



CAMPBELL
COLLEGE

EST 1894

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Revised: November 2021
Next Revision: June 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every student can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

Campbell College strives to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each student recognises the importance of attendance and punctuality as necessary attributes for later life. This policy is reviewed every 2 years by the Board of Governors, however, the College may review the policy earlier if required. The latest version of this policy is available on the College website.

APPENDIX 1 helps clarify the level of concern regarding attendance.

2. AIMS

- To maintain the overall attendance of students at Campbell College (Target is >95%)
- To provide a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance
- To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and students
- To promote good relationships with the Educational Welfare Service (EWS)

3. ROLE OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN

Under Article 45 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 ("the 1986 Order"), it is the duty of parents who have a child of compulsory school age to ensure their child receives efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and to any special educational needs they may have.

Paragraph 3 (1) of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order states that it is the duty of a parent of a registered student of a school to secure their regular attendance. This applies to all young people of compulsory school age who are on the roll of a school. Parents/guardians are legally responsible for making this happen.

It is a **parent/guardian's** responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a student's absence on the first day of absence. This can be done by contacting Front of House at Campbell College and leaving a message on the dedicated absence line. This should then be confirmed with a written note when the student returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, parents should contact their son's tutor to provide further information, enabling the school to assist in providing materials for home learning or any other necessary arrangements which may be required. Please see pages 3-4 for more details on attendance procedures.

Students are expected to be in school before 8:40am for registration and 'First Commitments', such as assemblies. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their son is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and is retained on a student's attendance record.

If a student appears reluctant to attend school, the issue should be discussed promptly with his tutor or Head of Year.

Medical or other appointments should, where possible, be organised to take place outside of school hours.

4. ROLE OF THE STUDENT

Each **student** at Campbell College has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly.

THE SCHOOL DAY STARTS AT 8:40am

5. ROLES WITHIN THE COLLEGE

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item for meetings on a regular basis.

The Vice-Principal (Pastoral) has overall responsibility for school attendance, and will monitor a student when his attendance falls **below 85%**. The Vice-Principal is responsible for EWS referrals. The VP will also be responsible for rewarding those students with excellent attendance.

Heads of Year will oversee punctuality and attendance within their year group, and will monitor attendance **below 90%**.

The **Head of Key Stage**, alongside the Head of Year, will review punctuality and attendance on a monthly basis and if attendance is approaching 85%. This will be followed up with appropriate actions and/or sanctions.

The Attendance Manager/Coordinator will follow up on unexplained absences and will record the reasons for post-registration absence/lateness. They will monitor the accuracy of attendance figures on SIMS Attendance.

Tutors will monitor the attendance and punctuality of students to morning registration and will monitor students with attendance **below 95%**.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance of boys at class through SIMS Lesson Monitor and will report concerns, initially to the Tutor.

6. EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE (EWS)

The Education Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, has a legal responsibility to ensure that parents meet their responsibility towards their child's education.

Regular attendance is an essential requirement for educational results and where attendance difficulties exist or a student's attendance falls below 85%, the EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

7. REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE

We believe that good attendance should be recognised, and at the end of each academic term, the College will acknowledge students with excellent attendance.

8. SANCTIONING POOR ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY

The College reserves the right to use any of its disciplinary sanctions when responding to poor attendance and/or poor punctuality. A student with poor attendance/punctuality may not hold positions of responsibility within the College (such as prefectship) and may lose privileges (for example representing the College, or bringing their car to school). The College reserves the right to withdraw a student with poor attendance or punctuality from College trips or other activities. Attendance and punctuality concerns may also be recorded on references from the College, including UCAS (university) references. Consideration will always be given to the reason(s) for absence.

9. STUDY LEAVE

The Department of Education states that there is no requirement for schools to grant study leave to pupils; however, we choose to do so for Years 12, 13 and 14 in the lead up to public examinations. When academic or attendance concerns exist, the College may withdraw the offer of study leave.

10. COVID-19

The usual rules and procedures on attendance continue to apply throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Students and parents must follow current Public Health Agency guidelines in terms of attending school and, given the evolving situation, the College will communicate any changes or updates to procedures through Parentmail. Parents should notify the Campbell College absence line about any absence that is Covid-19 related, including PCR tests, self-isolation or a positive test. Teaching and pastoral staff will be informed of Covid-19 absences in order to facilitate remote learning arrangements.

Absences due to Covid-19 are coded according to specific Department of Education absence codes (see **Appendix 2**).

11. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Procedures for Students

- Report for registration by **8:40am**
- If a student arrives late into school between 8:40am and 9:00am, they should see their tutor directly to be registered late.
- For late arrival after 9:00am, they must sign the late book at Front of House. At no time should a student be in school without having first recorded his attendance at registration, or having signed in at Front of House
- If it is necessary to leave school during the school day, students must sign out at Front of House. They must have evidence of prior permission from a parent (see 'Procedures for Parents/Guardians below). Students should inform their tutor of any such arrangements in advance and an appointment note must be signed by the tutor and then presented at Front of House when leaving. Students studying off-site as part of collaboration agreements must also sign out at Front of House.
- If returning to school during the school day, students must sign the late book at Front of House.

Procedures for Parents/Guardians:

Absence from School

- **If their son is ill or unable to come to school, parents must telephone the school before 10:00am.** Calls are only necessary on the first day of absence.
Calls should be made to the school's dedicated absence line: 028 9076 4101
- If their son is absent for more than one day, he should bring a note to his tutor on the morning of his return. For absences of one day only, no note is required (provided the parent has telephoned the absence line).
- If an absence is likely to be prolonged, parents should contact their son's tutor in order that we can assist in providing work or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.
- **Attendance and lateness are monitored closely and we ask for parents' support to ensure that their son is on time to school and his attendance is as regular as possible.**

Appointments during the school day

- Where possible, appointments should be made **outside** of school hours.
- If a student has to leave school for an appointment, the parent should contact the absence line as above or provide their son with a note explaining their leave of absence. The message/note must include the time of leaving and the time of return.
- If an appointment takes place in the morning, with the student arriving to school after registration, he must sign in at Front of House when he arrives and provide a letter explaining the reason for the late arrival.
- **In the interests of safety, we cannot authorise a student to leave the school grounds unless the parent/guardian has provided prior permission or the correct documentation.**

Holidays during term time (including attendance at events not connected to the College)

Students should not be taken out of school for holidays in term-time, since the continuity of learning and gaps in learning often take a long time to be resolved. We request that holidays are booked outside the school calendar. If there are exceptional circumstances, then a request should be made in writing and sent to the Head of Year, who in turn will discuss this with a Vice Principal.

All holidays during term-time are recorded as 'unauthorised absence'.

Parents will be responsible for ensuring their son catches up on work missed.

Procedures of the College

Absence from School

- Any absence not reported by 10:00am will trigger a telephone call from the school's Front of House office. This system is therefore reliant on boys signing in late, parents/guardians calling in at the appropriate time or prior notification being given of planned absences if it is to work efficiently and effectively.

Monitoring Attendance

- Attendance statistics will be printed on the academic reports parents receive. Parents can also view up to date attendance statistics through the *Firefly* Parents' Portal.
- The Department of Education considers attendance below 90% as 'Poor' (see **Appendix 1**).
- When issues over attendance become evident, the Tutor or Head of Year will contact home.
- Attendance letters (for those with very poor attendance below 85%) are sent every half-term.
- Depending on the level of absence, an appointment may be requested to meet with a parent/guardian in person.
- **If attendance drops below 85%, the school is obliged to discuss attendance with the Education Welfare Service, and may need to make a formal referral.**

Monitoring Punctuality

- Lateness statistics are held by the school and up to date information can also be accessed through the *Firefly* Parents' Portal.
- If a pattern of lateness presents, the tutor will contact parents.
- The Head of Year and Head of Key Stage will review punctuality on a monthly basis, and may apply sanctions as appropriate.
- If lateness in the mornings still does not improve following a conversation with home and sanctions, the school may request a meeting with parents to discuss and/or progress the matter as a disciplinary issue.

Monitoring Class Attendance

- The College records and monitors class attendance through SIMS Lesson Monitor.

Long-Term Absence

- If a student has an illness/injury that means they will be away from school for over five days, the College will try as far as possible to provide materials for remote learning so that they can keep up with their school work.
- For continued long term absence, the College will contact Educational Welfare Services to discuss the possibility of tuition outside of school.

To enable the College to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way, we will adhere to the guidance provided in the *Department of Education Circular 2021/16 (Attendance Guidance and Absence Recording by Schools)*.

APPENDIX 1

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE ON ABSENCE FIGURES

The Department of Education alongside the EWS has provided guidance to parents and schools regarding attendance statistics in a leaflet entitled:

[School Attendance Matters - A Parent's Guide](#)

Every single day a student is absent from school equates to a full day of learning.

For some, 90% school attendance may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that a student will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of the school year – nearly 4 weeks.

The table below gives some statistics to help clarify the level of concern:

Percentage Attendance	Number of days missed (academic year)	Characterised by Department of Education as:
100%	0	Excellent
95%	9 days (1 week 4 days of learning missed)	Satisfactory
90%	19 days (3 weeks 4 days of learning missed)	Poor
85%	28 days (5 weeks 3 days of learning missed)	Very Poor
80%	38 days (7 weeks 3 days of learning missed)	Unacceptable
75%	46 days (9 weeks 1 day of learning missed)	Unacceptable

The 'School Attendance Matters' document also clarifies the legal requirement for parents to ensure regular school attendance.

APPENDIX 2

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE (and Department of Education codes)

GENERAL SCHOOL CODES

/\	Present (/ present (AM), \ present (PM))
#	School holiday – school closed
!	No attendance required
X	Staff only should attend
Y	Exceptional closure due to unexpected circumstances

LATENESS TO SCHOOL

When a student does not attend the College at the correct time.

Includes:	L	Late before registration closed (arrival between 8:40am and 9:00am)
	U	Late after registration closed (arrival after 9:00am). This is an unauthorised absence

APPROVED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY (Student are credited with attendance, but not 'present' in class)

An activity taking place off the school premises which is approved by the Headmaster and is of an educational nature

Includes:	P	Approved Activity/Sporting Activity
	S	Study Leave as approved by the College (official study leave for public examinations only)
	V	Educational Visit
	W	Work Experience
	1	Community Providers/EOTAS (by approval of the Education Authority)
	2	Education Teaching Arrangement /Hospital Tuition
	5	Attending another School (as part of Entitlement Framework)
	6	Attending a training Organisation (under Entitlement Framework)
	9	Attending CAHMS
	[Covid-19: self-isolating and learning from home
]	Covid-19: social distancing and learning from home

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence is authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the College has received notification from a parent.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Includes:	A	Artistic Endeavour – an event which is agreed but not organised through the College
	I	Illness – where a note has been provided by parents
	M	Medical/Dental Appointments where the College has been notified in advance
	R	Religious observance (advance notice should be given)
	B	Bereavement – death of a close relative
	C	Suspensions
	F	A family holiday agreed in very exceptional circumstances
	O	Other exceptional circumstances agreed by the College
	(Covid-19 illness confirmed

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Includes:	D	No reason has been provided for the absence (more than 5 days unexplained)
	G	Family Holiday (not agreed by the College)
	H	'Other' absences which are considered as avoidable, and unacceptable by the school
	N	No reason provided for absence (temporary code only)
	{	Covid-19 self-isolating – vulnerable pupil/household member (medical evidence)
	}	Covid-19 self-isolating – no evidence of home learning

APPENDIX 3

MANAGING POOR ATTENDANCE / PUNCTUALITY

These procedures are for guidance and may be adapted according to circumstances.

• ATTENDANCE

TUTOR (Monitors attendance < 95%)

Initial Stages

Attendance drops below 95%
(more than 10 days of absence)

Discussion with student - clear expectations set. Tutor will contact home to ascertain the reason for the issue. Contact maintained.



HOY INVOLVED

Stage 1

Attendance below 90%
(more than 20 days of absence)

HoY will monitor the absence and when necessary, contact parents to discuss further or to arrange an interview.



HoKS INVOLVED

Stage 2

Attendance approaching 85% in a half term or attendance does not improve

HoY/HoKS will contact parents and arrange an interview to discuss further. Letter written to outline targets for improvement.



VP INVOLVED

Stage 3

Attendance falls below 85% (or 28 days lost)

VP will contact parents and a formal meeting will be held as necessary.



EWO INVOLVED

Stage 4

Attendance Concerns remain

VP will contact parents to inform them of EWS referral and arrange to meet.

• PUNCTUALITY

TUTOR

Initial Stages

Lateness is flagged as an issue

Discussion with student - clear expectations set. Tutor will contact home to ascertain the reason for the issue.



TUTOR / HoY

Stage 1

Lateness remains a concern

HoY Detention
Punctuality targets set.



HoY

Stage 2

Lateness remains a concern

School Detention.
Parents will be contacted.



HOY/HoKS

Stage 3

Lateness concerns continue

HoY/HoKS will contact parents and invite them in to discuss. Sanctions will escalate.



HoKS/VP INVOLVED

Stage 4

Attendance concerns remain despite parental contacts

HoKS/VP will write to/contact parents to arrange a further meeting. VP may make EWO referral. Formal disciplinary measures may follow.

• TRUANCY

Post registration truancy (where a student has registered his attendance and then absents himself from school) will usually be progressed as a disciplinary issue and may involve formal disciplinary sanctions. Truancy will be dealt with by the Vice-Principal.