 

**Attendance Policy**

**Primary person responsible for updates to this policy:** Senior Vice Principal

**Last review date:** July 2023

**Next review date:** July 2024

**Circulation**: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

‘Parents’ refers to parents, guardians and carers.

At DLD College we strive for all our students to maximise their individual potential and also to prepare themselves for the next stage of their lives.

It is a fundamental duty for the college to strive for high levels of punctuality and attendance. There is a strong correlation between attendance and punctuality in lessons and academic achievement and we expect our students to be achieving 100% attendance whilst at the college. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored by **Attendance Officer**, **Housemasters & Housemistresses (HMs)**, **Tutors, Subject teachers, Houseparents and** **Compliance Manager.**

Students have a right and responsibility to access their education which means attending all classes and scheduled activities. Parents and teachers share the responsibility to ensure that students attend properly and derive maximum benefit from their education. We recognise that the wellbeing of the student’s is key and in cases of attendance levels dropping, it is important to understand both the reason for the absence and allowing the student to determine measures that will help improve the

At DLD we are committed to:

* Prioritising attendance and maintaining robust systems for monitoring and recording absences
* Recognising and rewarding good attendance
* Promoting a teaching and learning ethos that encourages students to attend

Aims

* To address the Every Child Matters agenda
* To encourage a positive approach
* To challenge and reduce levels of authorised and unauthorised absences
* To promote a consistent approach by all staff
* To acknowledge the link between attendance and attainment

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

 **Principal**

The Principal has overall responsibility for the whole-college attendance. The Principal works alongside teaching staff, the HMs, and the Senior Vice Principal to monitor the attendance reporting process. Cases of serious and persistent truancy are ultimately reported to and managed by the Principal in line with the college disciplinary policy.

**Senior Vice Principal**

The Senior Vice Principal works with the HMs, Tutors, teaching staff, and the Attendance Officer to monitor student attendance levels and to manage the process of delivering discipline for poor attendance. The Senior Vice Principal tracks the strategic attendance information for the students and works closely with the HMs, to ensure that high levels of attendance and punctuality are met and any resulting sanctions are clearly communicated to students and parents.

**HMs**

The HMs disseminate attendance information to their Tutors each week and report persistent truancy issues to the Senior Vice Principal. HMs issue sanctions for poor attendance and review both general student attendance and individual student cases weekly. In cases of poor attendance levels, HMs will issue a Weekly Report card specifically for attendance that must be completed by the relevant student’s teachers and reviewed on a daily basis. When attendance levels continue to fall further measures can be applied (see the diagram at the end of this document).

**Tutors**

Tutors meet with students daily at Tutor registration. They communicate attendance levels to the students directly and pass on relevant authorisations received to the Attendance Officer. Tutors discuss with students their attendance and express concerns where appropriate as instructed by the HMs; these include verbal interventions to focus on improving the current levels of the student (please see diagram at the conclusion of this document for further details). In cases of poor attendance levels Tutors will issue a Tutor Weekly Report card specifically for attendance that must be completed by the relevant student’s teachers and reviewed on a daily basis. When attendance levels continue to fall further measures can be applied (see the diagram at the end of this document).

**Subject Teachers**

Subject teacher are to ensure that manual registration on SIMS is complete and accurate for each of their classes in a prescribed manner ensuring that information is as accurate as possible any issues with registering students and email should be sent to the Attendance Officer. Any concerns raised by subject teachers regarding students are passed to the student’s Tutor or directly to the HM as required. In cases where students are late or are non-attendees the Subject Teachers are expected to challenge the student’s absence and issue a detention if more than two unauthorised absences in a ten-day period.

**Assistant Principal (Boarding), Houseparents and School Matron**

Boarders’ attendance will be managed by the Assistant Principal (Boarding) for boarding evening registrations and activities. Parents will be notified of boarder’s attendance if a lesson is missed. The School Matron is the only staff member who is able to authorise an illness of a boarding student, though on the rare occasion that they are absent then in the Matron's absence, the Houseparents may authorise a boarder's absence due to illness. The College Matron will update the SIMS system to validate the authorised absence ensuring that members of staff are aware, please see section on Illness & Medical absences for further details.

**Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer manages the attendance recording system and records authorisation received from parents and, in the case of older independent living students, from the students themselves. The Attendance Officer prepares attendance reports for the relevant members of staff regarding student attendance.

**Parents, Carers & Guardians**

Parents, Carers & Guardians should ensure that their children attend college regularly and punctually, informing the college as soon as possible if there is any reason for non-attendance by emailing the Attendance and Intervention officer at attendance@dld.org.

**Students**

Students are also responsible for ensuring that they have good attendance and are registered in all lessons. Any problems with registration should be reported to the teacher immediately or the attendance officer report either by email to attendance@dld.org If a student is unable to attend a lesson they should ensure that the correct authorisation is given by their parent or guardian and they should contact their subject tutor to obtain the relevant notes and homework that they have missed.

Attendance is monitored using the SIMS Management Information Systems. Students are registered manually by the teacher at the start of the lesson. If they fail to attend the lesson they are marked as an unauthorised absence, an automated email notification may be sent to the relevant contacts through SIMS to inform Parents/Guardians of students’ absence.

### **Illness & Medical absences**

For all students, as soon as the level of their absences due to illness reaches 10% or above, we require an authorised medical note from a UK GMC registered practitioner, e.g. a doctor’s note, proof of medical appointments, for any illness in future. We will stop requesting this evidence once level of absences due to illness drops below 10% again. The College reserve the right to check the authenticity of the letter. Medical certificates must be written in English in order to be accepted from the college. There may be limited times where there are mitigating circumstances, which may lead to the above being changed, subject to agreement with the student’s HM.

**Illness before 8 am – Boarder**

If a boarder feels too unwell to attend lessons they must tell a Houseparent immediately, **the student must see the College Matron if the student is too unwell to attend, only the Matron can authorise a student’s absence from lesson**. Where the Matron may be absent for any reason, e.g., seeing to another student in an emergency, the absence can then be authorised by the Houseparent. All absences will be reported to the Attendance Officer. The college will not accept authorisation for a medical absence of a boarder in residence from a parent or guardian. For more information please read the Care of Ill Boarders’ Policy.

**Illness before 8am – Day/Independent living students**

If a day student is too unwell to attend college their parent or guardian should inform the college by 8.00am, the absence will then be recorded for that day or the specified period. Medical absences of more than 7 days will require a medical note for authorisation, e.g. a doctor’s note.

If a student lives independently, i.e. not with their parent or guardian, and they are too unwell to attend college, they should write to the college by 8.00am or as soon as is possible for the attendance record to be updated. Medical absences of more than 7 days will require a medical note for authorisation, e.g. a doctor’s note.

**Illness during the school day in lessons/activities**

If a student is in a lesson or activity and is feeling unwell, the subject tutor or supervising staff member should assess the severity of the illness. The staff member should try and avoid an immediate referral to the School Matron during lesson time unless it is absolutely necessary (depending on the gravity of the health complaint, etc.).

When the student is sent to the School Matron they should be accompanied by another member of staff or another student, if necessary.

The Matron will assess and ascertain if the student should be medically treated and sent home or to their boarding room, at which time the Parents, Carers, Guardians or Houseparent(s) will be contacted by the School Matron and SIMS will be updated. Students living with a parent or guardian will be asked to wait in college until staff have made contact with home and the student’s travel home is arranged.

The School Matron, Houseparents, members of SLT and HMs are the only members of staff who are permitted to allow students to return home or to their boarding rooms in case of illness.

**Illness during the school day outside of lessons/activities**

If a student feels unwell during the school day outside of lessons and activities they must speak to the Matron and / or their HM. If they are too unwell to attend their lessons the School Matron, their HM or a member of SLT will authorise their absence and will organise communication Parents, Carers or Guardians. Boarders will be sent to their room and the Houseparents informed; the Houseparents will then follow up with the necessary care and supervision for that student.

If a boarding student is ill and remains in their room for the day they are not allowed to leave the boarding area without specific permission from the School Matron or the Houseparent on duty.

### **Authorised Leave**

The college may authorise leave from lessons for one day/part of a day; a request from the student’s parent or guardian must be made in writing to the student’s HM & the Attendance Officer.

Staff will discuss each request with the parent or guardian and will only authorise a request if there is a significant and genuine reason that the event cannot take place outside of college hours.

Examples of authorised leave include: Medical appointments to UK GMC registered doctor/ hospital appointments with letter, text or email; UKVI meetings and embassy sponsored appointments; University open days (at the discretion of the HM); Bereavements (in line with the bereavement policy); External exams; Driving tests; Religious holidays and Observance.

### **Unauthorised Leave**

Please note that holidays taking place outside of holiday periods will **not be** authorised, except in exceptional circumstances. Parents/Guardians will need to put in a request in writing to the Principal, authorisation will be subject to the Principal’s discretion. Term dates are published well in advance on the college website [here](http://www.dldcollege.co.uk/dld-college-london/information/term-dates/). Any leave that is not agreed will be recorded as unauthorised.

Bank appointments students should endeavour to seek appointments outside college hours where possible.

Boarding students with persistent unauthorised absences, late to lessons, may face sanction of having their room key removed until his/her attendance, punctuality improves.

Examples of unauthorised leave include: Late returns and early departures in line with the published term dates, no holidays will be authorised during term time; Cultural and family celebrations during term time; Supplementary study during lesson time, e.g. driving lessons, extra tuition; Absence that is not certified by a UK GMC registered doctor or NMC registered Matron; Out of school work commitments or business meetings; Any other type of appointment not agreed by a HM for the duration of the College day.

### **Punctuality**

Punctuality is recorded alongside attendance. Sanctions will be imposed on those students who are persistently late to college & lessons, in line with the behaviour policy. If a student is late to the same lesson twice in a seven day period or 5 times over a week that can be expected to be issued with a detention. Punctuality is an essential component for effective lessons and any lateness can be seen as disruptive to the learning of other students. All students are expected to be punctual, ensuring that they successfully register with the member of staff in charge of the activity.

### **Sponsored Students**

Students sponsored by DLD College’s visa are responsible for meeting the requirements of their visa including adhering to the college attendance policy. The college is responsible for accurately recording and reporting absence to the Home Office and students failing to meet the attendance requirements may be withdrawn from the college and their visa sponsorship withdrawn.

**Weekday evenings and weekends**

As a matter of importance, and aligned to the college’s duty of care and the BSA National Minimum Standards, boarding students are expected to register at the specified times during weekday evenings and weekends, outlined in the boarding handbook. Failure to adhere to these expectations will result in sanctions, outlined in the college behaviour policy.

Weekend leave starts at 4.00pm on Friday and all boarding students are expected to return by 8.00am on the following Monday, failure to do so will impact on the agreement for future weekend leave.

Evening leave (weekdays Sunday-Thursday with overnight stay) starts at 5.00pm on the day the evening leave has been agreed. All boarders are required to return by 6.00pm on the Sunday evening, failure to do so will impact on the agreement for future evening leave.

**Statement of Intent**

In order to improve levels of attendance and punctuality the college will employ seven key strategies:

* Address non-attendance early by contacting parents.
* Analyse data on punctuality and attendance supplied by the Attendance Officer through the HM, directing tutors to intervene with their tutees where necessary.
* When prolonged absence is recorded contact will be made by the HM and issues relating to attendance will be reported to the Senior Vice Principal.
* Have clear strategies to address levels of attendance below 92%.
* Fulfil reporting duties as required by the Home Office for any sponsored students.
* Celebration of high attendance through contact with the parents and celebration with the college community.
* Impose sanctions for persistent lateness and non – attendance.

This policy is made available to staff, parents, and students on the online dashboard and in induction packs and programmes.

**Rewards and sanctions for attendance**

**Rewards**

Students who maintain a high level of attendance will be credited verbally by Tutors during Tutor registration and meetings and encouraged to maintain the high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Those who maintain a 100% attendance at the end of each term will be credited at house meetings.

**Sanctions**

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| **Cumulative Attendance Levels** |
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| **Attendance level** | **% of overall\*** | **Actions** |
| Level 1 Warning | 92 | Tutor verbal warning. Student spoken to by tutor, explaining issue & importance of attendance, and placed on a weekly report with the tutor. Recorded on e-praise and communicated home |
| People notified | Tutor, HM, Attendance Officer, Compliance Manager, Parents/Agent/Guardian/Student |
| Level 2 Warning | 88 | HM verbal warning. Student spoken to by HM, explaining issue & importance of attendance, and placed on a weekly report with the HM. Recorded on e-praise and communicated home |
| People notified | Tutor, HM, Attendance Officer, Compliance Manager, Parents/Agent/Guardian/Student |
| Once a student is at or below 88% attendance, all sickness-related absences will require medical evidence, to be shared with the Attendance Officer. Boarders may be asked to surrender their room key during the day |
| Level 3 Warning | 80 | SVP verbal warning. Student spoken to by SVP & HM, explaining issue & importance of attendance, and intervention to help improvement, which may include actions such as being placed on a weekly report with the HM, having lessons in supervised study. Recorded on e-praise and communicated home |
| People notified | Senior Vice Principal, Tutor, HM, Attendance Officer, Compliance Manager, Parents/Agent/Guardian/Student |
| If no improvement, Principal and SVP to decide on student's future at College, through meeting with parents |
|  |  | \*Figures to include authorised absences and AEA |

**Those students with high levels of authorised absence are also monitored and may be subjected to expectations such as being required to provide medical proof, where the authorised absences are all due to medical issues.**

**Records of intervention are addressed to the student, but shared with parents/guardian.**

**Where medical reasons are the cause for the absences being below 10%, evidence such as medical notes may be needed, until the Attendance figure returns to the levels mentioned above.**