



**Carshalton High School for Girls**  
***Attendance & Punctuality***  
***Policy***

Reviewed October 2015

## **Introduction**

Good attendance at school is vital for students to achieve their full educational potential. Students with good attendance records benefit in the following ways:

- Continuity of learning makes progress and retention easier
- Improved performance in coursework tasks
- Enhanced performance in examinations
- Continuity of relationships and friendships
- Good references for further education or employment
- Good habits are formed for later life

The following policy outlines our procedures.

At Carshalton High School for Girls, we strive to record, monitor and improve attendance in the following ways:

### **Electronic Registration**

This enables the school to:

- Record statutory attendance
- Monitor individual lesson attendance
- Identify, analyse and report absence and punctuality

### **Absence Alert**

Absence Alert is an automated communication system that will contact parent(s)/carer(s) directly if a student is marked absent at registration. This will ensure that the reason for the absence is known as soon as possible and will alert parent(s)/carer(s) if a student is not in school when she should be. Post-registration absence can also be detected and reported to parents.

### **Lesson Monitor**

This enables the school to:

- Monitor individual lesson attendance
- Track post-registration truancy
- Record and monitor lateness

Lesson Monitor enables Carshalton High School for Girls to analyse and report patterns of individual lesson absence and internal truancy.

### **Attendance Panel**

Students who do not reach the expected level of attendance may be invited, with their parent(s)/carer(s), to attend a meeting with the Headteacher, Governor and Attendance Officer to discuss the matter further.

Below are the school's expectations of Students, Parent(s)/Carer(s) and Staff.

### **Students**

In order to benefit from all opportunities and experiences within the school, students should:

- attend daily
- arrive on time
- follow signing in and out procedures
- forward written explanation of absenteeism to Attendance Officer
- attend all assemblies and lessons punctually

All procedures are outlined in the School Induction Booklet.

### **Sixth Form Students**

Sixth Formers are expected to attend school every day. Attendance at both morning and afternoon registration is a requirement, as is attendance at all lessons and assemblies. Attendance to lessons remains crucial to the success of the student and to their commitment to the school.

Students are permitted periods of home study which are agreed with the Head of Sixth Form. When going home at these times, students are required to use the signing out book outside the school office.

The school's procedures are followed in terms of authorised and unauthorised absences and the requirement for medical evidence.

### **Parent(s)/Carer(s)**

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their daughter(s) attend school daily and on time. This is also part of the Home-School Agreement which parents are required to sign before students are admitted to the school.

Parents are required to contact the School Attendance Officer before 10.00am on each day of absence. When the student returns to school an absence note must be provided.

Where an absence is known in advance, for example, a dental appointment, parents should inform the school in writing. Parents are requested to keep these to a minimum and should be made wherever possible outside school hours.

Only the school can authorise an absence. An explanation given by a parent is not, necessarily, sufficient for the school to authorise an absence.

According to guidelines to schools from the Department for Education, an authorised absence could be due to:

- Student illness
- 'Leave' given by the school (this commonly includes medical appointments, interviews and other similar special circumstances)
- The student being unable to attend due to unavoidable causes
- Religious observance where applicable

Absences which the school is not able to authorise include:

- Looking after a relative, pet etc
- A shopping trip, even if this is for uniform
- Day trips
- Lateness after the register has closed, that is after 9.15am
- Being unable to participate in a school activity e.g. games or a school trip
- Remaining at home to wait for deliveries, repairman etc
- Holidays

Family holidays should **never** be taken during school terms. From September 2013 amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** come into force, which make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore, family holidays may only be taken during school holidays. Where there are extenuating circumstances, parents should complete a Leave of Absence request form from the school. (Appendix A1). This must comply with the Leave of Absence Policy (Appendix A2).

## Staff

Form Tutor:	Records students' attendance and forwards attendance related correspondence to the Attendance Officer. Initially monitors students placed on Attendance & Punctuality report. Form tutors are to contact home during periods of sickness to enquire when students will be returning to school and to ensure a prompt return to lessons after illness.
Attendance Office:	Electronically records, identifies and analyses attendance data, for example, % attendance, punctuality, unexplained absence, truancy, patterns of absence
Assistant Head of Year (AHOY):	Monitors attendance. Identifies, analyses and takes action on attendance concerns within the year group in the first instance. Monitor punctuality in the first instance including those who have been late to school more than 5 times in a half-term. These students will be required to register with their AHOY each morning to ensure a prompt start to school. AHOY (in consultation with Year Leader) monitors Pupil Premium attendance and punctuality. AHOY will monitor students placed on Attendance & Punctuality report following referral from the Form Tutor.
Year Leader:	(In liaison with the Curriculum Leader(s) and Attendance Officer) monitors, identifies, analyses and takes action on attendance concerns within the year group following initial actions of AHOY. Monitor punctuality including those who have been late to school and upon referral by the AHOY. Year Leader monitors Pupil Premium attendance and punctuality. Year Leaders will also monitor the rate and number of Fixed Period Exclusions throughout the year. Year Leaders will monitor students placed on Attendance & Punctuality report following referral from the AHOY.
Assistant Head (Attendance and Punctuality)	Assists Year Leaders and the School Attendance Officer in the analysis and action of attendance data. Monitors Pupil Premium students overall.
School Attendance Officer:	Actions referrals from Year Leaders. (See Appendix B for the procedure staff follow).
Data Manager:	Collates data for distribution to tutors, AHOY, Year Leaders and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

## Encouraging Good Attendance

We consider good attendance to be of such importance that we place a great deal of emphasis on it and put considerable resources into promoting it. Listed are some of the strategies used:

- Individual rewards for students with good and excellent attendance records
- School, year group and tutor group targets set for attendance
- Inter tutor group attendance league tables displayed in every tutor room
- Home visits conducted by the School Attendance Officer and Assistant Head (Inclusion)
- Regular attendance information sent to parents to assist them in monitoring their child's attendance
- Regular promotion of and rewards for good attendance in assemblies
- Detailed analysis of attendance figures and trends for individuals, years groups and the whole school
- Mentoring groups for students in the Persistent Absence category
- Regular reports to governors
- Computerised registration system
- A member of the office staff dedicated to the administration of attendance
- A dedicated School Attendance Officer who works with the Assistant Head (Inclusion) to secure good attendance from all pupils
- Regular network meetings with other schools to share information on siblings and promote good practice
- Contact with parents on each day of absence or lateness
- Close working partnership with the Educational Welfare Service
- Support for students and parents where attendance difficulties are emerging
- Procedures to identify students who truant after the register has been taken
- Rewards for students with the most improved attendance

## Dealing with Poor Attendance and Punctuality

See flow chart (Appendix B) for Attendance

See flow (Appendix D) for Punctuality

## Penalty Notices

Below is the information provided by the London Borough of Sutton on Penalty Notices:

- **What is the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003?**  
Section 23 of the Act gives power to the Local Education Authority and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable of, but unwilling to, secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.

The powers came into force on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2004. Penalty Notice Referral Form (Appendix C).

- **What is a Penalty Notice?**  
Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (those for which the school cannot or has not given permission). Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, whilst still seeking to secure an improvement in a student's attendance.

- **Can I get help if my child is not attending regularly?**

Yes, the School Attendance Officer and your child's Year Leader and Form Tutor will give you advice and support if you need help to improve your child's school attendance, although you should be aware that this is ultimately the legal responsibility of the parent/carer.

It is very important that you speak with the school and the School Attendance Officer at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries at all about ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of your child at school.

THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Tel: 020 8770 6605

Websites which may be useful to parents:

**Parentline:** [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

**Advisory Centre for Education:** [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

**Parents' Centre:** [www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk)