



Attendance Senior Policy with COVID Addendum

School Division: Whole
Policy Division: General
Policy Owner: Principal
Date: September 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy is a 'Senior School Policy' and informs practice in the Senior School and Boarding Houses.
- 1.2. We expect all pupils to attend every day when the school is in session so long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage pupils to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for every child, and we look to parents to support this objective. We will make the best provision we can for those pupils who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

COVID addendum: If students are unable to attend school in line with Public Health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are in close contact of someone who has COVID-19, access to learning via Google classroom and Google meet will allow continued learning. In these cases attendance for tutor and lesson registration will be coded as "study leave" when communication (either email, google classroom or google meet) is made by the student to their tutor or the teacher for each lesson period. Attendance will be monitored.

- Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of COVID-19; this means that even the small number of pupils and students who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to their setting, as can those who have family members who are shielding (see [current advice on shielding](#))
- If rates of disease rise in local areas, children and young people (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below)
- Some pupils and students are no longer required to shield, but those who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school in September, usually at their next planned clinical appointment - see [advice from Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#).

Where a pupil is unable to attend their setting because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, the DfE expects settings to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Settings should monitor engagement with this activity. Where children and young people are not able to attend their setting as parents are following clinical or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

- 1.3. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 the Headmaster is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of the school day. This takes place at 8:20am and 1:50pm each day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. Attendance records are kept for a minimum of 7 years.

COVID addendum: If students have to isolate but are well, able to work and register with their tutor for each session, this will be coded as positive attendance as “study leave”. As soon as a student becomes unwell, parents need to write an email informing the office (absentees@claremontschool.co.uk) copying in their tutor. The student will then be absent from school, coded as “illness”. In the cases where a student is following Public Health advice absence will not be penalised.

Authorised Absence

- 1.4. An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a pupil has been unwell and the parents write a note or telephone the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a pupil out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

COVID addendum: All COVID related absences will be authorised. During isolation, parents need to inform the school as soon as their child’s condition changes from study leave to illness. Current shielding advice means that the majority of students on the shielded patient list can return to school. This will be subject to change based on rates of disease in local areas. Those remaining under the care of a specialist health care professional will need to discuss their care and inform the school of the care plan.

Unauthorised Absence

- 1.5. An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. This means an absence is unauthorised if a pupil away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

2. Absent Pupils

- 2.1. When a pupil is absent unexpectedly, the teacher will record the absence electronically and inform the School Office, which will endeavour to contact a parent. When the pupil is absent, the parent should contact the school by email or telephone before 9.00am on the first day of absence. Parents should contact the school prior to the day of absence if the absence is planned (e.g. dental appointment).

- 2.2. If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a pupil, the teacher will take immediate action to notify the School Office, which will contact the parent in order to make sure the child has not suffered an accident.

3. Boarders

- 3.1. Boarders travel to school via mini-bus from the Boarding House. Any absences are reported by the House Master/driver by email or in person.

4. Requests for Leave of Absence

- 4.1. We believe that pupils need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. Requests for absence must be made in writing and reach the school at least 14 days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.00am). Requests for exceptional absence (e.g. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments for illness) should be sent to the Head at least two weeks in advance.
- 4.2. We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance so that holidays can be arranged without disrupting your child's education. It is school policy usually not to allow holidays to be taken during term time.

5. Long Term Absence

- 5.1. When pupils have an illness that means they will be away from school for over 5 days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to establish if arrangements can be made for the pupil to be given some tuition outside school.
- COVID addendum: Due to the fluidity of the student attendance due to COVID insolation guidance, all lesson resources for the foreseeable future will be loaded onto Google classroom by 8:30am each morning with access to the teacher in the lesson via Google meet.***

6. Repeated Unauthorised Absences

- 6.1. The school will contact the parent or guardian of any pupil who has an unauthorised absence. If a pupil has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LEA support services who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents understand the seriousness of the situation. The school reserves the right to consider taking action against any parents who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.
- COVID addendum: Clearly absences due to COVID will not be deemed unauthorised absence.***

7. Monitoring Absence

Absence is monitored on a weekly basis by the student's tutor and the Head of House. Those students whose attendance is under 95% will receive a letter reminding them of the impact regular lack of attendance has on their education. If attendance continues to be poor then parents will be asked to come in and see the

Head of House and the child's tutor and an agreed strategy for improvement will be implemented.

COVID addendum: Online attendance during tutor time and lessons will not affect a student's overall attendance. Clearly in cases of illness due to COVID parents will not be contacted. However, keeping in regular contact with tutors and Heads of House during isolation or longer periods of illness is beneficial to the student so the school can support the student on their return.

8. School Hours

- 8.1. All pupils are required to be in school before 8.15am. The school day ends at 5.20pm at the Senior School.
- 8.2. Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for trips or sporting fixtures, the dates of which will have been notified in advance. The one exception to this is Sixth Formers who have achieved Independent Learner Status. A list of these people is in the School Office and with the Director of Sixth Form.

9. Sixth Form

- 9.1 All Sixth Form students have Independent Learning Status which allows for a more flexible attendance and a greater degree of independence. We encourage Sixth Form students to be on site during the school day, which runs from 8.20am - 5.20pm. Attendance at all lessons is compulsory, including senior games, as is registration at 8.20am, if students have lessons Period 1. Students are expected to fulfil all commitments, but outside this, are able to leave the site if they have parental permission and are able to do so.
- 9.2 **Signing in and out is mandatory.** The school office must be aware of students' whereabouts at all times. This is an important regulatory requirement. Students not attending morning registration must email the school office before 9am to let us know they will not be at registration. Flexible attendance is a privilege and teachers will be monitoring student progress carefully. If we feel a student would benefit from closer supervision and access to their teachers during the day, the right to leave the site during school hours will be withdrawn. If parents do not want your son/daughter to have the ability to leave the school site during the day from the start of term, they must notify the Head of Sixth Form (Victoria.liggett@claremontschool.co.uk)

10. Policy Owner

- 10.1. The policy owner is Deputy Head at the Senior School.

11. Issue Date

- 11.1. Issue date: September 2020.

12. Review Date

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed annually. The next review is due in September 2021.

Director Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Dickie', enclosed within a thin black oval border.

**Mr E Dickie
Head of Senior School**

September 2020