



St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

St Swithun's Prep School including EYFS

ATTENDENCE POLICY

(Incorporating the teachers' guide to registration)

Policy History	
Reviewed	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2027

This policy can be accessed on the school's website at www.stswithuns.com

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- [Safeguarding policy](#)
- [Supervision policy](#)
- [School Journey/Offsite activities](#)
- [Wraparound care](#)
- [Missing Pupil Policy](#)
- [Child Missing Education Policy](#)

Introduction

At St Swithun's we regard attendance at school as vital for the pastoral and academic development of pupils. We strive to ensure that all our students receive an education that enables them to maximise opportunities and reach their full potential. Research indicates a strong correlation between good attendance and increased attainment.

Absence, regardless of its cause, is detrimental to any pupil's academic, social, and emotional development.

Regular school attendance is essential for the pastoral and academic growth of pupils, and we are committed to ensuring that all our students have access to an education that maximises their potential. Studies have demonstrated a significant link between good attendance and higher academic achievement.

Children with poor attendance typically achieve less in school, which has a cumulative effect over time. Regular or persistent absence can also signal underlying pupil welfare issues.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly. A child may only miss school if they are genuinely too ill to attend or if they have received prior permission from the school.

The school maintains high attendance expectations for all students and will collaborate with students, parents, and other agencies to ensure that every student can achieve this goal.

It is a legal requirement that a register of students present is taken at a specified time during each session of the school day and documented by a teacher in the form register. This record may be required as proof of attendance, and its accuracy is the responsibility of the form tutor, who should not delegate this task to a student.

There is a timetabled registration slot which is usually lead by form teachers.

*** Morning registration should be completed at 08.20 and closes at 08:30**

*** Afternoon registration should be completed at 13.15 and closes at 13.30**

When challenges to attendance arise, the school will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families, and where appropriate, local authorities, to address these issues.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE September 2025) (KCSIE)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024)
- [Children Missing Education](#) (DfE, September 2025)

It should also be read in conjunction with the following school policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Missing Pupil Policy
- Behaviour Policy.

School staff to support attendance

The school's Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) is **Kate Grosscurth** (Deputy Head)

Contact: email at: grosscurthk@stswithuns.com or via telephone: 01962 835750

The school's attendance officer is **Miss Beth Wallington** (Prep School Administrator)

Contact: email at: office.prepschool@stswithuns.com or via telephone: 01962 835750.

The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. However, all staff have a responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality amongst the pupil body. The SAC ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it; the

SAC also provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

Teachers should deal with lateness to registration and lessons consistently and promptly and, where appropriate, consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Management of the register

We have an expectation that all pupils will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality.

All pupils are formally registered twice a day by their form teacher: in the morning at 08.20 and in the afternoon at 13.15.

Parents are encouraged to ensure that pupils arrive punctually and are on time for morning registration. Pupils arriving after these times **will** be marked as late.

- All registers are to be completed electronically via ISAMS.

Please see the guide below for detailed instructions on how to do this using a desktop, it can also be done on an iPad using the ISAMS app.

- See Appendix 2 for ISAMS register codes
- It is the responsibility of the form tutor to keep the register up to date and accurate.
- It is important that assumptions are not made and that children are not marked as late until they are actually at school.

An **L** (late before register closes) can be used only when a child reaches the classroom after the register has been taken and before the registers officially closes.

- If a child is not present when the register is taken, they should be marked with an 'N' (No reason yet provided for absence) rather than no code being recorded.

The electronic registration system will automatically default to 'N' if a code has not been entered. Incomplete registers will also register an entire class as 'N'.

All absences marked 'N' should be immediately followed up, initially by the office and then by the deputy head if required, and the correct absence code entered.

In a circumstance where, at the time of registration, the school is satisfied that the student is safe from harm but a suitable explanation has not been received from the parents before the next registration point (which is actually the afternoon registration, not the next day), the school will continue to seek information from the parents and record actions taken.

- If a parent emails you, as form teacher, directly about their child's absence, please ensure the office is also copied in/informed.
- The office will chase up all unapproved absences before 08.45am that day and will amend a register with the correct code once an absence has been investigated. Similarly, staff are also able to amend their registers at any time by 'overwriting' their previous code input and then saving the register again.
- Once all registers have been completed and checked the office then compiles the 'absence list' for the school, recording all those who are missing from school and stating the reason for their absence. This is emailed to all staff asap and by 9.15am. A copy of this absence list is put with the fire registers, after registration.
- In the afternoon, the office will check that all registers have been completed. If the register has not been completed by 1.30pm, the office will follow this up.
- The prep school office staff have overall management of the electronic registration system and can assist/amend records where necessary e.g. noting absences, medical appointments. They will also complete the registers when a class is away on a school trip for example and misses registration
- If a child goes home during the morning (illness, medical appointment) and will not be returning in the afternoon, the office staff will update the afternoon register to this effect.
- For the afternoon register, please do not leave a pupil with no code attached, all pupils must be accounted for by those completing the register.
- If a child is late on a number of occasions, class teachers should discuss the issue with the parents and try to ascertain if there is a problem which can be addressed in the first instance. If the problem persists, the Deputy Head should be notified.

Taking the register (am and pm)

Preschool & Reception

EYFS classes may run a 'self-registration' process during their hand-over sessions and they are then formally marked in the register by a member of staff.

Key Stage 1

Y1 & Y2 have a variety of 'morning activities on offer when they enter the classroom and the teacher will then say "We're taking register now so please could we lower voices for a moment?" Staff will then say 'Good Morning/afternoon, child's name' and children should respond with a polite "Good morning/afternoon, teacher's name."

Key Stage 2

Children KS2 should enter the classroom and sit quietly in order to promote both a calm & orderly start to the morning/afternoon but also good manners. There might be instructions or an activity on the board for the children to complete quietly whilst they wait for the register to be taken. Children should respond in the same manner in which they are asked i.e. teachers should be saying 'Good Morning/Afternoon child's name' and the children responding 'Good Morning/Afternoon teacher's name'. Once registration has been completed the children can move quietly to assembly/their lesson.

All year groups

- A student must be physically present in the room to be marked as such: they cannot be registered as present on the basis of an email or message that they themselves have sent saying that they are going to be late, or from another member of the Form or teaching group.
- Students should sign in and out in the school office if they arrive late or leave early
- If taking a 'quick register' e.g. for a trip/going out to games (not completing the official register) this can be done more informally and it may be appropriate to just to call the child's name and they can respond yes/no.

- The school office will follow-up students who are absent from morning and afternoon registration by checking whether they are in lesson 1 or 9. If present a mark of late will be given. If not, the school office will begin to follow the [Missing Child Policy](#).

NB Whilst the student may simply be off sick at home with appropriate care, this may not be the situation. The student may be at risk of harm and may be in distress. The student may have been involved in an incident whilst on their way to school. The student may be truanting (possibly because of anxiety about something happening at school).

Immediate Action When a Child's Whereabouts Cannot Be Confirmed

The safety of pupils is paramount. Attendance monitoring must therefore operate in tandem with safeguarding procedures. In any situation where a child's whereabouts cannot be confirmed, staff must treat this as a **potential safeguarding incident**, not an administrative matter.

1. When a Child Is Absent for Morning Registration (First Register)

If a pupil is absent and no explanation has been provided:

- The form tutor/teacher must report the unexplained absence immediately to the School Office/Attendance Officer.
- The School Office must attempt first-day calling *without delay* to establish the child's whereabouts.
- If no explanation is obtained within 30 minutes of the register closing, the case must be escalated following the Missing Child Policy.

2. When a Child Is Missing at the Second Registration (Afternoon Register)

This scenario represents a heightened safeguarding risk, as the pupil was known to be on-site earlier.

If a child is marked absent at the second register and no staff member can account for their whereabouts:

- 1) The teacher taking the register must alert:
 - The School Office immediately, and
 - A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 2) Staff must begin immediate on-site checks, including but not limited to:
 - Classrooms, toilets, cloakrooms, playgrounds, library etc
 - Clubs, peripatetic lessons, Learning Support
 - Travel between buildings (music school etc)
- 3) If the child's whereabouts are not confirmed within 10 minutes, the situation must then be further escalated (as per the Missing Child Policy) without delay.
- 4) If, after escalation, the child remains unaccounted for after 20 minutes, staff must treat the situation as a missing child emergency and follow the Missing Child Policy with regards to contacting parents and the police.

3. Responsibilities of All Staff

- Staff must never assume another colleague has checked a child's whereabouts.
- Any concern about an unaccounted-for pupil must be reported *immediately* and *directly*.
- All actions taken must be logged on CPOMS

4. Link to Missing Child Policy

This Attendance Policy outlines the trigger points for moving into Missing Child procedures. The detailed steps for each escalation stage are set out in the School's Missing Child Policy, which must be read alongside this document.

Lateness to school

As stated above, if a pupil arrives after 08.20 or 13.15 they should sign in at the school office before going to assembly, form time or joining a lesson. Lateness data is regularly monitored by the form tutor and deputy head. Where students are late to school more than once a week, or if there is a regular pattern to the lateness, this will be flagged to the form teacher, who will monitor and deal with the situation and, if necessary, escalate to the deputy head.

Where necessary, a dialogue will be had with parents/carers to support families to improve time keeping. If lateness does not improve in the short term (e.g. over 2 weeks), the form tutor will agree with the deputy head an appropriate course of action.

With no improvement in the situation, the matter will be referred to the head and deputy head (DSL) who will discuss the matter with the parents/carers.

Leaving the school site

If a student needs to leave school early, their parents should inform the school office, copying in the form teacher, and stating the reason for their early departure. The parent/student must sign the signing-out book in the Office.

If a student is ill during the school day and it is deemed best to send them home. The office is responsible for contacting the parents and arranging collection.

Absence form school

Parents/carers are required to report a pupil absence via:

- Emailing: office.prepschool@stswithuns.com
- Notifying via parent portal
- Telephoning the school office: 01962 835750

This should be by **08.45 at the latest** on the day of absence. If parents/carers do not contact the school, the school office will contact parents/carers to confirm an authorised absence; this may be by phone or email. Holidays taken in term time that are not authorised by the head will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their child's attendance, they should contact the relevant form tutor in the first instance.

Requesting leave of absence

Parents requesting leave of absence should email office.prepschool@stswithuns.com.

This will be forwarded to the head for approval. The executive assistant will email the form tutor and school office with permission, if given.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Each request will be considered individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted the head will determine the length of time the student can be away from school.

As leave of absence should only be granted in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Unauthorised absence

An "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
- the reason for absence has not been provided;
- a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

All absences marked 'N' should be followed up by the form tutor as soon as possible and codes should be amended as necessary by the Attendance Officer.

Students with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

We recognise that some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other student and therefore the attendance ambition for these students is the same as they are for any other student. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these students face and will discuss additional support where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reporting Duties

As is required by law, the school will inform the relevant local authority of any student who: fails to attend school regularly; or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

The local safeguarding partners will also be informed if absence amounts to a safeguarding concern.

We will also consider making a return to the local authority (a 'sickness return') where a pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (illness) and the school have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been unable to attend school because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, consecutively or cumulatively.

The school shall also inform the relevant local authority of any student who is going to be added to or deleted from the school's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Ongoing monitoring and analysis

The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance, reasons for absence and patterns in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and/or those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

Summary of responsibilities for monitoring attendance

Form teachers will:

- Monitor and follow-up the attendance for their class. Attendance summaries can be produced by the attendance officer to assist with this process.
- Review each absence with the code N and, if the reason is still not established, replace this with an O (an N must not be allowed to remain in the register indefinitely).
- Raise concerns attendance/lateness with the pupil concerned parents, liaising with the relevant Phase Lead as required.
- Deal with persistent lateness proactively, liaising with parents/carers and/or issuing sanctions as appropriate.

Phase leads will:

- Discuss attendance issues as necessary in their fortnightly meeting with the deputy head.

The School Office will:

- Undertake the day-to-day management and administration of Attendance Registers (AM and PM), advising class teachers, phase leads and the deputy head/SAC on matters regarding attendance and lateness.
- Share summaries of pupil's marked 'N' in the morning registration period at 8:20am each day and begin proceedings to establish the whereabouts of pupils marked 'N' at other points during the School day, including the afternoon registration period.
- Share summaries of pupil lateness/absence at the end of each week with phase leads and the SAC

The Attendance Officer will:

- Oversee the swift and accurate completion of attendance processes, including accurate maintenance of the Attendance Register.

- Follow-up with colleagues as necessary where registers are routinely not completed before the close of the registration period and to refer on to the SAC where necessary.

The Deputy Head as the School’s Attendance Champion will:

- Monitor pupil attendance identifying any trends which may be a cause for concern.
- Investigate and follow up any apparent patterns of absence or persistent or unauthorised absence and lateness, liaising with the appropriate phase lead and/or parents/carers as necessary.
- As DSL, make referrals to external agencies where safeguarding concerns around a student’s attendance exist.

Attendance reports, produced by the Attendance Officer, will be reviewed regularly by the SAC/deputy head to:

- Identify pupils who are regularly late or with attendance of less than 90% and intervene as necessary. This is likely to be a conversation with parents/guardians to understand the barriers to being in school and agreeing appropriate actions/interventions to address them.
- Review each absence with the code N and, if the reason is still not established, replace this with an O (an N must not be allowed to remain in the register indefinitely).

Returning to school

Where a student has had a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence from school we will do what we can to maintain contact and will provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps to support that pupil back into school.

Other provisions

The SAC/deputy head is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

Contact: Kate Grosscurth. Email grosscurthk@stswithuns.com or telephone 01962 835750.

This policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in a non-discriminatory fashion in accordance with the school’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The school will always consider the individual needs of students and their families who may have specific barriers to attendance.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE September 2025) (KCSIE)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) (DfE, August 2024)
- [Children Missing Education](#) (DfE, September 2025)

Reviewed & updated September 2025	Beth Wallington	Attendance officer
	Kate Grosscurth	Deputy Head, DSL & School Attendance Champion
	Liz Norris	Head
Ratified by Education Committee on behalf of council, October 2025	Dr S Bailey	Chair of Education Committee

Appendix 1 Additional guidance for form tutors and teachers

Visiting students

- **Students in school for familiarisation visits** – remain with the form and should be accounted for by the form tutor

Visits and trips

Students should be registered in the morning and afternoon sessions on the day of visit or if known the information can be pre-coded in the register and amended on the day of the trip. If the trip leaves before registration, a list of students registered on the trip should be returned to the school office prior to departure.

In the event of a fire alarm

- The school office will bring a list of absentees and the signing in and out book outside.
- A member of SLT will seek confirmation from class teachers that everyone is present and will check off against the list of absentees.
- *See fire protocols for more detail*

Appendix 2 Common Codes

Present at school

/ or \	Present during registration
B	Educated off site and taster days and do not fit K,V,P or W codes
K	Attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	Arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
p	Sporting activity with prior agreement form school
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
%	Music lesson
&	Communication and Performance lesson

Authorised absence

C	Exceptional circumstances (including authorised holiday)
C1	In a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Absent due to a part-time timetable
D	Dual Registered - at another educational establishment
E	Suspended or permanently excluded
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments) note comments
J1	Job/school/college interview
M	Medical or dental appointments
Q	Unable to attend due to access arrangements
R	Religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	Study leave
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect pupil NOT parent)

Unauthorised absence

G	Holiday (not agreed)
N	Reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected in 5 days)
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Late after registration closed

Administrative codes

Z	Student not yet on register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure (e.g. holidays, INSETS and polling station days)