kept off school to assist with shopping or looking after younger siblings;
- day trips and holidays in term time
- absences which have not been properly explained;
- arrival at school after the register has been closed;
- truancy during the school day.

Unauthorised absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Every half term, the BoP School Attendance Worker and the School Attendance Officer, in conjunction with Heads of Year and Deputy Head perform an attendance audit; the purpose of this is to identify pupils and parents/carers who may need further support to assist with improving attendance. Strategies used may include notification to the parents by letter, an action plan, peer or teacher mentor support and contact with outside agencies.

The Local Authority Attendance and Outreach Team

The School Attendance Worker supports us in seeking the way forward with any attendance issues. Like us s/he will want to resolve the situation by agreement, but, if other ways of trying to improve a child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the local authority can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or, in extreme cases, prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A student becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' when 10% or more of schooling is missed across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is likely to do considerable harm to any child's educational prospects and we aim to work closely with you to address this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of doing so is given priority and you will be informed of this either via letter or a telephone call. PA pupils are monitored and supported closely. Where a pupil has been identified as a PA pupil and they are absent, parents/carers must complete an "Absence Information" form, which must be handed in on the pupil's return.

Leave of absence

Only in exceptional circumstances can leave be granted – the potential criteria for these are issued to parents and are available on request. Applications should be made using the "Leave of Absence Request Form", available at the end of this policy, and also from the school website. Following submission of the form, you will be notified of the Headteacher's decision within 10 working days. The Headteacher's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding his decision.

Holidays in Term Time

There is **no entitlement** in law to time off during the school term to go on holiday.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in sanctions being issued by the local authority.

Sixth Form Students

In addition to the circumstances above where leave of absence would not be granted for main-school students, sixth form students should note that the following reasons for absence will not be authorised: holidays; work experience (this should be arranged outside of term time); driving lessons; part-time employment; child-minding.

It is important that students are on time to registration and to all lessons. If a sixth form student arrives late to school, they should sign in at main reception and then proceed directly to registration / assembly / the lesson.

If a sixth form student has to leave the school site during the school day and they are not intending to return to school, the student should sign out at main reception using the folder provided. If leaving the school site and intending to return (e.g. going to a lesson at Parkstone School or are going off site at lunchtime if issued with a midday exeat) the student should sign out, and sign back in, at main reception using the folder provided.

Summary

Continuity of attendance is vital for academic progress and absences could also affect your child's integration amongst his peers. We trust that we can rely on your support in seeking to achieve as high a level of attendance for him as possible.

Policy agreed by the Full Governing Body

Date: October 2013

Next Review – October 2016

PLEASE DETACH REPLY SLIP AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S TUTOR.

Student's Name:

Tutor Group:

Name of Parent / Carer:

I have read and understood Poole Grammar School's Attendance Policy.

Signature: Date:

Pupil absence form – Authorisation of absence for medical appointments

Medical consultants and orthodontist appointments can be inflexible. Therefore, if despite your best efforts, your child's appointment has to be in school session time, please complete this form and attach a copy of any documentation confirming the appointment if you have it.

This form should be handed in to the school office **PRIOR** to the absence so that details may be recorded on the school system and authorisation be sought from your child's Head of Year. Your child's Head of Year will only contact you if further clarification is needed or authorisation is not given.

Child's name:	Form:
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Date of appointment:	Time of appointment:
Leaving school at:	Returning to school at:

Name and address of medical/dental centre/hospital:
Reason for appointment:

Signature of parent:
Print name:
Date of request:

Pupil absence form – Reason for absence (PA Pupils)

Child's full name:	Form:
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First day of absence:	Last day of absence:
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Reason for absence (give a full list of symptoms if the absence is due to illness)
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Medical professionals consulted?	Yes/No
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Details of medical professional:

Signature of parent:

Print name:

Date:

Leave of Absence request form

Any application for leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. Only in exceptional circumstances will leave be granted. This form should be completed and submitted to your child's **Head of Year**. Following submission of this form, you will be notified of the School's decision within 10 working days. The School's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding the decision.

Child's full name:	Form:
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First day of requested absence:	Last day of requested absence
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Reason for absence request (give as much detail as possible, including any supporting evidence with your request)

Signature of all holders of Parental Responsibility	1 st holder of PR	2 nd holder of PR
Signature:		
Print name:		
Date:		

For school use

Date received	Current attendance	HoY	DH	Authorised	Date notified	Added to SIMS