



**DRIFFIELD
SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM**

Attendance Policy

Version 2.0

Important: This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the school's website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.

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Attendance Policy

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Aims

Driffield School & Sixth Form is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Driffield School & Sixth Form, it is vital that they maintain excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students and we actively promote good attendance and discourage unjustified absence - this ethos prepares students for the disciplines of working life and maximises learning opportunities.

- We will ensure that all students access full-time education which meets their needs and allows them to reach their potential.
- We emphasise that it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to improve attendance and punctuality.
- We strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
- We work with students and their families to ensure every student has good attendance and punctuality.

What you can expect from Driffield School & Sixth Form

- We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where student absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

What Driffield School & Sixth Form Expects from Students

- To attend regularly and on time.
- To be punctual to all lessons.
- To ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the Attendance Officer if they are not able to register
- To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the Attendance Officer.

What Driffield School & Sixth Form Expects from Parents/Carers

- To ensure that their child attends the school, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To ensure their child attends every day the school is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child away from the school for any other reason than illness or authorised explanation
- To avoid arranging term time holidays
- To immediately inform the School if their child is unable to attend (by 8.30 am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
- If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers should contact the school on each day of absence.

Elements of the Policy

Local Governing Body

The Governing Body is required by law to ensure that the registers are kept accurately. They are also required to publish annually a report to parents which includes the school's attendance figures.

The School will improve attendance by:

- ensuring all registers are completed accurately
- fostering good relationship with parents and carers
- fostering good relationships with the Education Welfare Service and relevant external agencies.
- only removing students from the school roll when s/he has legally left
- encouraging students to attend through the provision of work which is appropriate to their needs
- identifying patterns of non-attendance and those students who have an irregular pattern of attendance for intervention
- liaising with parents/carers to support improved individual attendance targets – any student with an attendance under 95 % will be monitored
- providing a clear statement of attendance on the student's reports
- providing clear guidance to parents/carers regarding holidays in term time
- holding regular multi –agency meetings to discuss students causing concern
- ensuring that parents/carers know the necessity of providing suitable and detailed communication, e.g. a note, email or phone call, to explain absence either by letter or in the Student Planner
- informing the Governing Body of the level of attendance as part of each KPI Report.
- providing information for the prosecution of parents whose children do not attend school and who do not have a substantive reason
- monitoring through Data analysis, students who are looked after children, Pupil Premium and other vulnerable groups including SEND
- monitoring Persistent Absence (PA) figures

Registration Procedures

The Tutor – must complete the morning register accurately and save within the first 10 minutes (remembering that the register is a legal document). If students arrive late to registration then the tutor must re-open the register and mark with an “L” and enter how many minutes late and save again. They must follow-up absences with the student, by reminding the student that a note is required explaining the absence. Absence notes should be sent direct to the Attendance Officer.

When marking a register any discrepancies in attendance need reporting to the Attendance Officer immediately.

Subject Staff – must complete the class register for each and every period including double lessons within the first 10 minutes, please remember period 4 is the equivalent of afternoon registration. Students arriving late without a valid reason should be marked with an ‘L’ and the many minutes late recorded. Lesson registration is a vital element in tracking post-registration truancy and records will be used by the Attendance Officer in communications with parents and as evidence in legal proceedings.

Educational Visits and Sports Fixtures – Paper registers must be taken prior to departure and a copy sent to Attendance Officer. Students will be given their marks for lessons in that session.

College Courses/SMASH – Paper registers should be taken by link member of staff and returned to the Attendance Officer.

Signing Out – Any KS3/4 student who leaves the school premises during the day should go to the ACE Reception where s/he will be given an ‘Authorised Absence Pass’ which gives permission for the student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside the school by the police or Education Welfare Service.

Heads of Year and the Post 16 Pastoral Tutor – will check attendance on a weekly basis ensuring that:

- a) absence e-mails or notes are being provided and phone calls are logged (in conjunction with Tutors and Attendance Officers)
- b) codes and explanations for absence are being inputted by the attendance officer
- c) any patterns of absence are identified and investigated

- d) poor attending students with problems in school likely to affect their attendance are identified for intervention
- e) reasons for non-attendance are investigated with students, parents or carers and where there are concerns the appropriate action taken – mentoring will begin initially by form tutor and further ‘investigation’ will be done by the House Team and then Attendance Officer
- f) if a student is likely to be absent for a known period of time the Head of Year will arrange for work to be sent home
- g) if a student’s absence is supported by a hospital consultant or a specialist medical team a referral to Home Tuition Service will be completed
- h) if a student is returning after a long absence from school, the possibility of a phased return should be considered.

Attendance admin (through the central admin team) have responsibility for:

- a) ensuring registers are being completed and informing SLT link (where there are persistent concerns)
- b) clearing and entering absence notes, (ensuring correct codes are used) absence emails and phone calls re absence
- c) updating and maintaining students’ personal data/contact details
- d) making necessary amendments to SIMS data
- e) actioning first day messaging
- f) reporting any hardware difficulties to ICT Systems Managers

Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- a) monitoring attendance levels of all students
- b) meeting on a regular basis with Head of Year and Senior Leadership Link to discuss students with under 95% attendance, including reporting on persistent absence patterns and Pupil Premium attendance
- c) sharing information with wider school staff as appropriate
- d) liaising with parents or carers to identify any problems which may be affecting attendance and offer support if appropriate to parents or carers and students
- e) supporting students with difficulties in school
- f) making home visits if appropriate to meet with parents or carers
- g) informing parents or carers of legal responsibility for regular attendance and possible sanctions – via standardised letters where attendance has become a concern, penalty fines and prosecution
- h) following up with the EWO’s line manager where a decision is made to take action against parents/carers for the non-attendance of a student
- i) monitoring attendance and implement Fast Track Procedure if appropriate
- j) adopting a multi-agency working practice to ensure support for parents/carers/students
- k) attending child protection conferences and core group meetings under the direction of Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- l) taking part in truancy sweeps under direction of the police or SLT
- m) providing attendance data to the pastoral team (daily and weekly)
- n) providing punctuality data for the pastoral team (daily and weekly)
- o) providing 100% attendance certificates (termly)

School Data Team are responsible for:

- a) providing data for governing Body (termly KPI)
- b) providing data for the LA and DFE returns
- c) providing data to Senior Leadership Team (daily and weekly)

The LA Education Welfare Service will use a wide range of strategies to monitor and improve attendance of all students, for example:

1. Parenting Contracts
2. Penalties

3. Fast Track Procedures
4. Prosecution
5. Education Supervision Orders

Parents and/or carers have a legal responsibility

“All parents and/or carers who have children of compulsory school age, are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive an efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs which they have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

(Section 7 Education Act 1996)

This responsibility includes:

- a) ensuring that their children attend punctually, regularly and stay in school
- b) ensuring a good attitude to learning and support the Home-school Agreement
- c) working in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of the child
- d) in exceptional circumstances as stated below, requesting leave of absence for holidays during term time via a Holiday Form, well in advance of the requested dates

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents or carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

Parents or carers should contact the School (by telephone or email) on every morning of absence (preferably before 8.30 am), giving a reason and an expected date of return. Wherever possible, students should attempt to arrange non-school activities outside of their course timetable.

The following is a list of reasons for absence which would be authorised:

- A medical appointment
- A family bereavement and/ or attendance at a funeral
- A religious observance
- A visit to a University / College, either to attend an open day or for an interview
- A careers interview
- An appointment with a Youth & Family Support Service personal advisor/CAMHS/MIND counsellor
- A work experience placement (although preferably arranged for during weekends or holidays)
- Moving house (1 day only)
- A job interview (Sixth Form only)
- An approved sporting activity recognised by the National Body for that sport
- Driving test (Sixth Form only) or Tractor Driving Test

For each of the above, evidence will be required e.g. an appointment card or letter.

Term Time Holidays (School Unauthorised Absence)

New legislation came into effect on 1 September 2013 which means there is no longer a provision in law for the Headteachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday other than in a very limited set of exceptional circumstances outlined here:

- 1) Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with the school holidays
- 2) Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
- 3) The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family
- 4) To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Head of School must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- 1) The first term of any academic year (applies to all students)
- 2) Year 9 options time (for students in Year 9)
- 3) At any time during Years 10 and 11 (for all students in these year groups)
- 4) At any further times as specified by the school
- 5) Students whose attendance is classified as persistent absence

Persistent Absence

A student will be defined as a persistent absentee (PA) when they have been absent from school for 10% or more. The Department of Education reduced this threshold from September 2015 from 15% previously. Persistent Absence is a serious problem for students, leaving students at a considerable disadvantage. Students who fall below 92% threshold will be monitored and supported to improve their attendance. Students whose attendance falls below 90% PA threshold will be supported by Education Welfare Officer and their attendance will be reviewed by their Head of House and Senior link. Where appropriate, Attendance Action Plans will be drawn up by the Education Welfare Officer in consultation with parents or carers and relevant external agencies, such as CAMHS.

Penalty Notices

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent.

Penalty Notices may be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post directly to the home of a parent after a warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This may include students caught on truancy sweeps, excessive or unauthorised family holidays and persistent late arrival after the close of registration.

If a parent's or carer's request is declined and they still take their child out of school each parent within the household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days it will increase to £120. If after 42 days it remains unpaid the parent will be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why their child has unauthorised school absences and they may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Parental Guidance on new legislation

We advise that parents or carers do not plan for their child to be absent without contacting the school first to obtain prior approval. Head teachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance. A penalty notice may be issued for any unauthorised absence due to holidays.

If a parent believes at any stage that their child's absence from school may leave them liable for prosecution or a penalty notice, it is important for the parent/carer to take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if parents/carers have any questions about this, or need any help to achieve an improvement, they are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any issues.

Sixth Form Students

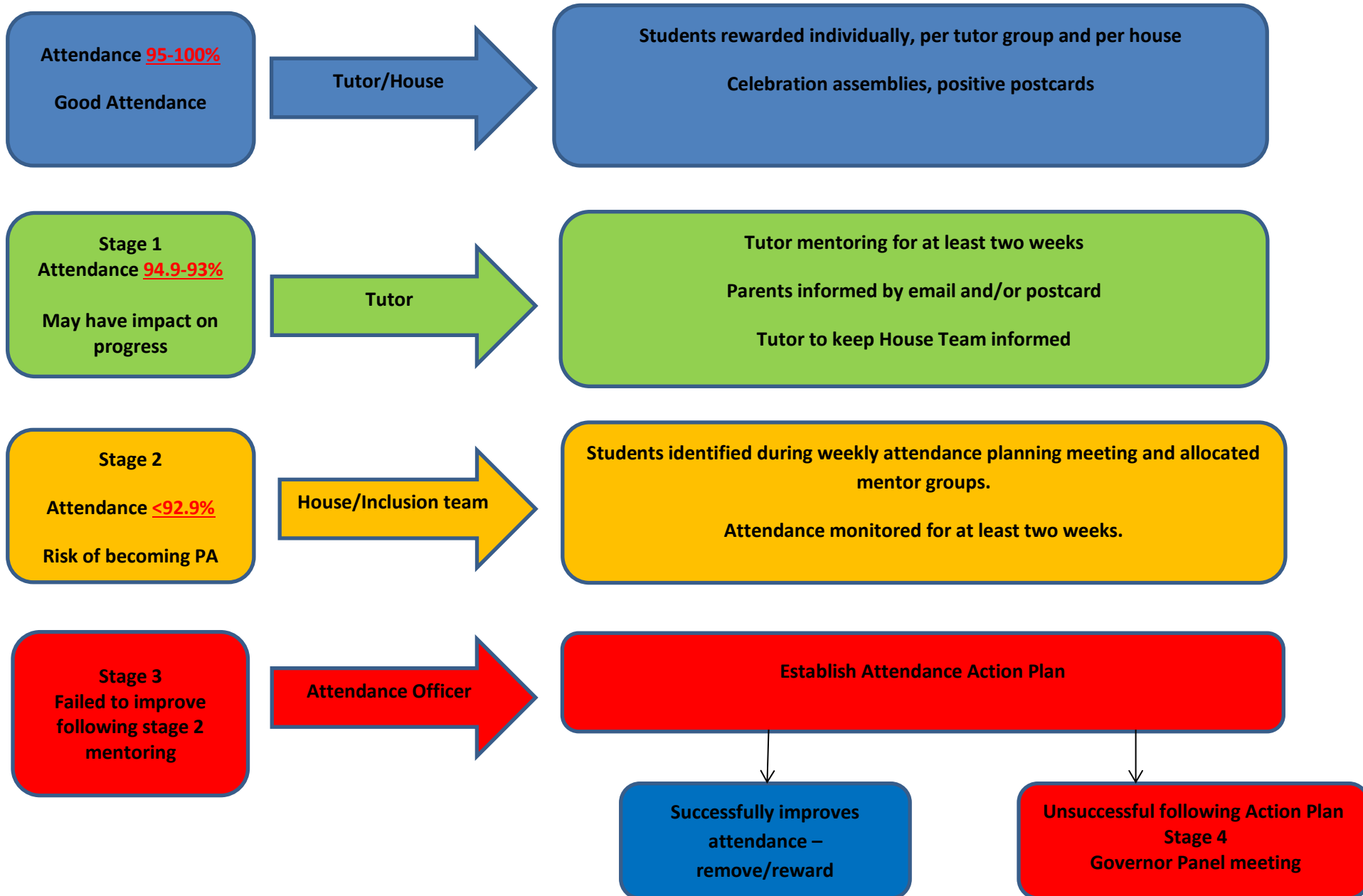
Sixth Form Student and parents are expected to abide by Post- 16 Learning Agreement with regards to all attendance issues (See appendix 2).

School Leaver Year 11 & 13

Year 11 & 13 Leavers official school leaving date will be the date of their last examination. Year 11 students are expected to register and attend school during the examination period to access subject specialist support. Revision support is provided within school for every student during the examinations. Year 13 Students are not expected to register during exam period.

The Secretary of State may by order determine the day in any calendar year which is to be the school leaving date for that year.

Appendix 1 Driffield School and Sixth Form Attendance Flow Chart 2020-21



Appendix 2

Sixth Form Absence Procedure

Reporting Absence – NOTIFY AND AUTHORISE

In EVERY case of absence students must **NOTIFY** us that they will be absent for the day or part of the day and then on their return **AUTHORISE** their absence as follows:

In case of illness – NOTIFY

Students or their parents must inform the school if they are unable to attend lessons for part or all of the day you are absent. Please ring on 01377 232365 (direct dial – please write this number down somewhere by your phone) or call the mobile on 07855 224487. Calls will be made to the school from 8.45am to 10.30am or if necessary a message left on voice mail at an earlier time. If they are also absent the following day, there must be a call for each day of absence.

On returning to school following absence – AUTHORISE

On return to school, students must go to Miss Bateman on the morning of return. They can “self-certify” their absence in certain conditions (see below) OR authorise their absence to include a letter from a parent or responsible adult.

Students are allowed a maximum of 3 episodes of self-certified absence per term (each episode for self-certification must be no longer than 3 days), or 10 days of self-certified absence per school year after which they must bring supporting evidence such as a letter from parents or a doctor’s note.

If they know that they are going to be absent

Notify Miss Bateman before the absence takes place. For this absence to be authorised, evidence of the absence must be produced **ONLY BEFORE THE EVENT** (see Appendix 1: Examples of Authorised and Unauthorised absence with examples of the type of evidence required to support an authorised absence).

Failure to adhere to the attendance policy will result in the following consequences:

1. Initial letter to parents and form tutor involvement expressing concern.
2. Sixth Form Leader’s intervention including strict monitoring process with formal warning sent home.

Parents invited into the Sixth Form with consideration of your place in the sixth form

Punctuality and attendance are essential. If students are falling short in these areas then please inform Miss Bateman so that these students can enter the attendance process.

Where students are late to the lesson please ensure that you enter a late mark on the register so that things can be followed up.

After 3 late marks students will need to attend an “Academic Catch Up” session one evening from 3.30-4.30 in order to catch up on work missed through lateness.

Key

KS3 – Key stage 3 (years 7-9)

KS4 – Key stage 4 (years 10-11)

KS5 – Key stage 5 (years 12-13)

NC - National Curriculum

SLT - Senior Leadership Team

SEN - Special Educational Needs

Alps - Key Stage 5 data and target setting package

AS - Advanced Subsidiary (qualification)

HOH - Head of House

AFL -Assessment for Learning

DFE – Department for Education

JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications

LA – Local authority

ERYC – East Riding of Yorkshire Council