



SAPIENCE
GIRLS ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

2023-24

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. AIMS

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. At Sapience Girls Academy (SGA), we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a key part in making our school successful.

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

At Sapience Girls Academy, we are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. This will be done through attendance awards in assemblies (see school behaviour policy)
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. A link governor is assigned responsible for attendance who will be responsible to work with the headteacher and attendance officer by meeting them monthly to review attendance data and ensure the policy is being implemented.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

3.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers in form time are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis in the school registers.

3.5 School office staff

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. The attendance register will be taken at 9:05am in the morning of each school day and at 1:20pm during the afternoon session. Registers will close at 9:15am in the morning and 1:25pm in the afternoon. Anyone arriving after 9:05 is considered late, in the afternoon, if pupils arrive later than 1:25pm will be considered late. Pupils arriving after 09:05 in the morning and 1:25pm in the afternoon will be marked as "late after registers have closed" (see **appendix 1** for attendance codes). Pupil arriving late after registers have closed will need to report to the school office in the first instance.

Any amendment to the attendance registers must show-

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See **appendix 1** of this document for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). A message can be left on the school answer phone. We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Please notify the school in such instances by calling the school office on **0161 652 8563** or emailing the school's admin Mrs. Maryam at admin@sgacademy.org.uk.

However, we ask parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not unavoidable, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

It is imperative that pupils arrive at school on time each day as those arriving late miss out on valuable learning during form and assembly time. To overcome persistent punctuality issues, the school has reviewed its punctuality policy and will apply the following steps.

- **1st late** - Verbal warning & message sent home from the school office via text/email
- **2nd late** - Call home to discuss with late arrival with parents
- **3rd late** - Parents to meet with attendance officer and lateness discussed along with a warning
- **4th late** - Parents meet with Head Teacher & Pupil placed on Attendance Report (pupil will be placed on report for 4 weeks on the first instance)
- **5th late** – Authority intervention (relevant agency will be informed)/referral to external authority such as council education officer.

If your child is unwell, please notify the office by 9:00am. If a child is persistently unwell for over 3 days a medical note **will** be required.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by calling the parent by 10am the same day
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents can request an update on their child's attendance at any time throughout the year by making a request to the school office. In addition to this, the school will provide attendance figures twice a year as part of a written pupil performance report.

5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Holidays During Term-Time

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school holiday schedule for Sapience Girls Academy is shown below and where necessary, these dates will be further amended to reflect staff training needs and Islamic holidays.

ANNUAL TERM TIMETABLE				
AUTUMN TERM	Term 1A	Trustee and Governing body meeting	Sunday 3 rd September 2023	33 days
		Performance Management meetings	Monday 4 th September 2023	
		STAFF INSET	Tuesday 5 th September	
		School begins	Wednesday 6 th September 2023	
		School ends	Friday 20 th October 2023	
	Half-term holiday	Monday 23 rd October-Friday 27 th October 2023		
	Term 1B	School begins	Monday 30 th October 2023	35 days
		School ends	Friday 15 th December 2023	
Winter Holiday	Monday 18 th December 2023-Monday 1 st January 2024			
SPRING TERM	Term 2A	STAFF INSET	Tuesday 2 nd January 2024	34 days
		School begins	Wednesday 3 rd January 2024	
		School ends	Friday 16 th February 2024	
	Half-term holiday	Monday 19 th February- Friday 23 rd February 2024		
	Term 2B	School begins	Monday 26 th February 2024	25 days
		Ramadan begins	10 th /11 th March 2024	
		School ends	Thursday 28 th March 2024	
	Spring Holiday	Friday 29 th March-Friday 12 th April 2024		
Eid Ul Fitr Holidays	9 th /10 th April 2024			
S U	Term 3A	STAFF INSET	Monday 15 th April 2024	28 days

		School begins	Tuesday 16th April 2024	
		Bank Holiday	Monday 6 th May 2024	
		School ends	Friday 24 TH May 2024	
	Half-term holiday	Monday 27th May – Friday 31st May 2024		
	Term 3B	School begins	Monday 3 rd June 2024	35 days
		School ends	Friday 19 th July 2024	
	Eid Ul Adha Holidays	Monday 17th June- Wednesday 19th June 2024		
	Summer Holiday	Monday 22nd July- Monday 2nd September 2024		

TABLE 1- ANNUAL TERM TIMETABLE 2023-24

The school takes a firm position that parents/carers only book their family holiday during the school holidays. If for a specific reason, where an absence during term time is unavoidable, a holiday request form must be completed prior to the holiday. A holiday request form can be obtained by contacting school office or emailing admin@sgacademy.org.uk (see example in appendix 2).

The Headteacher will decide whether or not to authorise a requested absence during term-time. The Headteacher may grant leave at their discretion for up to **5 days** in any school year. A parent/carer is not entitled (by law) to demand leave of absence for their pupil as a right and only the Headteacher can authorise term-time absence <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>.

The headteacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence having considered:

- The pupil's attendance record.
- Whether the holiday exceeds the maximum of 5 school days in any one year (unless it is felt that the experience would be of beneficial educational value or it is an exceptional circumstance).
- The dates of the holiday, ensuring that it would not prevent the pupil from taking important examinations/assessments.

Factors included in determining whether attendance will be approved include (but are not limited to):

1. No absence will be approved for pupils between January and GCSE examination dates (until completed) unless there are exceptional circumstances.
2. If a pupil's attendance is over 95%, an absence requesting up to 5 school days will be considered unless there is a specific reason not to.
3. If there is heavy snow, an absence will only be authorised if the family lives more than a mile from school and/or there are specific reasons why an adult could not walk with the pupil to school.
4. Whether leave at this point in time will be detrimental to the pupil's education.
5. Whether the pupil will miss any national tests or examinations?
6. Whether the pupil's attendance is a cause for concern?
7. Whether the proposed absence during the month of September or any other transition period.
8. Whether the pupil has already had leave during term time this year?
9. Whether the pupil has had leave of absence during term time in the previous school year(s).
10. Whether the pupil has had any absences which have been recorded as unauthorised in the current school.

5.2 Unauthorised Holidays During Term-time

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Therefore, **we strongly recommend that you do not arrange holidays in this period.** Regular attendance in Years 10 and 11 is particularly important in preparation for GCSE exams. Therefore, **requests for holiday absence will NOT be authorised in years 10 and 11.** Outside of these periods, the school may allow up to a maximum of **5 days** leave during term time in extenuating circumstances. Each request for absence will be dealt with on individual merit; **parents MUST consult the school prior to booking holidays.** Holidays exceeding **5 days** taken without permission will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's record and may result in the child being taken off roll from the school register. They will need to re-apply and will be considered for re-admission using our admissions criteria (see Admissions Policy). **You are strongly advised to complete a holiday request form and return it to the school for consideration and authorisation before booking any holidays. We require at least half a term's notice to consider holiday requests.**

5.3 Examples of Authorised Absence

- Hospital or Orthodontist appointment supported with appointment letter.
- College/Careers/Employment Interview (evidence required).
- Funeral of a close relative.
- Reported Illness of 2 days or less (unless medical evidence has been specifically requested)
- Illness of 3 or more consecutive days supported with medical evidence or a Home Visit.
- Emergency Doctor or Dental appointments (Evidence Required) *. **Routine appointments should be made outside of school hours**

5.4 Examples of Unauthorised Absence

- Leave of Absence NOT approved by the school.
- Absence NOT reported on the day or supported by written explanation upon return to school.
- Absence of 3 or more days WITHOUT medical evidence or Home Visit.
- Routine Doctor/Dental appointments.
- Arriving late after registers have closed.
- Reported Illness NOT authorised by the school.

5.5 Reducing persistent absence

Attendance figures after 4 weeks into the new academic year will be used to ensure a larger sample size is applied to assess overall school attendance. Students who have attendance at or below **90%** fall under the persistent absence category. These pupils are reviewed weekly, and the Attendance Officer will work with the respective parents to bring these attendance figures up. Persistent absence pupils (where no approved reason has been allocated for the absence) will be placed on an attendance report which will include restorative work to improve attendance. Details of all pupils with persistent absence (90% or below) will be placed on a log and monitored closely and reviewed weekly. The attendance officer will work with the parents of persistent absentees to improve their child's attendance at school. An attendance meeting with the attendance team and the headteacher takes place monthly where persistent absence is discussed and actions agreed to reduce any persistent absence.

6. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil attendance and absence on a daily basis. A weekly meeting takes place every Monday and pupils causing concern are discussed and referred for follow-up action. The Attendance Officer will monitor the registers closely and follow up any incorrect procedures or inconsistencies in recording attendance. The headteacher will meet with the attendance officer on a weekly basis to review attendance in the school.

6.1 Stages of Dealing with Unauthorised Absences

98% attendance – Reminder sent to parents via email/text on importance of attendance at school

96% attendance – Call from school attendance officer with reminder on the importance of attendance and evidence for any medical absences

94% attendance – Meeting with headteacher and parents. If no evidence or reason provided (such as a medical or fit note), pupil to be placed on report

90% or below attendance – Placed on persistence absence log and addressed using persistence absence process (see 5.5 above). Second meeting with both parents and headteacher also arranged with consideration of referral to external agencies (such as an education welfare officer)

6.2 Attendance at 95% or above will be dealt with our attendance officer (see 4.5 above) A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2). The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

6.3 Sapience Girls Academy collects and stores attendance data and uses it for internal purposes. For example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, each academic year by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

1.1.1 APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

1.1.2 Appendix 2 – Term-time Holiday Request Process

