

## **Earlscliffe (Earlscliffe Ltd)**

### **Policy: Student Attendance Policy**

**Member of SLT responsible: Deputy Head (Academic)**

**Date of review: January 2025**

**Date of next review: June 2025**

This Policy makes direct references to the DfE document, 'Working together to improve school attendance' 2022. Further information can be found in this document and will be referred to by the school in all instances of attendance concerns.

We want to support all of our students and their parents/guardians so that they have the best possible experience and reach their full potential. Students with excellent attendance are more successful in school and achieve significantly higher outcomes. Low attendance can be seen as a safeguarding concern (KCSIE 2022) and is a whole school responsibility and priority.

The law entitles every child of a school age to a full-time education suitable to their age and any additional needs. Whilst we recognise that some medical conditions or SEND may provide barriers to education, the student's right to education remains the same as their peers. We will strive to work with families and students to minimise the barriers students face and put in additional support where necessary to ensure that all students are able to access their full-time education.

We recognise that there can be barriers to school attendance and for some students it is harder to attend school than others so we will continue to work closely with parents/guardians, seeking their support throughout the student's time with us. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but will consider the individual needs of the student and their family.

It is the legal responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their child accesses education either within a school or by education other than a school. This means the student must attend the college every day it is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances.

We would like everyone to maintain 100% attendance and it is our expectation that all students achieve at least 95% attendance.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Parents of day students perform their legal duty by ensuring their children attend regularly and are punctual.

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy. Attendance figures are published to the governing body through the Governors Report.

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible to ensure class registers are accurate and completed using the relevant DfE absence codes day to day; is responsible for implementation of this policy at the school, monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors and Head Teacher and supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for leading and supporting cases of persistent absence and monitoring absence data in liaison with the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) and reporting it to the Head Teacher and governors.

The Deputy Head (Academic) monitors attendance data across the school and, in liaison with Senior Tutor, at an individual student level to support early intervention, reducing absence before it becomes habitual. They report concerns about attendance/punctuality to the Head Teacher to tackle persistent absence/punctuality issues.

Senior Tutors lead on the communication with parents to discuss attendance issues.

## **Absence**

If there is a planned absence, for example a medical appointment, the parent/guardian of day students should notify the school in advance. Boarding students should make medical appointments in liaison with the School Nurse.

We encourage parents/guardians of all students to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of education for the minimum amount of time necessary. If an appointment is arranged by the school, they will be marked “authorised absence” by teachers. If an appointment is made by a parent/guardian, the school should be informed by phone or email at least 24 hours in advance.

All students' parents/guardians must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible. The final decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised rests with the school.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/guardian to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note or proof of the appointment or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Parents/guardians, onsite medical staff, Senior Tutors and senior boarding staff are the only people who can authorise absences. All absences are recorded on ISAMS and parents/guardians will be notified by email of any unauthorised absence.

Unwell boarding students will be supported by the boarding team and the school Nurse. If a student is too unwell to attend classes, they will be marked out by the appropriate staff member.

If a parent/guardian requires an absence of a student out of school during term time (for example a family holiday), they should put the request in writing to the student's Senior Tutor as early as possible. Please note that such a request will only be approved in exceptional circumstances, and you should not make any bookings before approval has been granted.

Students absent without permission from boarding will be dealt with through our Missing Students Policy.

### **Absenteeism**

Any student whose attendance falls below 95% will attend an absence meeting with their Senior Tutor. Disciplinary procedures or welfare interventions will be followed as appropriate.

Persistent absenteeism is attendance below 90%. If a student's attendance falls below this, it will be referred to the Deputy Head (Academic) and Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding).

Senior Tutor's will check the attendance data provided and follow up on any patterns of non-attendance half termly. Through regular monitoring, students who are identified as needing additional support with attendance will be targeted and the relevant actions discussed with the student and their parents/guardians. If there is no improvement, despite a collaborative effort, an escalation of support may be required. Depending on the individual circumstances, there may be a requirement for a multi-disciplinary

support, a targeted support meeting, parenting contract, involvement from the Local Authority Attendance Support Team or Integrated Children's Services. If there is still no improvement, the local authority may seek legal intervention.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for monitoring student absence and punctuality. ISAMS is the college information management system and is used to record attendance. The Deputy Head (Academic) will analyse attendance data to inform practices and next steps for individual students and cohorts who may need support.

A register is taken for each timetabled lesson and group tutor period. Teachers should take the register within the first 10 minutes of the lesson and report any missing students who have not arrived within the first 15 minutes. This should be done using the alert function on the electronic register.

An AM and PM register is recorded each day. An AM register will be marked if a student has been marked as present at any academic register point before lunch, and a PM register will be marked if a student has been marked present at any academic register post lunch.

For UKVI purposes, the school recognises a contact point each day Monday to Friday (when the school is open) if either an AM or PM register has been marked as present.

### **Sponsored Students**

Good attendance is part of the conditions of stay for sponsored students studying in the UK. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up. We may cease sponsorship of students who fail to meet the attendance requirements or those who miss ten consecutive contact points without authorisation from the Head Teacher.

Students missing 5 contact points without authorisation will be subject to a Pastoral Review with the Head Teacher and Dukes Student Immigration Manager. The student's Senior Tutor will also attend this meeting. This meeting will put in place a plan to support the student improving attendance or allow the school to increase support and monitoring of the situation.

Should a student miss 10 contact points without authorisation, the school will review the situation with the default outcome being that the school will cease sponsorship and report the absence to the UKVI at this stage. In such cases, UKVI are likely to curtail the student's permission to stay in the UK and the student will have to return to their home country.

### **Part-time Timetables**

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable is not used to manage a student's behaviour. Part time timetables will be documented and reviewed regularly and agreed with the student and parents.