



## Attendance and Registration Policy

**This policy applies to all pupils at Bishop's Stortford College including those in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. It takes into account the Department for Education non-statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (May 2022) which the Secretary of State has committed to becoming statutory guidance when parliamentary time allows (no sooner than September 2023).**

### **The Law on school attendance and right to a full-time education**

**Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. Excellent school attendance promotes high attainment and protects vulnerable pupils.**

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

The Department for Education defines 'persistent absenteeism' as cases where school attendance falls below 90%. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly to access their entitlement to a full-time education. All schools, including independent schools, are required to take action should a pupil's attendance become a cause for concern. As an independent school we are responsible for the attendance of pupils on our roll and have a duty to follow up on all instances of non-attendance and take reasonable steps to address poor attendance. If a pupil has irregular attendance or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten school days, we are required to notify the local School Attendance Support Team at Hertfordshire Children's Services. Where persistent absenteeism persists above 10%, access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and formalise support in conjunction with the Local Authority. With this in mind, the Deputy Heads (pastoral) and Pre-Prep Head will monitor attendance figures regularly and communicate with parents where there is a cause for concern. In cases where attending school full-time presents a challenge, part-time timetables may be agreed as a temporary measure for the shortest time possible until barriers to attendance are removed and pupils are re-engaged with full time schooling. Where necessary, additional pastoral care may be agreed to plan a time-limited phased return to school. In cases of severe absence, or where the child is more absent than present, the College will work with families, and relevant services to overcome the barriers to being in school. In cases where pupils are absent from school more than they are present

(those missing 50% or more of school), there is likely to be a need for more intensive support across a range of partners and services which may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan. It may also include consideration for an Education, Health and Care Plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school. If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support has been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect and may result in a full children's social care assessment. Further information is available in the statutory guidance, "Keeping Children Safe in Education".

## The Registers

The Senior School, Prep School and Pre-Prep registers are completed electronically and collated centrally in the respective School Offices, where details of absences, pupils attending music lessons, learning support lessons or medical appointments during the day are centrally recorded for staff information. The electronic registers are backed up monthly and stored away from the original entries. Pupils are expected to be on time to all registration sessions and punctuality is monitored in addition to attendance.

The attendance register is completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. Registers will remain open for 30 minutes after registration periods begin. After that time, an unauthorised absence code will be used with the reason established as soon as possible. Regular lateness to school will be monitored and parents informed where there are patterns or trends that raise concern. Punctuality is very important to learning.

The attendance register is a legal document which shows whether a pupil is present, absent, or has authorised absence due to illness, medical appointments, approved educational or sporting activity, work experience or other exceptional circumstances, such as a bereavement or religious observance. If no reason is established for absence when a register is taken, code N is used until the reason is established. The College follows the Department for Education set of codes for schools to use in registers. If no reason is established for absence, code 'N' is used in the register at first and is later corrected (ideally within two weeks). Code 'N' does not remain indefinitely.

## Senior School

All pupils must be registered for the morning and afternoon sessions each day Monday to Friday. Registers must indicate whether a pupil is present, absent, attending an approved educational activity outside school, unable to attend through exceptional circumstances, taking authorised absence or taking unauthorised absence.

Formal electronic registration will take place in Houses twice per day at 08. am and afternoon 2.30pm.

Parents should e-mail the relevant House staff and the absence line for unplanned absences ([absence@bishopsstortfordcollege.org](mailto:absence@bishopsstortfordcollege.org)) as soon as possible on the day of the absence.

When a boarding pupil who is due to return to school after the weekend cannot return, parents or guardians are required to contact the Housemaster or Housemistress by telephone or email **before** Registration (9.00 am) on the day concerned.

Parents are reminded that if a pupil has to be away from school for a pre-arranged reason, an email or letter is required from home, which should be sent to the Head to request permission. Permission will not usually be granted for reasons considered non-essential, such as family holidays.

Pupils arriving late at the College (i.e. after Registration), must 'Sign In' immediately upon arrival (or after Assembly) at the main College Reception.

After 10.00 am on the morning of absence, the College will text those parents or guardians;

- whose children have not been registered in House;
- who have not contacted the College by 10.00 am;
- whose children are absent without pre-arrangement for an organised legitimate absence; or
- whose children have not signed in at the main College Reception if late.

Should parents have failed to inform us of an absence for any reason, they should telephone Reception (Tel: 01279 838575) as soon as possible to avoid being contacted unnecessarily.

Pupils who know that they are due to miss a registration session because of a College activity (eg. Choir, fixtures etc.), must notify their teacher in advance.

If a pupil is admitted to the Medical Centre, and as a result misses one or more lessons, activities or games, the parents (or Housemaster/Housemistress in the case of boarders) will be informed by the Medical Centre.

### **Fire Practice or Emergencies**

In the event of a fire, fire practice or other emergency, the priority of the teachers is to evacuate their pupils safely, quickly and quietly, and assemble at the fire point. The teacher takes a register for their class.

Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. This means that it is unlikely that leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

We ask that parents try to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, we ask that the pupil is only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

### **Prep School**

Pupils are expected in their form rooms by 8.20am each day. Registration takes place at 8.20 am.. This is usually done by the Form Tutor or the Head of Year. They make a note of absences or other appointments during the day (Learning Support, Music lessons etc.). Pupils who arrive after 8.20am will be marked as late. Pupils who are late should sign in at the Prep School Office.

Parents are expected to phone the Prep School Office before 9.15 am if pupils are ill or unable to attend school.

A GAP student cross checks unexplained absences once the registers have arrived in the Office by visiting the teaching rooms. A member of staff in the Prep School Office sends a text to parents whose children are still unaccounted for after this check has taken place. These are followed up by a telephone call if no reply is received.

Registration in the afternoon is completed at 1.25 pm from Monday to Friday in Shell. In Form One to Upper Third, afternoon registration will take place between 1.25pm and 1.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday, afternoon registration will take place during period 4, the lesson before lunch.

When pupils are involved in any day trip off site, the Prep School Office Staff are kept informed of those pupils and staff involved with the correct marking system being added to the 3Sys Registers. Lists of those pupils involved in fixtures can be found on the SOCS website. This information should be used by Form Tutors or those deputising for them, and taking afternoon registrations, in order to make accurate registrations for the afternoon sessions.

On Wednesdays, for pupils from Form One to Upper Third, staff taking games lessons, or teams to fixtures, are able to check 3Sys or the SOCS website for up-to-date information to confirm pupils' attendance.

Pupils who leave the premises during the school day are required to sign out at the Prep School Office.

### **Authorised Absences**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. This means that it is unlikely that leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday. Where possible, parents should apply in advance for leave of absence. The Prep School will consider each application for a leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances. Leave of Absence requests should be sent to the Senior Deputy Head.

We ask that parents try to make medical appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, we ask that the pupil is only out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

### **Fire Practice or Emergencies**

In the event of a fire, fire practice or other emergency, the priority of the Teachers is to evacuate their pupils safely, quickly and quietly, and assemble, at the AWS.

Prep School Office Staff (FEC) will bring down the Evacuation Pack which has form lists and the daily absence information to the meeting point (AWS) and the Teachers check that pupils are present.

### **Pre-Prep (Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1)**

Registration takes place twice a day – by 8.30 am and at 1.15 pm. Electronic registration is completed, as well as paper registers, which are kept in the Pre-Prep Office. Paper registers are used in emergency situations such as a fire. The electronic registers are backed up monthly and stored away from the original entries. When swimming lessons are at 1pm, registration will be taken before the children enter the pool. A member of staff calls the Pre-Prep office for the electronic registers to be completed.

The parents of pupils who are absent are required to phone or email the Pre-Prep Office before registration explaining the absence. If no information about an absent child has been received by 09.30am, the Pre-Prep

Secretary contacts the parents/carers. Pupils who are late are signed in by their parents/carers at the Pre-Prep Office.

### **Authorised Absences**

Parents/carers are reminded that if a pupil has to be away from school for a pre-arranged reason, an email or letter is required from home, which should be sent to the Head of Pre-Prep to request permission. Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. This means that it is unlikely that leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

If a parent/carer has prearranged to collect a pupil early, they come to the Office, sign the child out and administrative staff collect the child from the classroom.

Teachers inform the Pre-Prep Secretary if they are taking their pupils out of the Pre-Prep site for a “non-timetabled” activity, such as a nature walk on the College fields.

### **Medical Centre**

If a pupil is admitted to the Medical Centre, the parents/carers are notified by the Pre-Prep Secretary. Parents collect their child from the Medical Centre and the Medical Centre notify the Pre-Prep Office.

### **Fire Practice or Emergencies**

In the event of a fire, fire practice or other emergency, the priority of the Class Teacher is to evacuate their pupils safely, quickly and quietly, and assemble in the Pre-Prep playground. The Pre-Prep Secretary brings the paper registers to the waiting lines so that each class can be checked.

### **Early and Late Stay Registers**

There is a paper register taken by the Early Stay Supervisor each morning for Early Stay, which starts at 7.45am. This is stored in the Pre-Prep Office.

Late Stay is registered by a staff member using a paper register, which is stored in the Pre-Prep Office. The first Late Stay session is from 3.00 pm until 3.50 pm. The second Late Stay session starts from 3.50pm until 4.50pm. The final Late Stay session starts at 4.50 until 6.00pm. Parents collect their children from the external door where the Late Stay is being held. The final Late Stay session is held in the Pre-Prep Hall and collection is via the front door.

The Late Stay register is held in the Pre-Prep Office.

### **After School Activities**

A paper register is taken by the coaches for each of the after-school activities and is handed back to the Pre-Prep Office.

Pupils joining Late Stay after an activity are registered on the late stay register.