



Southam  
College

*Attendance Policy*

Ratified by Governors: 22 October 2020

Date of Review: October 2021

## Southam College Attendance Policy

### Philosophy

Southam College is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance. It is the policy of our school to celebrate both.

All staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. We recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish a strong home-school links and communication systems. We will provide effective and efficient communications with students, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information advice and support in order to meet our objectives.

This policy is based on current government and Statutory Regulations.

### Objectives:

- To encourage students to achieve 100% and a minimum attendance of 96%.
- To improve the overall percentage of students attending school.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students to increase attendance levels.
- To develop a framework in which good attendance is promoted and attendance issues are addressed consistently.
- To build relationships with outside agencies, for example the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) – formally Attendance Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) to support students and families in promoting the need for good attendance.

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### Statutory/Legal Guidance:

Southam College acknowledges the legislation provided below:

*The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7* states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- to his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- to any special needs they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

*(note: for educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.)*

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Additional legal requirements may be found in: *The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006*.

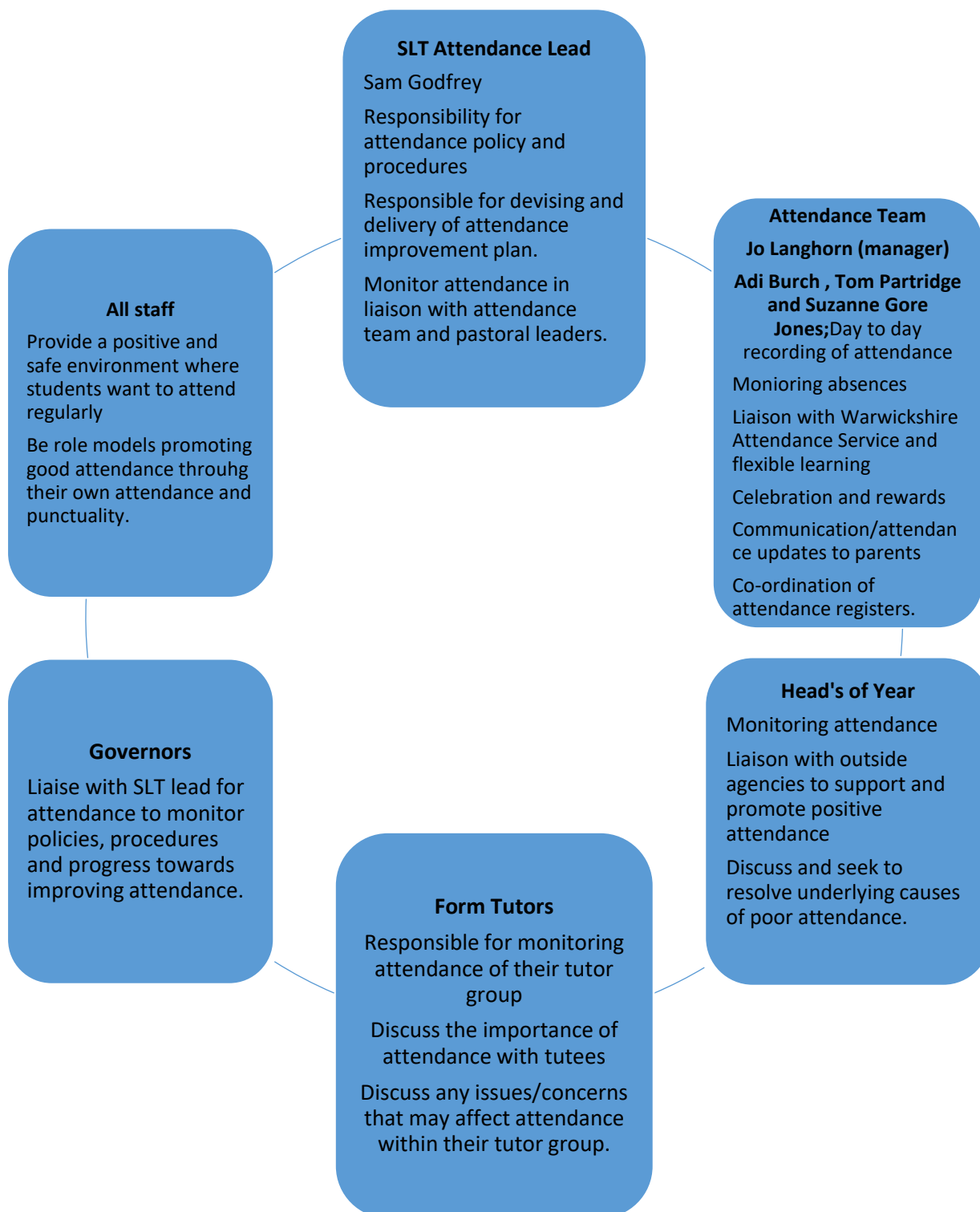
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**.

### Safeguarding

Southam College recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at the School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

If a student is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day the absence will automatically be unauthorised until medical evidence is provided by the parents to the school or contact is made directly with the attendance team or the Head of Year to discuss.

School Responsibilities



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### Procedures

#### Registers

Registers are taken each AM and PM session, within the first 10 minutes of the lesson. Non-attendance is identified each morning and afternoon as well as within every lesson.

In the morning if the child has not arrived in school and we have not been informed of a reason the following actions will be taken;

- A text message will be sent to the parent/carers

If no appropriate response is received

- A telephone call will be made on the second day of unexplained absence

If no appropriate response is received

- A home visit will be completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the unexplained absence.

The DSL notifies Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two consecutive days without explanation.

#### Vulnerable Students

Southam College works closely to monitor the attendance of vulnerable students. If we have concerns about students we work closely with outside agencies to ensure parents understand the importance of good attendance and attendance procedures.

- a. Watch List - Vulnerable students are included on the Watch List, the attendance of these students is monitored on a lesson by lesson basis and absences are reported to the appropriate HOY and contact is made with parents/carers as needed.
- b. Daily school contact from the attendance team to parents/carers for absences of vulnerable students or those at risk of persistent absence.
- c. Warwickshire Flexible Learning Team – HOY are in regular communication with the flexible learning team to ensure Ill Health students are engaged and progressing.
- d. Dual Registration – Southam College maintains its responsibility to ensure that students who are dual registered are attending and progressing with their education.
- e. SEND – Students with medical and emotional issues who are poor attendees are monitored through the watch list. At regular attendance meetings their attendance is discussed and intervention strategies are put into place.

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### Absence and Lateness

Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible to inform us if a child is to be absent or late on each day that the child is eligible to attend.

This can be done via;

1. **Telephone** 01926 812560 - press 1 for attendance
2. **Text** 01926 800044
3. **Email** [attend4114@welearn365.com](mailto:attend4114@welearn365.com)
4. **Login to insight** and update us online.

Students are late if they are not in their first session by 8.50am.

The attendance team and tutors will monitor lateness and punctuality. Sanctions and parental contact will be used as appropriate.

### Authorisation of Absence

We are advised by government legislation and Local Authority guidance that attendance can only be authorised if the following applies:

- Medical reasons - please note medical evidence and/or a parental written note will be asked for upon return to school for student's whose attendance falls below the schools expected threshold. Medical evidence will always be required if a student has five consecutive days absence from school due to illness. Notes are to be returned to student office.
- Religious celebration observation
- If transport provided by the school/Local Authority cannot bring the child to school.

Absences may also be authorised for the following reasons, but this will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher:

- Where a Leave of Absence has been completed by parent/carer and is agreed by the Head Teacher
- Where a student has a medical appointment that cannot be changed e.g. a consultant appointment
- When the student has no fixed abode, their parent is engaged in a trade which require them to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and the student has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months
- Other exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement and for a limited period.

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### Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours or in school holidays. However, we realise this is sometimes not possible. Students should come into school before and after appointments to ensure they miss as little lesson time as possible. Students should sign out and in at the attendance office before leaving/upon their return to school.

### Leave of Absence During Term Time

Arranging holidays during term time causes issues for many reasons:

- the student's education suffers;
- lessons and extra-curricular activities are missed;
- there is often no opportunity for teachers to set additional work or to assist a child in catching up on their return from holiday; and
- Parents may be in breach of their legal obligation to send their child to school.

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.

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- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**

### **COVID-19 related attendance information:**

#### Symptoms at Home

If your child develops **any** of the following symptoms whilst at home please do not send them into school and arrange a COVID-19 test. These symptoms are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If your child has **none** of the symptoms above but has a runny-nose or sore throat they may attend school if they feel well enough.

#### Symptoms in School

If your child displays any of the above COVID-19 symptoms whilst in school you will be required to collect them (and any siblings that are in your household). We require all children that are sent home with symptoms of COVID-19 to have a test.

The school must be informed of the result, if negative your child can return to school immediately. If positive, your child must remain in isolation for 10 days from when they developed symptoms (or longer if they still have a temperature at day 10). For any positive tests we will contact you to get the names of who your child has interacted with, within 2meters, over the last 48 hour period. This will support our other measures of contact tracing in school and allow us to inform other parties that are required to isolate. If a test result is returned as unclear then a second test must be arranged.

Details on arranging a test can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>



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### Sending students home to self-isolate

In the event of a member of our school community testing positive for COVID-19 we will contact you if your child needs to self-isolate for 14 days due to being a 'close contact'. 'Close contacts' will be identified based on proximity and time spent in close contact to the person that has tested positive. If you are contacted to inform you that your child needs to isolate, there is no need for the rest of your household to isolate unless someone in the household develops symptoms. Work will be provided for student who are self- isolating via Satchel:One and Microsoft Teams.

In the case of a positive test within our school community we will inform all parents via letter so that you are aware of the actions taken, after contacting 'close contacts'.

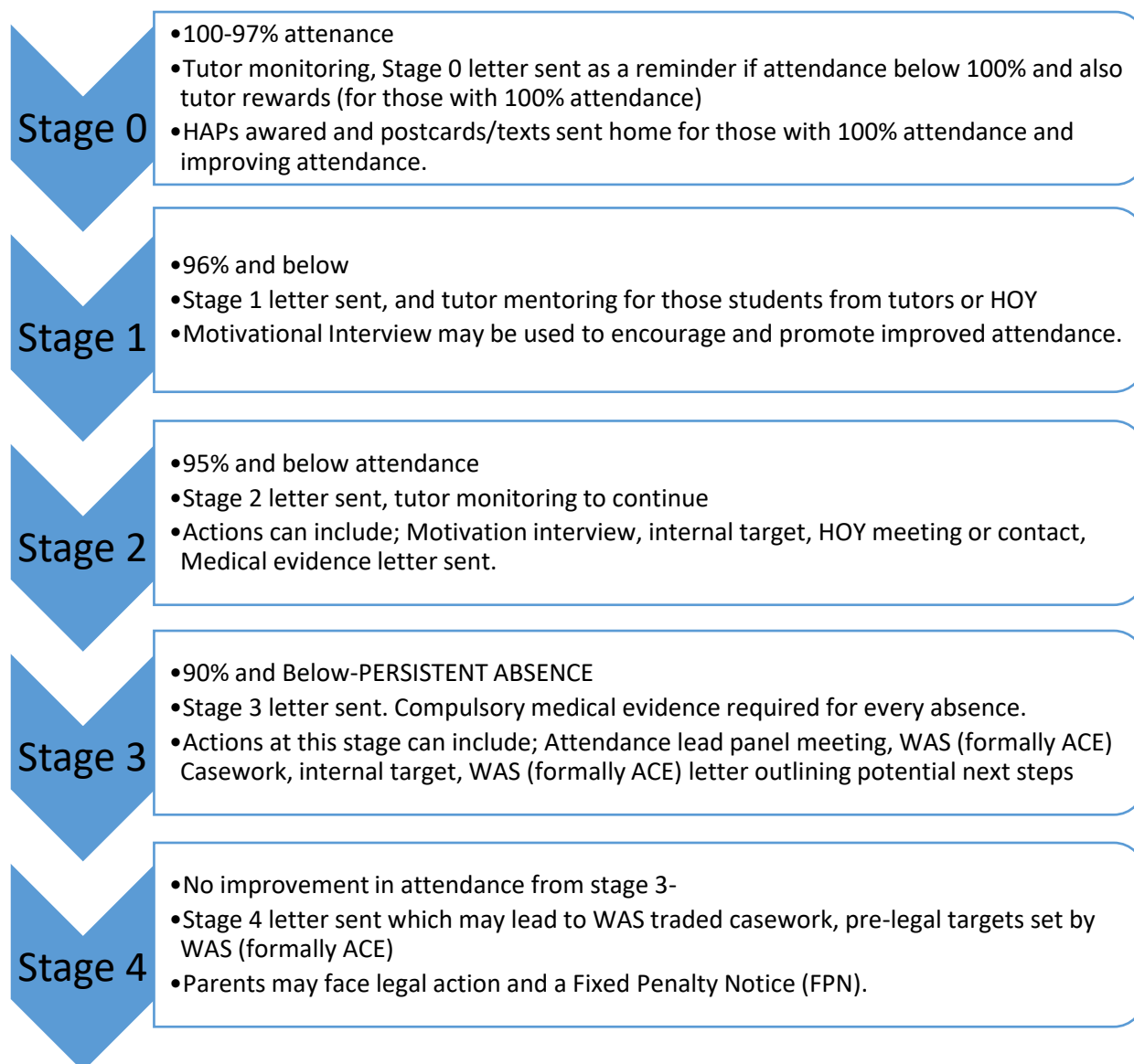
### Out of hours school contact

If your child is required to have a COVID-19 test and you receive the results outside of school opening hours, please **text** our COVID-19 textline on **07724 371488** with your child's name and the details of their results. This line will be monitored several times a day on the weekend and after school, and you will be contacted upon receipt of your message.

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### Attendance Intervention

Intervention will follow a staged approach and students will be monitored and different strategies will be used depending on the stage they are at in the process outlined below and their personal situation.



This flow chart is a guide and each case will be assessed and reviewed depending on each students' individual needs and which interventions will be most effective in supporting them to improve or maintain positive attendance. Early intervention will be sought so students can be supported meeting their attendance targets. The nature of student absence is crucial when applying this approach and individual circumstances will be considered.