



Westbourne
House School

CHICHESTER

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is the policy of Westbourne House School, which incorporates the Prep School, Pre-Prep, Early Years Foundation Stage as well as provision for boarding

Policy Statement

At Westbourne House, education is seen as a partnership between the family and the school. The school is committed to providing the highest quality of education for all pupils and parents/guardians who are also asked to support this objective.

Aims

The school follows the DfE Guidance – *Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2024)*, together with the DfE statutory guidance: *Children missing education Statutory guidance for local authorities (August 2024)*.

For pupils to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the school, they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. The school believes it is in the best interest of all concerned that requests for authorised leave are made honestly and that pupils are not complicit in concealing reasons for their absence.

Consistent and regular attendance is a requirement of the school. In exceptional circumstances, such as a pandemic, prolonged illness, recuperation or for compassionate reasons that result in extended absence, the school will provide work (either on-line or in hard-copy) and facilitate a pupil's return to full time education within an agreed time frame.

Practice and Procedure

All attendance is monitored and parents are asked to inform the school of absence of any kind. Attendance and absence is recorded within the Registration Manager module of the school's database – iSAMS. Any pre-authorised absence is also recorded within 'Out of School' on iSAMS, so that staff can easily gain access to it and it is also visible when taking a register. Any unreported absence is followed up immediately with a telephone call to the parents/carer/guardian and subsequently recorded on the electronic register as appropriate.

If attendance becomes a concern, parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the form teacher and a member of the pastoral management team in the Prep School or the Form Teacher in the Pre-Prep to discuss what measures will be implemented to improve attendance. If there is no or insufficient improvement, within the agreed time frame, the school may refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) through the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSL has overall responsibility for attendance. Weekly reports are produced and disseminated to the SMT for review. Concerns are addressed as outlined above.

All pupils are required to be in school by 8.25am. The school day ends at:

- **Pre-Prep (including EYFS):**
 - *Monday to Friday:* 3.15pm

- **Prep School:**
 - *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:*
 - Years 3&4: 4.30pm
 - NB: Some Year 3&4 pupils may be involved in matches on a Thursday. If this is the case and parents are watching the match, they may take their child home directly (after having 'signed-out' with the teacher in charge of the match)
 - Year 5: 5.15pm
 - Year 6: 5.20pm
 - Year 7: 5.25pm
 - Year 8: 5.30pm

 - *Wednesday*
 - Years 3-8: 3.45pm
 - NB: If involved in matches, pick-up times are advised in advance on the school's Sports Portal (SOCS/Teamsheet)

 - *Saturday*
 - Years 4-8 depart after matches (either morning or afternoon) and/or optional activities – pick-up times are advised in advance on the school's Sports Portal (SOCS/Teamsheet)
 - All sport matches are compulsory
 - Activities are optional and pupils must sign up for these by noon on the preceding Thursday

Many pupils remain at school later (Monday-Friday) to take part in extra activities under the supervision of a member of staff. Registers are taken manually at the beginning of these activities and, should a child be missing and staff have not been informed previously, their whereabouts will be checked with the School Secretary (Pre-Prep and Prep School).

Unless pre-authorized, pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day and should attend all lessons. Pupils are always accompanied by staff when attending trips, visits or sporting fixtures, the dates/times of which will have been notified to parents in advance and via the school's termly calendar.

Registration (Monday to Friday)

The school is required by law to maintain an Attendance Register and pupils are registered twice a day: once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The school uses an electronic registration system and the DfE National Codes (through iSAMS) to record attendance and absence:

- / \ – Present (AM and PM)
- A – Medical/Dental Appointments
- B – Educated Off-site
- C – Other Authorised Circumstances (*eg: funeral*)
- C1 – Regulated Performance
- C2 – Temporary Reduced Timetable
- D – Dual Registration
- E – Excluded/Suspended
- G – Family Holiday (NOT agreed)
- H – Family Holiday (*if previously agreed by the Head/Head of Pre-Prep*)
- I – Illness – General/Other
- J – Senior School Visit/Interview
 - NB: also used if pupil is attending senior school for assessments
- J1 – Employment/Educational Interview
- K – Educational Provision Arranged by LA
- M – Musical Activity
- N – No reason yet provided for absence
- O – Unauthorised absence
- P – Away Sporting Activity (off-site)
- Q – Lack of Access Arrangements by LA
- R – Religious Observance
- U – Late (after registers closed)
- V – Educational visit or trip
- W – Not attending session (Nursery)
- X – COVID-19 Related Absence
- Y – Exceptional Circumstances (*eg: absence due to COVID-19 but prior to official lockdown being put in place*)
- Y1 – Normal Transport Unavailable
- Y2 – Widespread Travel Disruption
- Y3 – Part of School Out of Use
- Y4 – Session Cancelled – School Closed
- Y5 – Subject to Sentence of Detention
- Y6 – Infection or Disease
- Y7 – Other Unavoidable Cause
- Z – Pupil Not Yet on Roll
- # – School Closed To Pupils
- ; – Illness – Confirmed case of COVID-19
- (– Self-isolating with COVID-19 symptoms

- [– Self-isolating – IN School Contact
-) – Self-isolating – OUTSIDE School Contact
-] – Self-isolating as part of quarantine requirements
- { – Clinically Extremely Vulnerable
- } – Restrictions as per Government advice
- > – DNU COVID-19 Related Illness DNU

Any pupil arriving after 8.30am but before the end of the registration period will be recorded as Late. Pupils missing from morning registration, without a valid reason, will be registered by their Form teacher with an O (Unauthorised absence) which is updated with the appropriate code once the reason has been established by the School Secretary (in both the Pre-Prep and Prep School).

A phone call will be made to the parents/carer/guardian of any pupils with an unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. From this call, should it be ascertained that the pupil was in fact dropped off at school but was not at registration, then the School Secretaries will put the Lost Child Procedure in place (please refer to Appendix 3 of the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy).

Once the registration session has closed and all pupils are accounted for, the Pre-Prep and Prep School Secretaries print off a copy of the day's absence report and school diary and post to the:

- Fire Board (in both the Pre-Prep and Prep School)
- School Nurse/Matrons' Department
- Catering Staff
- Sport Teachers (both Head of Boys' Sport and Head of Girls' Sport)
- Assistant Director of Studies during exam periods

Afternoon registration takes place at:

- **Pre-Prep (including EYFS):**
 - *Monday to Friday: 1.30pm*
- **Years 3&4:**
 - *Monday to Friday: Period 4b – 1.30pm*
- **Years 5-8:**
 - *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: Period 4c – 2.00pm*
 - *Wednesday: Period 4a – 12.30pm*

As per the morning registration, any pupils missing from afternoon registration without a valid reason will be registered by their Form teacher with an O (Unauthorised absence) and the same system that is used during the morning is put in place to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil.

Pupils leaving the school site because of a medical appointment or an approved absence are required to be signed out at the School Offices and in again if/when they return.

If a pupil feels ill during the day, they should notify a member of staff in the Pre-Prep or, if in the Prep School, they should report to the Matrons' Department to be assessed. If a pupil is too ill to remain at school, the parents/carer/guardian will be contacted. Pupils must not contact their parents directly and ask to be taken home.

Y5-8 Afternoon Prep Registration

Additionally, a Prep Registration (in form rooms) takes place at 4.45pm for Years 5 to 8 using iSAMs and the codes outlined above. The purpose of this additional registration is to ensure that the children are accounted for during the final sessions of the day which necessitates movement across the site for children involved in activities other than prep e.g. Chapel Choir, Orchestra and the academic clinics.

Saturday Registration

In order for the School's Saturday programme (compulsory sports fixtures and optional activities) to run smoothly and safely, as well as ensuring that attendance lists are accurate, pupils are requested to register as follows:

- **Optional Morning/Afternoon Activities:** pupils arrive at the Dining Hall for registration prior to being dismissed to the location of their chosen activity. The same process, used during the week, is put in place if a pupil is missing from their chosen activity.
- **Sport Fixtures:** pupils register with their sports coach as follows:
 - **Away Matches:** at the front pillars prior to departure (time advised on SOCS/teamsheet)
 - Parents are requested to advise the School Office (by 5.30pm on the preceding Friday evening) if it is their intention to take their child directly to his/her away fixture. This in turn is annotated on the paper copy of the teamsheet for the sports coach – held centrally in the school office – which is used by the sports coach as the register.
 - **Home Matches:** at pitch-side (time advised on SOCS/teamsheet)
 - **Optional Sports Programme/Training:** if a pupil is not involved in a match but would like to attend the optional sports programme/training; parents are requested to sign their child up for this by the end of the day on the preceding Friday. As with optional activities, pupils must arrive at the Dining Hall for registration prior to being dismissed to the location of their sports training session.

Saturday's registration is performed manually/in a paper format and filed weekly (as appropriate) in the Prep School Office – all other procedures apply as noted above.

Medical Appointments

The school requests that parents try to avoid making external appointments for their children during the school day. For medical appointments arranged necessarily at short notice, requests for authorised absence should be made to the School Office and copied to the Form Teacher.

Exceptional Leave

Requests for exceptional absence must be made in writing to the Headmaster or the Head of Pre-Prep and should reach the school at least 10 days in advance.

Whilst it is preferred that absence in term time is avoided, each request will be considered individually and decisions made based on a number of criteria including:

- The stage the pupil has reached in his/her school career
- His/her academic record
- The unique nature of the absence
- If the request is to participate in an off-site co-curricular activity such as sport or drama, the level of representation will be considered
- Whether the pupil is sponsored on a Child Student visa

The school understands that on occasions there are extenuating reasons why a pupil may need to be away from school and the Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep will provide authorisation where there are compassionate grounds. Parents are asked to provide as much advance notification and detail as possible, so that each request can be considered carefully.

All parents considering making a request for a holiday or absence for recreational reasons in term time are asked to weigh up the following points:

- The school year generally has between 180-190 days. Term dates are published sufficiently in advance to allow parents to make use of remaining days in the calendar year for holiday purposes.
- Missed lessons place pupils at an academic disadvantage and may have unsettling effects, both socially and academically. Other pupils may be disadvantaged due to the disruption caused by absence and it is always the responsibility of the pupil to catch up with any work that is missed in the Prep School and the responsibility of the parent in the Pre-Prep.
- If the request is not authorised then the period of absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register. In exceptional circumstances the School may ask to meet with parents to discuss any unaccounted periods of absence. All leave for holidays is at the discretion of the school and not an automatic entitlement. The basic framework and guidance is taken from [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/111/section-9), which states that leave of absence should not be granted unless:

- An application has been made in advance to the proprietor by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides; and
 - The proprietor, or person authorised by the proprietor in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.
- National Views – There has been a national campaign to maximise school attendance with fines imposed on irresponsible parents and, in extreme cases, the imposition by courts of parenting orders. In April 2017, the Supreme Court upheld a ban on term time holidays in state schools noting the disruptive effect of the learning on the individual child and on other pupils.

Child Student Sponsored Pupils

The school holds a Child Student sponsor licence which allows it to sponsor pupils under the Child Student route of the points-based immigration system. The school takes its responsibilities as a Child Student sponsor seriously, including monitoring sponsored pupils' engagement with their studies and reporting any changes to the UK Home Office.

In particular, the school has a duty to withdraw sponsorship of any pupil that misses 10 consecutive 'expected contact points'. The school defines an 'expected contact point' as a 'School Day' (which includes a morning and afternoon session).

Form Teachers are informed of any Child Student sponsored pupils in their class and that any unauthorised or unexplained absence of such a pupil should be immediately reported to the PA to Headmaster in the first instance. Action will be taken in accordance with the procedures outlined above and the school may request medical evidence as appropriate.

If attendance does not improve and a Child Student sponsored pupil accrues a total of 10 consecutive unauthorised absences on 'School Days,' the school will ask the pupil to leave the school. The school will make a report to the UK Home Office within 10 working days of the withdrawal, with a copy of the report saved on the sponsored pupil's record.

In the event of a period of long term-authorized absence (eg due to illness), the school will assess whether the pupil can still complete their course within their current Child Student visa, consulting with the pupil and their parent/guardian accordingly.

If the school concludes this will not be possible, the school will ask the pupil to leave the school. The school will make a report to the UK Home Office within 10 working days of the withdrawal, with a copy of the report saved on the sponsored pupil's record.

Monitoring and review

The School will review and monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy (and appendices – if appropriate). This policy will be kept up-to-date and amended to take account of legislative and regulatory changes.

| Last Review Date | Next Review Date | Reviewer(s) |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 2024 | October 2025 | Deputy Head – Academic Admissions Manager DSL PA to Headmaster – <i>in conjunction with the School Secretaries</i> |