

# Hutton Grammar School Sixth Form - Attendance and Punctuality Policy



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This document is supported by the Sixth Form Standards Policy

## Our Mission

As outlined in the *Hutton Church of England Grammar School Behaviour Policy*, our Sixth Form's foundation scripture, Philippians 2, outlines the core of our mission and our core values:

*"In your relationship with one another have the same mindset as Christ Jesus".*

With our core values as: Koinonia, Compassion, Justice, Reverence, Humility and Endurance. At Sixth form we expect our students to be able to embody these values and serve as examples to our younger students in the main school. This core scripture, alongside our values, allows us to create a learning community that will enable all members to flourish in an environment of collaboration and respect.

Members of Hutton Grammar School Sixth Form are required to follow the standards outlined in this document as part of their membership of our community. Sixth Form students are at a stage in their life and education where they act as significant role models for the younger students at school. As such we expect them to be leaving the potential for immaturity and misbehaviour of their younger years behind. We do however recognise that this is a journey and mistakes will be made. This document is written to outline to students and their parent or carer what is expected of them.

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to encourage students at 6<sup>th</sup> form to engage with learning in a positive and mature manner. In addition, it is the aim of the document to convey to students and parents the importance of regular attendance. The school expects students to attend all timetabled lessons and morning registration. Regular attendance at school is vital for progress and attainment. There is strong evidence that poor attendance is a leader factor in poor attainment at A-level, **more so even than at GCSE.**

A-level subjects are intensive and require a great deal of preparation, both during lesson time and during independent study periods. It is also important that morning registration and our collective worship programme is engaged with, to help develop student views on our multicultural society, school community and Christian Ethos. An exemplary record of attendance says a huge amount about the student as a person: that they are dedicated, well-motivated, organized and someone who takes their responsibilities seriously.

At Sixth form students are granted more freedom in where they learn in line with their age group and our expectations of them as learners. The student day is not fully timetabled to allow students flexibility within the school day to completed independent study and homework tasks. The school reserves the right to require students to attend specific timetabled intervention during non-timetabled hours should attendance or work standards fall below what is outlined in this document and the *Sixth form standards policy*.

To support students with attendance Hutton Grammar School Sixth form will establish and monitor a culture of good attendance. To promote this, the school will inform parents should the attendance of a student not be in line with this policy. Procedures relating to this policy are outlined further into this document. In addition, the school will create and uphold a positive learning environment in line with our whole school policies.

## **Context**

This document has been written with the support of the following documents.

- Hutton C of E Grammar school and Sixth Form
  - HGS School Behaviour Policy
- From the Department of Education:
  - Keeping children safe in education 2023.
  - Working together to improve school attendance 2024.
  - School suspensions and permanent exclusions 2023.
  - Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022.
  - The Education and Skills Act 2008
- From the Education and Skills Funding Agency
  - Funding guidance for young people 2023 to 2024 from the ESFA

This document should be used as additional guidance alongside the main school behaviour policy, this document outlines specific additions or replacement policies that apply to Sixth Form students only.

## **Key Attendance Expectations:**

### **Of the Student:**

- To maintain good attendance to lessons.
  - Good attendance is defined as 96% or higher.
- To attend lesson on time in a punctual manner as mature learners should.
  - Should a student attend lesson 10 minutes after the bell has sounded, the classroom teacher reserves the right to refuse entry to the lesson. The student will be marked as late, and the incident will be recorded on synergy.
- To be present for morning registration.
  - Where students do not have any timetabled lessons in the morning, they are not required to attend morning registration and will be marked in the register as taking study time. Morning sessions are defined as any lesson between 9:05am and 12:20 pm.
- To inform the school office should you not be able to attend school.
- To inform the Sixth form leadership and pastoral team should there be any reason that is preventing you from regular school attendance.

- To sign in with the biometric Inventory system located in the 6<sup>th</sup> form atrium when arriving at school outside of morning registration, and to sign out when leaving school.
  - This is part of our safeguarding and fire safety policy.
- To make every effort to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours.
- To make the Sixth form administrator aware of upcoming absence requests for any school absence in line with the main school attendance procedures.
  - The leave of absence request form can be found on the school website.
- To understand that the following are not authorised absences:
  - Driving lessons – *Driving tests are permitted with prior permission.*
  - Part time work – Young persons (16-18) may not engage in employment during the hours of the school day as outlined by statutory guidance from the DFE. The school day is 8:30am – 15:05pm.
  - Workload – We expect students to be using independent study hours to complete work.
  - To mind the house.
  - To look after siblings.
  - To go shopping or celebrate a birthday.
  - Because it is the end of the week or term.

#### **Of Parents and Carers**

- To support the school in maintaining its aim for good attendance.
- To recognise that whilst the students should be more independent, they will still need support and boundaries regarding punctuality and attendance.
- To use synergy to monitor their young person’s attendance. Note that synergy is our primary mode of communication with parents and carers. It is essential that the listed primary contact on the day of enrolment has a working synergy account. Please contact the school if this is not the case.
- To let the school know when a student will not be attending school due to illness. This can be done by emailing the 6th form administrator or ringing the school office.
  - Long term absences due to illness should have the support of an accompanying Doctor’s note.
- To not take holidays during term time.
- To use and engage with synergy to monitor attendance.
- To speak to a member of Sixth Form Pastoral team if they know of any problem, which may prevent their young person from attending school.
- To complete an absence request form to request an exceptional leave of absence. This should be emailed to the Sixth Form Administrator.

## **Of the School:**

- To monitor attendance and take action when attendance dips below 95%.
- To communicate attendance data and issues regarding attendance via school synergy
- To promote good attendance by providing an active and engaging sixth form experience:
  - Through extra and super curricular activities
  - Through active and engaging lessons
  - Through opportunities for leadership
    - Including worship, form time, mentoring programmes etc.
- To take action and support students to improve their attendance and appropriately support all students to improve attendance.
  - This could be through the use of internal support or external agencies.

## **Acceptable reasons for absence as outlined by the department for education:**

- The student is too ill to leave the house.
- The student has a hospital appointment.
- The student has toothache and has an emergency appointment.
- A day of religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs.
- The student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- There is a close family bereavement.
- Interviews for courses/employment that will begin after the end of their time in Sixth Form.
  - Students should not miss lessons to attend interviews, shifts and inductions for part-time work.
- University and Employer Open Days – students may attend no more than two of these events in an academic year that take place during the school day.
- Work experience – requests for term-time leave for essential work experience (e.g. medicine, law) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. These requests should be submitted at least a month in advance. Parents/carers may wish to note that there is a scheduled week of work experience towards the end of Year 12. Please contact the school if you require further details.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Signing In and Out**

It is a legal requirement that we know who is in the school building at all times.

Students must make sure that they register biometrically every day and sign in each time they are late to school. They must also sign out each time they leave the building throughout the day and sign in on their return.

## **Unauthorised Absences – The school’s response**

If a student is absent from school or from a lesson and we have received no communication from either the student or a parent/carer, a text message will be sent to the primary contact on our synergy system.

A reply is required stating the reason for the students’ absence to enable attendance records to be updated; if no reply is received, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This will negatively affect the student’s attendance score and trigger the processes outlined below should unauthorised absences continue to occur.

## **Lesson attendance and Punctuality**

Students should attend all lessons but where student attendance drops below 96% the school will take action. Students must be on time for all lessons and registration periods. When a student is marked as late this is because they have arrived 5 minutes or more after the bell. Where a student attends the lesson more than 10 minutes after the bell the classroom teacher may deny them entry to the lesson to prevent disruption. In either the case the student will be marked as late and be expected to catch-up all missed work in their own independent study time.

## **Persistent Absence and Persistent Lateness**

To inform these procedures attendance scores for each student will be generated for each student on a half termly basis. We have also calculated the number of lesson hours missed to allow parents, carers and students to understand the effect missed lessons will have on their attendance.

### **Stage 1 – 91-95% attendance**

At this stage the student is missing 1-2 hours of learning per week, 4-8 hours a month.

- The student will receive a negative synergy note which will notify home and act as record of the poor attendance for the half term.

### **Stage 2 – Continued poor attendance or attendance between 85%-90%**

At this stage learning will be significantly affected and therefore further action is needed.

At this stage the student is missing 3-4 hours of learning per week, 9-16 hours a month.

- A meeting with the sixth form leadership team will take place to discuss improving attendance. An agreement to improve attendance and necessary interventions will be discussed and implemented. This will form an attendance contract.
- A summary of the meeting and agreement will be communicated home to parents via letter.
- Recorded on synergy as stage 2 attendance negative.
- Sustained periods at the level may result in the withdrawal of examination entry fees.

### **Stage 3 – Failure to improve attendance from stage 2 or attendance below 85%**

At this stage learning is significantly affected and the student's absence is disrupting the progress of the student academically and significantly affecting their prospects when they leave the Sixth form after year 13.

At this stage a student is missing approximately 5 hours of learning per week, and 20 hours per month.

- A meeting will take place between the parents and carers of the student, a member of SLT and the sixth form pastoral team. A letter will be sent home.
- Strategies to improve attendance and why the attendance contract failed will be discussed. If the student has attendance below 85% without a stage 2 meeting, the student follows stage 3 procedures.
- Recorded on synergy as a stage 3 attendance negative note.
- Should no acceptable reasons be given for the attendance, a written warning will be issued to the parents and carers of the student outlining the final stage of these procedures.
- Sustained periods at the level may result in the withdrawal of examination entry fees.

### **Stage 4 – Failure to respond to stage 3 contract.**

At this stage significant interventions have been put in place, a significant amount of pastoral involvement has occurred, and the student has still not improved their attendance.

- A final meeting will take place with parents and carers. Parents and Carers will be invited to the meeting via letter home.
- The school will seriously consider withdrawal of examination entry fees.
- Should no acceptable reasons be provided for continued failure to meet school expectations around attendance the school reserves the right to withdraw the Sixth Form place permanently.

### **Withdrawal of Examination Entry Fees**

All students enrolled to complete examinations or coursework between the ages of 16-19 at Hutton C of E Grammar School and Sixth Form will be entered for their exams, the school funds the exams in the first instance. However, the school reserves the right to withdraw this payment for all or individual subjects the student is entered for on the grounds of attendance. Our ability to do so is outlined clearly in the Funding guidance for young people 2023 to 2024 from the ESFA (education and skills funding agency) section 2. The school may take this action if no improvement on attendance is seen from the point at which the student, parent, or carer is notified via synergy (Stage 2) or via letter (stage 3) that the student has reached stage this point of our attendance tracking staged approach. Should a student consistently fall below 90% attendance without acceptable reason the student may be required to source their own examination fees. Acceptable reasons are outlined in the above sections.