

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE AND UNAUTHORISED STUDENT ABSENCE

Last reviewed:	October 2024
Next review due:	October 2025
Reviewed by:	Vice Principal-Pastoral Director

“Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and should therefore be seen as everyone’s responsibility in school.”

Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, 2024).

At d’Overbroeck’s, we believe that student attendance is critical to academic success and social integration, and that maintaining good school attendance is everyone’s business. Every student has a right to a full-time education and we set high attendance expectations for all our students. We also have high expectations for punctuality; students are expected to arrive on time and lateness will be recorded.

The admission and attendance register at d’Overbroeck’s is maintained in accordance with the ‘School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024’. Students are expected to attend school every day and may only miss school if they are too ill to attend or have advance permission from the school. Good attendance is promoted throughout the school community, eg, through posters, assemblies, conversations with students, communications with parents and staff training.

The Senior Attendance champion at d’Overbroeck’s is the Vice Principal-Pastoral Director (see contact information in **Appendix 1**), supported on each site by the Deputy Head-Pastoral.

We monitor attendance rates on an ongoing basis and use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the students or student cohorts who need it most. Attendance statistics are updated on an hourly basis and reviewed weekly by the safeguarding teams. For any student where attendance falls below 95% the safeguarding team will further investigate for trends and patterns.

Teachers, Personal Tutors (Years 7-11), Directors of Studies (Sixth Form) and pastoral leads will follow up concerns about attendance, as required by the law. The DfE codes are used to record attendance (see Appendix 2).

In development and implementation of this policy, d’Overbroeck’s understands its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We work in partnership with students, parents and guardians to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Where appropriate, this may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support (*“Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place*

to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils” - Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE, 2024).

Processes and support will be adapted to the individual needs of the particular student (eg, those with long term illnesses, SEND, etc) and regularly reviewed together with students and families. Our policy and practice for attendance and dealing with instances of unauthorised absence of students is set out below. The policy will always be applied fairly and consistently but, in doing so, we will also consider the individual needs of students.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, the school will endeavour where possible to hold two emergency contact details for each student, facilitating the prompt follow-up of absences.

Each part of the school (Senior School, International School, Sixth Form) will regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

1. Absence from Senior School (mainly day students)

Students in the Senior School are registered every morning and every afternoon in accordance with current regulations.

If a student is absent through illness or for any other reason, parents are asked to contact the school office before the start of the school day. Where a student is absent from school without prior notification from parents, the school office will contact parents (or another listed contact) within 30 minutes of when the student was expected in school and until it has been established that the student is safe.

Parents are asked to contact the school on each day of a child’s absence and ensure that any absence is followed up by a written communication explaining the circumstances.

Staff responsible for student registration will follow up reasons for lateness and absence. Persistent poor punctuality/absence will involve the pastoral staff, student and parents. Parents will be informed about attendance on at least a termly basis.

2. Absence from Sixth Form (day and boarding students)

2.1 Absence from Sixth Form lessons

We do not have collective daily registration sessions in the Sixth Form. Attendance registers for every lesson are completed directly in iSAMS.

Teaching staff are expected to complete the attendance register at the start of every lesson throughout the day.

Parents of day students are asked to email Sixth Form Attendance and the Director of Studies by 8.30am to let them know if their child is ill and will be absent.

Where a student is absent from school without prior notification from parents, boarding staff or the host family, a member of the Sixth Form Attendance Team will follow up. The member of the Sixth Form Attendance Team will telephone parents (in the case of day students), Heads of Boarding Houses/host families (in the case of boarders) and/or the student’s own mobile number to establish the whereabouts of any absentees and the reason for the absence. It is preferable that contact is made with an adult; if the reason for absence has been established with the student rather than a parent/member of staff/host family, then email and/or phone

will be used to contact the appropriate adult to confirm the reason the student has given for their absence.

If a student living in a host family contacts the school to say that they are unwell, the member of staff in the Sixth Form Attendance Team will alert the School Nurse, and the student's Director of Studies. The School Nurse will decide whether a video call with the student via Microsoft Teams is needed on that day to complete a medical/welfare check, assess whether further medical or pastoral support is required and, if so, take the lead on arranging this. If the student is unwell for more than one day, the School Nurse will contact the student and/ or Host family. If the Sixth Form Attendance Team is unable to establish the whereabouts of the student and the reason for the absence, then the matter will be referred to the Sixth Form Senior Leadership who will lead on follow up until such time as the student's safety and location has been confirmed.

The Sixth Form Attendance Team will circulate a note of absences, together with the outcome of the follow-up, to Directors of Studies, Sixth Form teaching and Activities staff by email as soon as possible. The Sixth Form Attendance Team will then ascertain the whereabouts of the student in question, following the Missing Person Protocols.

All unauthorised absences from classes are followed up with the students concerned by their Director of Studies, in liaison with the Sixth Form Leadership team within two weeks. Alongside the collaborative support to remove any barriers to attendance, if appropriate a system of sanctions may also be considered for persistent unauthorised absence; these may include timetabled study sessions in the library during free periods, daily reporting-in at 8.30am and 'Friday work club' sessions (which take place in the latter part of the afternoon every Friday, supervised by the Head of Sixth Form).

All absences, authorised and unauthorised, are recorded on iSAMS and updated through the Parent Portal. In addition, parents will be alerted to concerns or patterns of absence by the Director of Studies or member of the Sixth Form Senior Leadership Team.

2.2 Absence from Sixth Form boarding houses

Boarders may be away from their boarding house overnight at the weekend provided written permission has been received from their parents/guardian in advance, together with detailed information on where they will be staying and contact details. The Absence Authorisation Form – available from the House staff – is required at least 24 hours before the planned absence. Before leaving the house, students are asked to sign themselves out.

In the unusual event of a boarder wishing to spend a night away from the boarding house on a weekday, the same procedure applies, but the permission of their Director of Studies is also required.

Students are expected to be in their boarding house after dinner at 7.00pm, Monday through to Thursday, for a study session between 7.00pm and 9.00pm, and a register is taken. Students may leave the house between the end of study session and the 10pm curfew if they wish to do so. From Friday to Sunday, when there is no study session, students may register via MS Teams if given permission in advance. Curfew on Friday and Saturday is 11pm.

If a student fails to return to the house by curfew time, then the Head of House or Boarding Assistant has a protocol to follow, including that they will:

- try to contact the student concerned via their mobile phone;
- try to establish their movements in the course of the evening from their friends;
- contact the Emergency number (held by a senior member of staff) to discuss the best course of action.

The Emergency Contact will then liaise on:

- contacting the student's friends at d'Overbroeck's to see if they know something about the student's movements that evening.
- for local students, contacting the student's parents to see if the student may have gone home without notifying us in advance, or if they are able to give us any relevant information of which we may not be aware.
- contacting the school's Principal, Pastoral Director/Designated Safeguarding Lead (if not already involved).

What is done next will be agreed in discussion and will depend on the circumstances as best ascertained by everyone involved. The police will be contacted if appropriate.

2.3 **Absence from Sixth Form Host Families**

All Host Families have access to the office number for the Head of Non-Residential Boarding which is answered 9.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday, and to an out of hours Emergency mobile which is held by a senior member of staff. Host Families are aware that they have 24 hour support in relation to missing students.

If a student is not back at home when they should be, then the Host Family is asked to call the student's mobile number to establish if they are on their way. If there is no response, then the Host Family is asked to report the absence by ringing one of the emergency numbers immediately. The matter is then dealt with as above.

3. **Absence from d'Overbroeck's International** (mainly boarding students)

An initial registration is held before the students leave the boarding houses each morning. Any absentees at this point will be known by the Head of House and passed on to the school directly.

3.1 **Absence from d'Overbroeck's International lessons**

- Students are registered every morning and every lesson on school days.
- Boarding students are expected to be in school by 8.00am for breakfast and day students by 8.30am for tutor time.
- Morning electronic registration takes place in tutor groups between 8.30am and 8.40am.
- A student who arrives between 8.35am and 8.45am is marked late, and a note is made in the register of how late they were.
- If a day student fails to turn up by 8.45am and their parents did not telephone in advance to report illness or unavoidable delay, they are marked as absent without authorisation.
- Immediately after morning registration, the Administrator will follow up any unauthorised/unexplained absences by:

- calling the Head of House;
 - calling the student's parents and the student's mobile number;
 - continuing to do so until the student's whereabouts have been established and we are reassured that they are safe.
- If the reason for absence has been established with the student rather than a member of staff, then an email and/or phone call will be used to contact the appropriate adult to confirm the reason the student has given for their absence.
 - Afternoon registration takes place in a lesson after lunch.
 - An absence email is circulated to all staff each morning and updated if necessary during the day, for example if a student becomes unwell.
 - The full attendance register is recorded in iSAMS.

All absences, authorised and unauthorised, are recorded in iSAMS and communicated regularly to the parents/guardians of the students concerned. In addition, parents/guardians will be alerted to concerns or patterns of absence by the Personal Tutor or member of the Senior Leadership Team. As in all parts of the school, support will be put in place to try to remove any barriers to attendance.

3.2 **Absence from d'Overbroeck's International boarding houses**

The procedures for dealing with these are the same as those set out for the Sixth Form except that:

- Sunday to Thursday curfew time is 9.45pm for students in Year 9i and 10i, 10pm for Year 11i, and half an hour later on Friday and Saturday.
- the Head of d'Overbroeck's International or Deputy Director for Student Wellbeing will usually also be contacted in the case of an unexplained absence or lateness after curfew time.
- the Absence Authorisation Form is required at least 48 hours before the planned absence.
- in the unusual event of a boarder wishing to spend a night away from the boarding house on a weekday, the same procedure applies, but the permission of the Head of d'Overbroeck's International is also required.
- students are expected to be in their boarding house after dinner Monday through to Thursday, for a study session between 7.00pm and 8.30pm. A register is taken.

4. Students missing from education

Students being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, such as abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation, travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. d'Overbroeck's will put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who are identified as absent or missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

d'Overbroeck's will inform the local authority of the name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous school period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically

classified as unauthorised (G, N, O and/or U). d'Overbroeck's will provide the local authority with the full name and address of all students of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for students who cannot attend because of health needs. Attendance returns will be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

The Oxfordshire Supporting Improved School Attendance Support First Conversation pro-forma (**Appendix 2**) may be used to support questions and conversations to inform the support strategies that are put in place.

Should voluntary support to improve attendance not be effective, or not be engaged with, d'Overbroeck's will seek support through children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially when absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

d'Overbroeck's will notify the local authority of any student who is going to be deleted from our school Admissions Register where the student:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system, eg, home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of Oxford;
- has been certified by a relevant medical practitioner as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither the student nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend this school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and we as a school do not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- has been permanently excluded.

The notification will be made as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the student's name from the register.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following DfE guidance:

[Working together to improve school attendance](#): Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE, August 2024)

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024)

Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

Children missing education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Keeping children safe in education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

APPENDIX 1

Senior Attendance Champion:

Sarah Squire (Vice Principal - Pastoral Director)

Sarah.squire@doverbroecks.com

Tel: 01865 688600

To report absence:

d'Overbroeck's Senior: 01865 688700

d'Overbroeck's International: 01865 688500

d'Overbroeck's Sixth Form: 01865 688600

Attendance codes

APPENDIX 2

Blue - Nature of Absence needs to be recorded

Red - New or replacement codes

Codes	Pupil Attendance Codes
/	Morning session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
\	Afternoon session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
B	Attending a place for any other approved educational activity <i>(Where schools use code B, they must also record the nature of the educational activity in the Nature of Absence area)</i>
C	Absent with leave for other circumstances
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Absent with leave, of compulsory school age and temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend
D	Attending another school at which they are a registered pupil
E	Excluded from the school
G	Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday
I	Unable to attend because of sickness
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by LA (under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 of the Childrens and Families Act 2014) <i>(Where schools use code K, they must also record the nature of the educational activity in the Nature of Absence area)</i>
L	Absent from the school when attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended
M	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Absent - circumstances not yet established
O	Absent - other circumstances
P	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements by LA to facilitate their attendance
R	Day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
S	Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Mobile child whose parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and is travelling with that parent
U	Absent for registration - arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a visit or trip
W	Attending a place for an approved education activity that is work experience
X	Absent with leave, not of compulsory school age and timetable does not require them to attend
Y1	Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled
Y5	Unable to attend because pupil is subject to a sentence of detention
Y6	Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary/prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause <i>(Where schools use code Y7, they must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause in the Nature of Absence area)</i>
Z	Pupil's name entered in advance of start date
#	Planned whole school closure – no session to take place

Oxfordshire Supporting Improved School Attendance

Support First Conversation Pro-Forma

Conversation Aims and Information

- **An informal conversation to aid early identification of any concerns so that the right support is put in place early (where required)**
- **To aid a trusted, strong working partnership between pupils, families, and the school**
- **Pupil voice and wellbeing is the intended focus**
- **Documentation of the conversation is important, as is ensuring relevant parties are made aware of any concerns and identified support strategies, to ensure continuity and understanding by all parties**

Supporting our children and young people to engage

Date	
Name of person completing form	
Position of person completing form	
Pupil Name	
Pupil Date of birth	
Pupil Year Group	
Form tutor	
Head of year	

Introduction to the purpose of this conversation, the school member leading the conversation can use the information and aims above and should link it to the school’s ethos and approach with an emphasis on building strong, trusted, and supportive relationships with pupils and their families

How do you feel your child is finding school currently?	
Does your son/daughter talk about school and if so in what way, do they highlight what’s gone well and what they are finding difficult?	

<p>Are there any lessons or subjects they prefer or is there anything that they are most interested in and would like to do more of if possible?</p>	
<p>Is there a particular member of staff your child feels able to talk to?</p>	
<p>What do you think is important for your child about school?</p>	
<p>What is important to you as parents about school, for example, is it their grades, their well-being, their friendships, or all the above? Individual needs?</p>	
<p>Do you know if your child has any concerns about school – subjects, friendships, teachers? Journey to and from school/transport?</p>	
<p>Is there anything you as parents have concerns about in relation to school, for example, subjects, friendships, teachers?</p>	

<p>Is there anything your child is struggling with or worried about at school? And is there anything we as a school might be able to do to help?</p>	
<p>Is there anything that might be worrying you or your child outside of school, is everything ok at home, and is there anything we might be able to do to support you?</p>	

Additional information

Remember depending on the response to ask why?

Attach current attendance certificate as at date of completion to form – ensure it shows the pupil's name

Copies to be circulated as agreed as part of any internal processes, with any concerns, support and interventions highlighted. Examples of colleagues who may benefit:

- Personal Tutor
- Head of Year / Head of Key Stage
- SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinators)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy
- If a Looked after child, or previously looked after – Designated Teacher
- Senior Attendance Champion

Ensure a record is kept and is accessible by all key members of staff – See Deputy head Pastoral on site.