



Fullbrook Attendance Policy

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Culture and Safeguarding Committee
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Fullbrook Attendance Policy 2019 – 2020

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Introduction

Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are the foundations for academic achievement and personal development. They establish a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available at school and underpin the basis for future employment. Attendance and punctuality are strongly linked to students' well-being and safety, and to their achievement. Regular attendance demonstrates a commitment to learning and the school community.

At Fullbrook we are committed to the education and welfare of our students. To this end, please ensure that your child/children supports our policy and procedures relating to attendance. We will work with parents and carers to ensure that students achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon with the co-operation of parent/carers and the additional support, where necessary, of the Local Authority Inclusion Service.

Regular school attendance is central to students achieving their full potential. Their attendance and punctuality record throughout secondary school will be included in references required by colleges and prospective employers.

In this policy statement we set out how Fullbrook will:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Take action to address patterns of absence.

Student responsibilities

We expect that all students will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school on time
- Sign in at their Head of Learning office if they miss Tutor registration for any reason
- Attend school in full uniform and equipped for the day
- Discuss promptly with their Tutor/Head of Learning/Sixth Form Director any issues that deter them from attending school
- Sign out at Reception before leaving the school site to attend an appointment and sign back in at their Head of Learning office when they return.

Parent/carer responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 Part 1 Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Parents and carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered students of compulsory school age attend school regularly and punctually and that they receive an education suitable for their aptitude and ability.

We expect that all parents and carers will:

- Undertake their legal responsibility to ensure that students of compulsory school age attend school every day
- Ensure that the student in their care arrives at school on time and fully prepared for the school day
- Telephone the school and leave a message on the absence line for the Attendance Officer by 9 am on each day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school
- Send a note of explanation on the first day that a student returns to school, or make a note for their tutor in the student record book
- Inform the Head of Learning promptly when any issue arises that may keep a student away from school
- Support the efforts made and measures taken by the school and the Local Authority Inclusion Service to help students back into school if attendance becomes a problem
- Discuss with the Tutor/Head of Learning/Director of Sixth Form any post-16 attendance issues.

Staff responsibilities

We expect that all staff at Fullbrook will:

- Encourage good attendance and promote the benefits to all students
- Provide a welcoming and safe learning environment

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all students, in Tutor time and lessons, by taking the register on PARS/SIMS during each Tutor session and at the start of each lesson.

We expect that, as Tutors, all staff will:

- Aim to be in registration at all times; if unable to attend, it is their responsibility to inform the cover manager or Assistant Director of Sixth Form as appropriate
- Monitor the attendance of students in Tutor time and lessons
- Ensure that a note is received from parent/carers on the first day that a student returns to school after any period of absence
- Inform the Head of Learning when a student is failing to attend Tutor time with no reason for absence
- Provide pastoral support to address attendance issues and alert the Head of Learning if notes from parent/carers are not forthcoming when students return to school after a period of absence
- Follow-up all cases of late arrival to school in accordance with the school half-termly plan for improving punctuality
- Investigate reasons for absence where there has been no response to truancy call.

We expect that, as classroom teachers, all staff will:

- Send a responsible student to Reception to alert senior staff if a student who has registered in school has not arrived at their lesson
- Make contact with parent/carers if they are concerned about a student's absence from school because of the amount of curriculum being missed. The class teacher will always check with the Head of Learning first
- Check that a student has signed in at the Head of Learning Office or Sixth Form Office, if they arrive late to the lesson and say that they have just arrived in school.

Each Head of Learning meets with Fullbrook's Education Welfare Officer every cycle to review attendance and agree actions to be taken to support those with less than 100% attendance.

Attendance Years 7-11

Registration and Punctuality

The school day starts at 8.40am with morning registration. Afternoon registration is taken at 3pm at the end of period 5.

If a student arrives late to school, they must:

- (before 9.00am) Go directly to their Tutor room where they will be registered by their Tutor with a late mark.
- (after 9.00am) Go directly to their Head of Learning Office where they will show the Student Support Officer a note from their parent/carers and they will be registered with a late mark.

Late arrival of school buses: Students must sign in at their Head of Learning Office where they will be marked present, and then go immediately to their lesson.

Any student who arrives after registers have been closed (at 9.30am) will be marked U which counts as an absence. If there is an acceptable explanation and the written consent of a parent/carers is received, this may be adjusted.

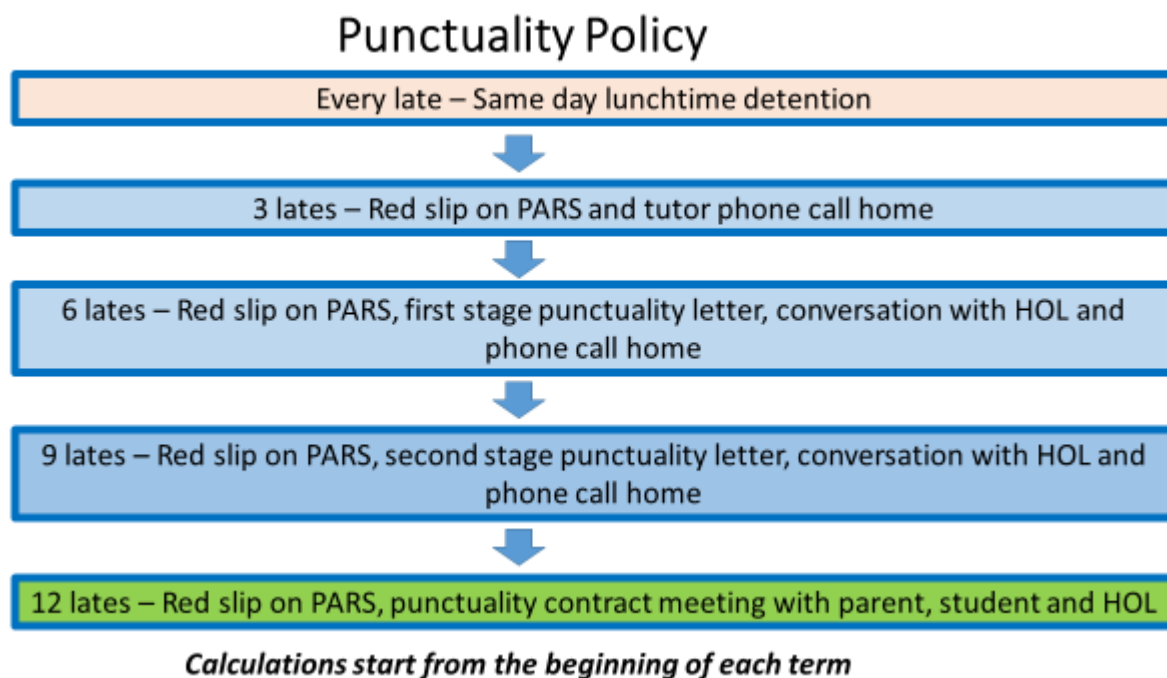
Students should expect their Tutor to follow up their late arrival to school with them and to discuss appropriate action where necessary. Late marks and sanctions are tracked and recorded by Heads of Learning and Student Support Officers.

Fullbrook's punctuality policy is designed to support students in improving their punctuality as follows:

- Students who arrive after 8.40am will be required to sit a 15 minute same day lunchtime detention
- If a student is late 3 times in one term they will be required to have a conversation with their Tutor who will make a phone call to their parent/carers
- If a student is late 6 times in one term, a letter will be sent to parent/carers and the Head of Learning will inform parent/carers following a conversation with the student
- If the student is late 9 times in a term, a further conversation will take place with the student and a second letter will be sent. Again parent/carers will be informed
- If the situation escalates and a student is late to school on 12 occasions in one term, the Head of Learning will hold a punctuality contract meeting with the student and her/his parent/carers
- Failure to improve and 15 late marks in a term will result in referral to the Fullbrook Education Welfare Officer who will invite parent/carers and the Head of Learning to a school attendance support meeting.

Students who persistently arrive after the register has closed could be liable to prosecution by the Local Authority.

A summary of our punctuality sanctions for each term is shown below.



Absence

Parent/carers are requested to phone and leave a message on the school absence line (Option 1) by 9am for each day of absence.

Parent/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside school hours whenever possible.

For appointments during the school day students must sign out at Reception on leaving school and sign back in at Reception on their return. We expect most appointments to take a maximum of two hours.

If a student becomes unwell during the day, they must go to Reception to be assessed. If the first aid staff member on duty decides they are not well enough to stay in school the parent will be contacted and arrangements made for their collection. Students must not contact their parents directly and will not be released from the school site unless they have reported to the first aid team.

Students are not allowed to leave the school site without school permission.

Parent/carers are requested to send in a note or write a note in their child's record book with the reason for any planned absence, the time they need to leave and if/when they are expected to get back to school.

Absence will only be authorised in cases of illness and medical appointments, or other situations which have been discussed with and approved by the school.

Absences of five days or more due to illness or medical conditions require verification from a GP or other relevant body before the absence can be authorised. Evidence includes an appointment slip, medication packet with date and name of student, copy of prescription or equivalent.

If a student's parent/carer requires a student to miss school for any period of time, they will:

- For absences of half a school day, send an email to info@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk or write and sign a note to the Tutor in the student's record book
- For absences of one school day or more, obtain a Leave Request Form from Reception or download a copy from the parent information area on the home page of the school website and request leave for specific dates recorded on the form.

Holidays and Exceptional Leave of Absence

It is school policy not to authorise any absence for holiday taken in term time. A maximum of 3 days may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

School term dates, external exam dates and inset days are published on the school website a year in advance.

Parent/carers should book their family holidays during school holidays; no parents/carers can expect leave of absence for their child/children to be authorised as a right.

If the school receives a request for leave of absence from parents/carers, the member of staff responsible will consider the application on behalf of the Principal and Governors. Consideration will take into account the following factors:

- The attendance record for the student
- Whether the student is taking public examinations that academic year (leave of absence will not be granted if a student is in year 11 or year 13)
- The educational benefits of the experience
- Any shared access or legal family agreements made between parent/carers when one is residing abroad.

The school will always be sensitive to unforeseen events and decisions will be made at the Principal's discretion.

Any unauthorised absence will be recorded as such on your child's attendance record. If a holiday is taken without prior authorisation by the school it will be recorded and the Local Authority will be notified. Parent/carers may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If a student fails to attend a public examination for which they have been entered by the school without good reason, parent/carers will be liable to reimburse the full cost of each exam entry to the school.

When a student is granted leave of absence from school, he/she will:

- Inform all of his/her teachers the dates of the absence
- Be responsible for finding out what needs to be done while away from school
- Ensure that any missed work is caught up with on return to school.

Failure of students to return from leave on the agreed date may result in them losing their school place and having to re-apply for admission to the school. Their place cannot be guaranteed.

Unexplained Absence

On each occasion a student is absent from school without explanation, an automated message will be sent to all parent/carer contacts.

Parent/carer responses will be recorded in the attendance system.

If no response is received, the absence will be followed up by the class Tutor.

If the class Tutor is unable to obtain a reasonable explanation for the absence within the next fortnight, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Encouraging and Rewarding Good Attendance

Good attendance is central to enabling each student to achieve their potential. Fullbrook works hard to provide a caring and welcoming environment and to encourage good attendance.

To this end the school will:

- Respond promptly to a student or parent/carer concern about school that may be impacting on his/her attendance
- Display attendance data and success stories of past students with good attendance

- Display posters on the Year Group notice boards each half term showing attendance for each Year and whether it has gone up or down
- Inform parents/carers of students' cumulative attendance percentage via a sticker in their record book approximately every 4 weeks
- Promote the benefits of good attendance in assemblies and reward individual and Tutor group attendance in celebration assemblies (See Behaviour for Learning Policy)
- Regularly monitor and assess the attendance data for individuals and groups and award intermittent prizes and awards
- Maintain intervention strategies to provide additional support for students with poor or irregular attendance in years 7-11
- Meet with interested parties to devise a plan of action when a problem with attendance arises.

Attendance Tracking and Support

The school reviews attendance on a daily basis and follows up on poor or irregular attendance or punctuality.

All Heads of Learning meet with the Fullbrook Education Welfare Officer every cycle to discuss attendance concerns and share and record information. All students with less than 100% attendance are reviewed. Where there is no valid reason for low attendance the following process and sanctions are put into place:

- After two absences a general information letter is sent to parent/carers explaining the Local Authority thresholds for attendance and the school attendance process
- If a student has been absent on three occasions, another letter is sent to parent/carers to advise them that the student's attendance has fallen
- If there is no improvement, a third letter will be sent to parent/carers stating that future absences will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is received.

If there is still no improvement the student will be referred to the Fullbrook Education Welfare Officer when it is felt by the school that the student and family would benefit from additional help to improve attendance. Parent/carers will be invited into school for an attendance support meeting in which an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified. Parent/carers may be required to sign a School Attendance Agreement which will include the agreed action plan.

The Education Welfare Officer will then work intensively with the student and parent/carers to improve their attendance.

If the student fails to sustain regular full-time attendance or the parent/carers fail to engage with the school, Fullbrook's Principal will refer parents/carers to the Local Authority. The Local Authority may issue a penalty notice or issue a summons to parents/carers to appear before the Magistrates Court for failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This could result in parents/carers being fined up to £2,500 if convicted and/or 3 months in prison.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances:

- Pupils identified by police and inclusion officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
- Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more). Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

In such cases the Headteacher/Governing Body have to judge whether there are exceptional circumstances and may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices when the absence is not authorised. Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

- The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance. This will be considered when a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 6 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the education welfare officer.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice. (Alternative education provision will be made available from the sixth day of any exclusion.)

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice

The amount payable for a Penalty Notice issued in any of the above circumstances is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued.

Please be aware that each parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents and one child, each parent will receive one Penalty Notice.

If there are two parents, and two children incur unauthorised absences, each parent will receive two Penalty Notices, which in this case would amount to £120 each if paid within 28 days.

Alternative provision and students off site

Some students attend another site for all or part of the week. For these students we will:

- Contact the education providers every day to check attendance and for safeguarding purposes
- Access on-line learning systems regularly to monitor attendance and engagement where relevant
- Make visits every half term to monitor attendance, progress and safeguarding
- Track attendance on the school systems, review each cycle and liaise with parent/carers and education providers to take corrective action when necessary.

Moving to another school

If parents/carers decide to send their child to a different school for any reason, they must inform the school in writing, addressed to the Principal. If requested, advice can be provided to the parent/carer about what should be included in this notification. The minimum information required is:

- Name and address of the new school
- Date of entry to the new school (students must attend Fullbrook up to this date)
- Their new home address if they are moving house.

In the event that the school does not receive information about the move or confirmation from the new school, Fullbrook School will make a referral to the Surrey County Council Inclusion Service and submit a children missing education form.

Attendance Fullbrook 6

Registration and Punctuality

Fullbrook 6 students are expected to attend every lesson and Tutor time as instructed by Tutors, unless their absence has been approved by the sixth form team.

Students must sign in using the fingerprint system when they arrive in school and sign out again with the fingerprint system before they leave the school site.

Attendance at assembly and Tutor periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays is compulsory.

Students should expect their Tutor and/or the Assistant Director Sixth Form to follow up any attendance issues by telephone or email. Students will be asked to provide up to date mobile telephone numbers.

All sixth form subject teachers will be expected to complete a subject register on SIMS/PARS each lesson. This will provide a tracking system for Tutors to map morning and afternoon registration.

Students are expected to be punctual to lessons and Tutor registration. Persistent lateness will be followed up in accordance with the Fullbrook 6 Student Agreement.

Absence

If a student is unwell a parent/carer must telephone the absence line (Option 1) by 9am and leave a message.

Should a student be absent for more than three days the parent/carer should contact the Assistant Director Sixth Form who will liaise with subject staff to send work home.

Absence will only be authorised in cases of illness and medical appointments, or other situations which have been discussed with and approved by the school.

In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verification from a GP or other relevant body may be requested before the absence is authorised.

Students should not make appointments with the dentist, doctor, opticians etc. nor arrange driving lessons, part-time paid or voluntary work or interviews not related to post F6 activities during lesson time.

If a student needs to miss college for any period of time, they will:

- For absences of half a school day, ask their parent/carer to write and sign a note to their Tutor
- For absences of one school day or more, obtain a Leave Request Form from Reception or download a copy from the parent information area on the home page of the school website and request leave for specific dates recorded on the form.

Students' attendance percentage may be used as a deciding factor for entry onto A level courses.

If a student's attendance falls below 92% they may be asked to pay for private entry to exams as set out in the F6 Student Sixth Form Contract.

Holidays and Exceptional Leave of Absence

It is school policy not to authorise any absence for holiday taken in term time. A maximum of 3 days may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

School term dates, external exam dates and inset days are published on the school website a year in advance.

Parent/carers should book their family holidays during school holidays; no parents/carers can expect leave of absence for their child/children to be authorised as a right.

If the school receives a request for leave of absence from parents/carers, including for university open day visits, the application will be considered in consultation with the Director of Sixth Form, taking into account the following factors:

- The attendance record for the student
- Whether the student is taking public examinations that academic year
- The educational benefits of the experience.

The school will always be sensitive to unforeseen events and decisions will be made at the Director of Sixth Form's discretion.

If a holiday is taken without prior authorisation, it will be recorded as such and the Local Authority may be notified.

If a student fails to attend a public examination for which they have been entered by the school without good reason, parent/carers will be liable to reimburse the full cost of each exam entry to the school.

When a student is granted leave of absence from school, he/she will:

- Inform all of his/her teachers of the dates of absence
- Be responsible for finding out what needs to be done while away from school
- Ensure that any missed work is caught up with on return to school.

Unexplained Absence

Attendance is monitored by the Sixth Form Team and concerns will be followed up with the student and parent/carers where necessary.