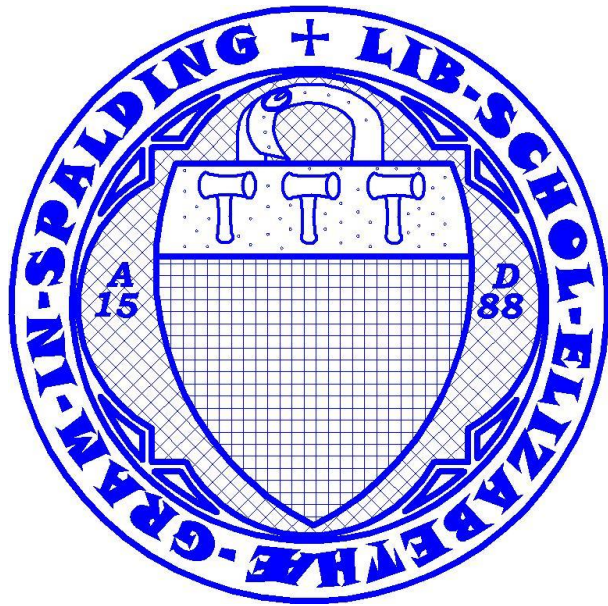


Spalding Grammar School



Sixth Form Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2023 -24

Overview

The Sixth Form at Spalding Grammar School ensures that all students access full-time education which meets their individual needs and maximises their academic achievements.

All A level courses are challenging and intense and students cannot afford to miss valuable teaching and study times. Excellent levels of attendance and punctuality are both characteristics of students who achieve above or in-line with their potential. Research shows that attendance falling below 95% (equivalent to about 10 days missed across an academic year) results in an average reduction of one grade at A-Level per subject and this increases to two grades when attendance falls below 90% (i.e. equivalent to 20 days missed across an academic year).

Also, it is important that students do not miss out on personal and social opportunities of enrichment offered in form time, including assemblies. Students with irregular attendance not only get behind with their studies but also miss out on important career advice, are less likely to feel part of the school and find it difficult to maintain friendships within school.

We strive for 100% attendance for all students. Our annual target is currently set at an aspirational level of 96% with the aim to reduce to zero the number of students whose attendance at school drops below 90% and the number of unauthorised absences.

This policy has been drawn up to clarify expectations of students who chose to join our Sixth Form to prepare for the world of further education and employment and identify responsibilities of staff, students and Parent/Carers.

Expectations

- It is an expectation that all Sixth Form students maintain a cumulative rate of attendance at 96% or above. The minimum level of attendance is 90% however in order to make adequate progress we expect the majority of students to achieve 96% or above attendance.
- Students are expected to attend fully during the school day from 8.50am to 3.30pm.
- Students are expected to attend form period, including assemblies, and all timetabled lessons including Senior Games and each of their study periods in the Study Centre, which is supervised by Mrs Oglesby, our Sixth Form Academic Support.
- Students are expected to be punctual to all lessons, form periods, private study periods and assemblies.
- In case of unavoidable absences, students are expected to try and catch up on the work they have missed by obtaining lesson's notes from peers in the first place.

Responsibilities

- Subject teachers are required to complete an electronic register for each lesson and have a vital role by coding absences appropriately, and alerting Tutors to any unexplained absences.
- The school operates computerised registration which enables lesson registers to be stored and analysed and sophisticated reports at individual, student, group, year or whole school level to be quickly generated. The Sixth Form team and the Attendance Officer are then able to use this information to follow up on lateness and unexplained absence.
- Parents/Carers have a joint responsibility to ensure that their sons/daughters attend the school as required and on time. They should show their support for this policy by not requesting authorised absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible all other authorised absence, for example, dental appointments during the school day. They should follow the Sixth Form procedures for dealing with attendance as specified below.

- Students themselves must ultimately accept a high degree of responsibility for their punctuality and attendance. Students must arrive punctually to all sessions where their attendance is required in order to be registered where the only person who can mark a student present is the Tutor or Subject teacher.

Procedures

Student Absence:

- In the case of an unforeseen absence, Parent/Carer should inform the school by phone on the first day of absence ill, ideally before 8.50am. This must be done for every day of an absence.
- Where the absence is due to illness, a GP's note will be required after 5 days.
- If an absence is planned for a known reason in advance (see below) then the student or Parent/Carer should inform the Attendance Officer or the Head of Sixth Form beforehand, ideally in writing.
- Where a Sixth Form student is unwell during the school day, they are not to simply sign out and leave site, rather they must seek permission from a member of the Sixth Form team (i.e. Head of Sixth Form, the Deputy Head of Sixth Form or the Form Tutor) before missing lessons or leaving school. If he or she is unavailable then a student should report to the School Reception where the staff there will grant permission, and if necessary, contact Parents/Carers. Students must not ring their Parents/Carers directly and ask to be collected. In cases of medical emergency, students should go directly to the School Reception.
- At lunchtime, students are allowed to leave school, but they must swipe in and out using the swipe card system when they come in or go out of school. The gates open at 1.10pm and lock at 1.45pm.

Staff Absence:

- When a member of staff is absent the work set for that lesson is left in the classroom or given directly to the students in advance. Alternatively, work may be emailed to students.
- In any of the above cases students must register at the lesson time at the School Office before using the lesson to complete the work in the classroom or an agreed appropriate area such as the Sixth Form Study Centre.
- The signing in sheets will be used to update the lesson attendance on Go4Schools.

Fire Regulation:

The accuracy of registers is essential for emergency evacuation purposes. Students must sign out if they leave the premises at any time during the school day. At lunchtime, however, swiping the lanyard will be enough both when leaving school and when returning.

Leave of absence (Holidays) and other absences.

- Students should not take any leave of absence (holidays) during term time, and these will not be authorised. That said, leave of absence under **exceptional circumstances** may be granted for up to 10 school days.
- To seek leave, Parents/Carers should complete a Leave of Absence (LOA) application form (available through the 'Sixth Form' section of the school website) explaining the special circumstances for which they are requesting leave and send it to the Head of Sixth Form not less than 15 school days **BEFORE** the proposed period of absence. **LOA requests should be made at the planning stage, before entering into any financial commitment.**
- If the absence clashes with external examinations and/ or controlled assessment units (CAUs), the school will not authorise the absence so Parents/Carers must check these commitments beforehand. Equally, the school is unlikely to authorise the absence

where a student is seriously behind in terms of his/ her subjects' commitments.

- Students may attend a maximum of three Open Days at universities during term time but are encouraged to visit at weekends or during school holidays wherever possible. The Form Tutor team should be informed in advance of these absences.
- Students may be absent for unavoidable appointments such as specialist medical appointments, job interviews (not part-time jobs) and driving tests and should inform their Form Tutor in advance.
- Students should not make routine doctors, dental or other appointments during the school day.
- Students may be absent for driving lessons but are required to book these to take place during their Free Periods.
- Under no circumstances should students undertake paid part-time work during the school day and are advised to limit part time work to 8 hours per week if it is not to impact on study.
- Students may undertake work experience or work placements or complete voluntary activity in support of university or work applications within the school day during study periods with the agreement of the Head of Sixth Form.

Protocols

- If the school has not been notified of the absence of a student, once the morning register has closed, the Attendance Officer will make a first day of absence telephone call to Parents/Carers.
- Absence for holidays will be marked as unauthorised in all circumstances.
- Absence for appropriate agreed reasons as outlined above will be coded accordingly and taken into account in calculating overall attendance.

Monitoring:

The monitoring of student attendance patterns and of attendance procedures includes the following actions.

- Attendance figures are regularly downloaded from the school electronic registry system for scrutiny and analysis of patterns and trends.
- Setting of an annual attendance target (and monitoring of figures for persistent absence) in discussion with the Head of Sixth Form.
- Attendance and punctuality are monitored in the first instance by the Deputy Head of Sixth Form and the Attendance Officer who will liaise with the Head of Sixth Form in following up the procedures outlined below.

Intervention Plan:

Failure to meet the 96% attendance mark and/or persistent tardiness will result in the need for intervention from the Sixth Form team. This intervention will be in stages and students will be given opportunities to discuss any issues that may be affecting their attendance and rectify these issues as soon as possible. Ultimately, if attendance is continually a cause for concern despite intervention, then the student may be required to forfeit their place in the Sixth Form, at least for the time being.

Punctuality

- Poor punctuality results in an immediate break time detention with the School Pastoral team and this will be recorded on Go4schools.
- If there is no immediate improvement (within one week), the student will have meeting with the Deputy Head of Sixth Form, be issued an after-school detention (ASD) and a **formal letter will be sent home**.
- If the punctuality problem is not resolved, a meeting with the Deputy Head of Sixth Form and a Parent/Carer will take place. A PSP will be put in place with targets.

Attendance

Form Tutors will question students about absences on a daily basis.

- If attendance falls below 96% without known and agreed reason the students will have a **Stage 1 Attendance Meeting** with their Form Tutor. A concern will be logged on Go4Schools.
- If attendance falls below 90%, this would be a Significant Cause for Concern as the student is making little progress in improving attendance since the Stage 1 Attendance Meeting. The student will have a **Stage 2 Attendance Meeting** with the Deputy Head of Sixth Form and a formal letter will be sent home. The student will be on Attendance Report for a minimum of 10 working days.
- If attendance falls below 85%, this would be a Serious Cause for Concern as the student has not made significant progress with regards to improving attendance as evidenced by the attendance report. **The Stage 3 Attendance Meeting** will involve the student, his/her Parent/Carer, the Attendance Officer and the Deputy Head of Sixth Form. There will be a discussion with regards to why the attendance has not improved since the report was issued. A Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) will be put in place with targets. Student will be on Attendance Report for a minimum of 20 working days on a warning to improve.
- If the attendance problem is not resolved and poor attendance continues to prevent a student from accessing our learning provision, a final **Stage 4 Attendance Meeting** with the Head of Sixth Form, the Attendance Officer and a Parent/Carer will be arranged. This could potentially result in the student being withdrawn from study until they are able to attend school and access our learning provision. The typical scenario would be to restart the academic year the following September.
- If a student has not attended school for over 4 weeks (i.e. 20 working days), then DfE funding regulations stipulate that we must withdraw the student from their programme of study, irrespective of the reason for absence.