



Attendance and punctuality policy

Rationale

At Uplands Community College, we aim to provide a stimulating and supportive environment where individual needs and abilities are recognised and all are encouraged to develop to their full potential. Excellent attendance is crucial for students to reach their full potential and any problems that impede full attendance must be identified and addressed as speedily as possible. We aim for maximum attendance and punctuality for all our students, with absence and lateness only for unavoidable reasons. We strive to promote an ethos and culture that encourage excellent attendance and where each student will feel valued, supported, and secure. We aim to build and maintain effective partnerships between the school, parents, external support agencies, and the wider community.

As a school, we aim to:

- Maintain parents' and students' awareness of the importance of regular attendance;
- To raise attendance;
- Improve punctuality;
- To raise level of achievement;
- Maximise opportunities both in school and in later life.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance;
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically;
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with;
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.

Attendance data can be seen below to give you an indication of the impact of days absent from school:

Above 98%	Excellent attendance Students with attendance above 98% have had less than 4 days absence in the year.
Above 96%	Good attendance Students with attendance above 96% have had less than 8 days absence in the year.
90%	Below average/ low attendance Pupils with 90% attendance =20 days absence over the year. Students with this attendance are missing 4 weeks of school per year may drop at least one GCSE grade.

85%	<p style="text-align: center;">Exceptionally low attendance</p> <p>Students with 85% attendance =30 days absence over the year. These students are missing 6 weeks of school a year it will be very difficult for them to keep up with work and they may drop more than one GCSE grade.</p>
Below 85%	<p style="text-align: center;">Persistent absentee</p> <p>Students with 80% attendance have missed a whole year of school over the five years of secondary education. East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service service will be informed and parents of the students with this level of attendance will be issued with a penalty notice or have a legal action taken against them.</p>

Reporting an absence

1. When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be in school at 8.50 am (at the latest) in time for morning registration, which starts promptly at 8.55 am.

Arriving late to school and into lessons is very disruptive for the teacher and other class members. It also means that late students themselves miss important input from teachers.

Afternoon registration is at 2.10 pm.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at 9.05 am in the morning.

If your child arrives between 9.00 am and 9.15 am, he/she will be marked late.

If your child arrives after 9.15 am he/she will be noted as exceptionally late which, for attendance purposes, counts as an unauthorised absence as specified by the Department for Education.

3. Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We require a parent to telephone or email the school (see below) on the morning of the first day of absence. If you do not telephone us, we will contact you via text or voicemail. We also require parents to call on each subsequent day of absence in line with East Sussex County Councils safe guarding policy. However, if your son or daughter is to be absent for a prolonged period of time for example a stay in hospital please speak directly to the Attendance Officer to make arrangements so that daily contact is not needed. We may require a medical evidence to justify frequent or extensive absences. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we may not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's report.

Absence Line: 01892 786 560

Email: absence@uplandsc.com

Telephone numbers:

To comply with health and safety guidelines it is important that we have up to date contact information at all times. There are a variety of reasons that the school may need to contact parents, including ill health, school emergencies or to discuss unexplained absences.

Examples of medical evidence

- Medical appointment card confirming attendance;
- Medical appointment letter;
- Copy of prescription showing name and date;
- Prescribed medication with pharmacist label showing name and date;
- Hospital discharge letter.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absence?

- Illness;
- Emergency dental/medical appointments (make routine appointments after school or during the holidays);
- Day of religious observance;
- Family bereavement;
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university etc.;
- Family trip – only when the circumstances are exceptional e.g. illness of a relative who lives some distance away. Cheaper flights etc. are not accepted as acceptable reasons. The Headteacher considers each of these cases individually.

Except in cases of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school giving at least 14 days' notice with full details.

In cases of recurring absences for illness, you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

6. Can we take family trips during term-time?

Family trips should not be taken in term time, except in exceptional circumstances. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on a family trip, you should complete an application form, at least two weeks in advance, stating the reason why the trip must be taken in term time. These forms are available on the schools website or from Student Services. The Headteacher has the right refuse permission having given consideration to:

- Your child's age;
- The time of year;
- The overall attendance pattern of the child;
- The reason why the holiday is to be taken in term time;
- The impact of the absence on the educational progress of the child.

If the absence is not authorised and the trip is taken anyway, it may be referred to East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

The attendance officer will contact parents if the trip is unauthorised, advising them of the above.

The Headteacher will not approve your child's absence if the timing of the holiday coincides with examinations such as GCSE.

7. Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

Yes if you do not call us on the first day that they are absent or we have not received prior notice. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you to discuss the best way forward. The school operates a first day response to absence: we will text or telephone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as his/her regular school attendance.

8. Considerations if your child is feeling unwell

Should my child go to school today?

Headache, earache and stomach ache	Students with headache, earache, and stomach ache can go to school - just let the staff know they have felt unwell. Give paracetamol and plenty of fluids to drink.
High temperature	Give paracetamol and plenty to drink. After paracetamol if your child feels better, bring them into school. If your child's temperature continues for three days or more seek medical advice.
Coughs and colds	Students should be given paracetamol plenty of fluid to drink can be sent to school. If your child is asthmatic, remember they may need their blue inhaler.
Flu and Swine Flu	Students should go back to school when recovered – this is usually about five days.
Sore throat, tonsillitis and glandular fever	Students should be given paracetamol, plenty of fluids to drink and can be sent to school.
Period pains	Students should be given paracetamol and be sent to school.
Diarrhoea and vomiting	Students can return to school 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea and vomiting.
Scabies	Students can go back to school after the first treatment.
Head lice	Students can go back to school with head lice but they must be treated for the condition to prevent further spreading.
Hand, foot and mouth warts and verrucae	Students can go back to school - verrucae should be covered.
Conjunctivitis	Students can go to school. They should be encouraged to wash their hands to prevent further spread of infection.
Impetigo	Students can go back to school when their lesions are crusted or healed, or two days after starting antibiotics.
Measles, Chickenpox and German Measles	Students should go back to school four days after the rash has started. Please let the school know as pregnant member of staff may be affected.
Medicine in school	Students can come to school even if they are taking medication. Please inform a member of staff.
Further advice	You can also contact NHS East Sussex on http://www.esht.nhs.uk/about-us/contact/telephone/ or http://www.esht.nhs.uk/ or dial 111
Local pharmacy	Local pharmacy – see your local pharmacist for help and advice.

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