



# Attendance Policy

**Member of staff responsible:**

**Deputy Head (Operations)**

Last reviewed November 25

Next review due November 26

The policy requires ELT approval

Location: Every/Parent Portal

## Definition of Terms

|         |                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| College | Ashville College, including the Boarding Houses, Ashville Acorns Pre-Prep (including Reception), Prep School, Senior School and Sixth Form |
| ISAMS   | Computerised system used to store pupil information in College                                                                             |
| Pupils  | Pupils who attend the College including pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)                                                  |

### Other policies to be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Children Missing Education Policy
- College Behaviour Policy
- Remote Learning Policy

### Other documents to be read in conjunction with this policy:

- [Working together to improve school attendance August 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-august-2024)
- <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

## 1. Introduction

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns from the outset. Schools that have good attendance recognise that it is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture.

Pupils at Ashville are encouraged to take full advantage of their educational opportunities through maximum attendance and are expected to attend all prescribed lessons and activities. Punctuality is equally important. Parents and teachers have a duty to ensure that pupils attend school for every school day except in the case of illness or if prior permission for absence has been granted.

For the welfare, health and safety and educational benefit of all pupils, Ashville College registers pupils in all years, including Sixth Form. Ashville College requires regular attendance, and the presence of pupils is checked in the morning and afternoon to fulfil the legal requirement. Also, in the senior school every lesson is registered. In the Sixth Form, pupils who do not have a lesson (particularly in period 5), must sign in with the Sixth Form Co-ordinator at the start of the lesson.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in the Sixth Form.

## 2. School attendance and the Law

This Policy complies with the requirements in:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

The attendance register is a legal document. Schools must take a register at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session. We cover more than the legal requirement in the senior school by also registering every lesson.

Ashville uses the statutory registration codes, please see **Appendix 1** for the Registration Codes used by the school.

Only Ashville (and not parents/carers) may authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for the absence is provided by the parent/carer, the College may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded using the appropriate code in **Appendix 1**.

The legal framework governing school attendance is summarised in school attendance:

Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2016), published by the Department for Education (DfE):

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781111/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) updated 2024.

Advice to parents from the Government:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Ashville follows guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) regarding school attendance.

### **Attendance Returns**

We provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O). We provide the local authority with this data on a monthly basis.

### **Sickness Returns**

We provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

## **3. Registration**

**Registration times for the Schools: (the below times cannot be longer than 30 minutes).**

Only authorised staff may complete registers. Electronic registers are used in every class via iSAMS.

If the electronic register is unable to be taken, a paper register will be taken and given to the Attendance Officer in the Senior School or the Head's Secretary in Prep school who will then input the information on iSAMS.

| Registration Times                   | AM             | PM           |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Acorns and Reception                 | 08:30 to 8:45  | 1:00 to 1:15 |
| Prep School                          | 08:30 to 08:40 | 1:00 to 1:15 |
| Senior School & 6 <sup>th</sup> Form | 08:35 to 08:45 | 2:15 to 2:25 |

#### **4. Monitoring attendance**

All pupils' attendance is monitored weekly by Form Tutors using the absence report from iSAMS. Half termly meets take place between Form Tutors and tutees to review their attendance alongside merits, detentions, and punctuality.

Attendance is discussed at pastoral meetings between the Deputy Heads) and Heads of Lower School, Upper School and Sixth Form. During these meetings intervention is discussed, reviewed and actioned for pupils if attendance is below 95%, without a justifiable explanation. When attendance becomes a concern, parents of pupils will be contacted.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, a formal letter will be sent home (see sample letters in Appendix 2). As part of the intervention, Early Help may be offered. If the attendance of the pupil does not improve, in the following two weeks, to the required standard (above 90%), with further unauthorised absences having occurred, then the case will be progressed to a Deputy Head.

##### **4.1. Prep School**

Class teachers manage issues related to attendance in the first instance. Teachers monitor, record and respond to pupil attendance. Where there is low attendance of less than 95% without justification this is reported to the Deputy Head. Attendance is also discussed at pastoral meetings between the Deputy Head and Head and a termly report is run to identify pupils of concern. The Deputy Head will follow up with parents and continue to monitor. Thereafter, a meeting for parents with the Head of Prep will be called.

##### **4.2. Acorns**

In Acorns the staff have a paper register that they complete every morning, lunch and at the end of the day. Staff write the exact time of arrival and departure. Attendance is then transferred from the manual register to iSAMS by the Pre-Prep Secretary.

It is not a statutory requirement for children to attend Acorns, however, we do ask parents to phone or email to let us know if their child will not be attending. Attendance is monitored as part of our Safeguarding Policy. If a child has not arrived by 8.50am and no reason has been provided for their absence, we will phone the parents to ascertain the whereabouts of the child.

#### **5. Punctuality**

Good punctuality is essential to maximise learning and develop positive behaviours which are transferable to higher education or the workplace. Ashville, therefore, expects all pupils to arrive punctually in good time for registration. Pupils are expected to be punctual to morning registration and all lessons. Pupils in Lower School or Upper School who are late into school must sign in at reception. Sixth Form pupils must sign in with the Sixth Form Co-ordinator. For safeguarding reasons, Sixth Form pupils are expected to attend morning registration even if they

have free study periods before later lessons. Arriving late, only for lessons will be considered unauthorised absence. If a pupil is regularly late, the Tutor/Head of Lower School, Upper School or Sixth Form will contact their parents. This will usually be by telephone to see if there is a problem with which we can assist. Persistent lateness to school will be addressed by intervention from the Head of Lower School, Upper School or Sixth Form and then a Deputy Head in Senior School. See sample letter in Appendix 2.

Punctuality shows respect for others, and we therefore expect pupils to be punctual to lessons. Pupils who arrive late to a lesson will be warned that this is unacceptable. In Senior School, repeated lateness will trigger a concern, which could lead to an appropriate sanction e.g. a Friday after school or Saturday morning detention (see the College Behaviour Policy).

If pupils are expected to be in school and fail to register in the morning, once initial checks have been completed and if the pupil is not found, the Attendance Officer will investigate and contact parents if necessary. If a pupil doesn't appear to a lesson within the first 10 minutes, teachers should e mail the On Call group on [oncall@ashville.co.uk](mailto:oncall@ashville.co.uk) so that the pupil can be located.

### **5.1. Prep School**

The Prep School take active steps to encourage excellent levels of punctuality. Pupils who are late to morning registration report to the Prep Office where the late mark is recorded on the school registration system, iSAMS. Class teachers manage issues related to punctuality in the first instance. Where there are high levels of pupils being late to school, this is reported to the Deputy Head who will follow up with parents and continue to monitor. Thereafter, a meeting for parents with the Head of Prep will be called. Pupils being late to school is discussed at pastoral meetings between the Deputy Head and Head and a termly report is run to identify pupils of concern.

### **5.2 Acorns**

In the Pre-Prep school, we encourage parents to drop children on time to ensure a smooth start to the school day. We remind parents via newsletters to be punctual.

## **6. The role of parents**

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children receive efficient full-time education by regular school attendance. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child, and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure pupils arrive at school on time.

Parents also have a responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence and when they may be expected to return and resume their studies.

In cases of unavoidable prolonged absence due to illness or other circumstances, the College will support the pupil and family by sending appropriate work home and ensuring that pupils can log into lessons remotely. For pupils who are remote learning, parents are expected to support their child/ren's remote learning, as per the Remote Learning Policy.

## **6.1. Parents of Prep School pupils are asked to:**

- 6.1.1. notify the school if their child is absent via an email to [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) before 9am on the morning of absence or the night before. We kindly ask that you confirm the date, duration (if known) and the reason for the absence.
- 6.1.2. arrange medical appointments during the holidays or outside of the school day, wherever possible.
- 6.1.3. ensure that if a medical appointment falls during term time and cannot be arranged during the school holiday then up to ½ a day absence can be authorised by the Head of the Prep School.
- 6.1.4. be aware that permission for a pupil to be out of school for a day's absence or more is at the discretion of the Head. Requests should always be made in writing by the parents, to the Head via email [head@ashville.co.uk](mailto:head@ashville.co.uk).

## **6.2. Parents of Lower School, Upper School and Sixth Form day pupils are asked to:**

- 6.2.1. notify the school if their child is absent via e-mail to the Attendance Officer on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) before 9am on the morning of absence. We kindly ask that you confirm the date, duration (if known) and the reason for the absence.
- 6.2.2. arrange medical appointments during the holidays or outside of the school day wherever possible.
- 6.2.3. ensure that if a medical appointment falls during term time and cannot be arranged during the school holiday then up to ½ a day absence can be authorised by the Attendance Officer on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) copying in the tutor and Head of Year.
- 6.2.4. be aware that permission for a pupil to be out of school for a day's absence or more is at the discretion of the Head. Requests should always be made in writing by the parents, to the Head via email [head@ashville.co.uk](mailto:head@ashville.co.uk) in advance.

## **7. Holidays**

Parents are expected to use school holidays for family holidays etc. In particular, parents and guardians should adhere to the school term dates which are published a year in advance.

Permission for a pupil to be out of school for a day's absence or more is at the discretion of the Head. Requests should always be made in writing by the parents, to the Head via email [head@ashville.co.uk](mailto:head@ashville.co.uk).

The College will not provide work for pupils who have chosen to take holiday in term time.

Requests for absence due to religious festivals will be considered favourably.

Requests for unavoidable early departure or late return for any pupil, should be directed to the Heads of Lower School, Upper School or Sixth Form if less than half a school day and the Attendance Officer should be copied in on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk).

## **8. Requests for regular time out of school**

Requests for pupils to miss school on a regular basis should be made in writing to the Head on [Head@ashville.co.uk](mailto:Head@ashville.co.uk). Only requests for elite/high performance pupils will be considered. The explicit expectation is that these pupils will actively catch up on work missed in these lessons and the impact of the time out of school will be reviewed regularly.

## **9. Responsibility of pupils in Senior School**

Pupils have a responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well and to arrive at School in time for morning registration at 8.35am. If for any reason, a pupil needs to leave the school site during the school day, their parents must have informed the school on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) prior to the absence and the pupil must sign out at reception.

If a Sixth Form pupil needs to leave the site during the school day, for example to attend a medical appointment, their parents must have informed the school on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) in advance. They must sign out with the Sixth Form Coordinator or school reception and sign back in with the Sixth Form Coordinator or school reception on their return.

If a pupil is taken ill during the day, they must make their way to the Medical Centre where they can be assessed. If a pupil is not well enough to return to lessons a member of the Medical Centre team will contact the pupil's parents to collect them. Pupils must not contact parents or guardians directly to request to be collected from school.

Failure to attend school regularly and punctually or failing to attend registration without good reason or leaving the school without signing out at reception constitutes a breach of the School's Behaviour and Exclusion Policy and may lead to formal disciplinary action being taken.

Pupils in certain year groups may be granted study leave during periods of public examinations.

## **10. University Open Days**

We appreciate that open days are an important part of the university application process, and we encourage pupils to attend them in order to make well-informed decisions about their next steps. Every pupil is permitted three days out during school time to attend university open days. We kindly ask that the rest are booked at weekends or during school holidays. These do not need to be requested from the Head. However, please do inform the Sixth Form Coordinator on [SixthForm@ashville.co.uk](mailto:SixthForm@ashville.co.uk) and the Attendance Officer on [absence@ashville.co.uk](mailto:absence@ashville.co.uk) in advance of these planned absences.

## **11. Responsibilities of staff**

Senior School staff must register attendance in each of their lessons using iSAMS within the first 10 minutes of their lesson. Any absence must be followed up with the Attendance Officer and staff know to email the On Call group if they have pupils missing from their lesson who should be present on [on-call@ashville.co.uk](mailto:on-call@ashville.co.uk)

Prep School staff must register attendance of pupils in the morning and afternoon using iSAMS within the registration times. When registering co-curricular clubs all staff must register at the beginning of the club and record the dismissal to parents.

Monthly reports will be run to show overall percentage attendance by child. These reports will be shared with the relevant Heads of Lower and Upper School or the Head of Sixth Form.

## **12. Children at risk of missing education**

The School will report to the Local Authority if it has a serious concern over a child's attendance or the child has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of ten days or more.

See Children Missing in Education Policy.

## Appendix 1

### Attendance Codes September 2024

|    |                                                                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | No Reason Yet Provided For Absence [N]                                               |
| 2  | Illness [I]                                                                          |
| 3  | If the pupils are In Medical Centre [A]                                              |
| 4  | Educated Off Site [B]                                                                |
| 5  | Other Discretionary Authorised Circumstances [C]                                     |
| 6  | Dual Registration [D]                                                                |
| 7  | Excluded [E]                                                                         |
| 9  | Family Holiday (NOT Agreed) [G]                                                      |
| 10 | Family Holiday (Agreed) [H]                                                          |
| 11 | Interview [J1]                                                                       |
| 12 | If a pupil is elsewhere on site [+]                                                  |
| 14 | Medical / Dental Appointments [M]                                                    |
| 15 | Absent in other or unknown circumstances [O]                                         |
| 16 | Approved Sporting Activity [P]                                                       |
| 17 | If the pupils are In Learning Support [LS]                                           |
| 18 | Religious Observance [R]                                                             |
| 19 | Study Leave [S]                                                                      |
| 20 | Late (After Registers Closed) [L]                                                    |
| 21 | Educational Visit or Trip [V]                                                        |
| 22 | Work Experience [W]                                                                  |
| 23 | Non-Compulsory School Age Absence [X]                                                |
| 24 | Exceptional Circumstances [Y] i.e. Absent due to transport or bad weather Y1, Y2 etc |
| 25 | Pupil Not Yet On Roll [Z]                                                            |
| 26 | School Closed To Pupils [#]                                                          |
| 27 | Lack of Access arrangements [Q]                                                      |
| 28 | Arrived in school after registration is closed [U]                                   |





## Appendix 2

### Sample parent letters regarding absence

#### Anxiety 1<sup>st</sup> letter

Dear Parent {Name}

{Pupil Name} has been absent for {#} days of school this academic year and their attendance has dropped below the Department of Education recommended threshold of 90%.

We know that parents may be concerned about their children's mental health. Please remember that anxiety, whilst sometimes a difficult emotion, is normal. In many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue more than being away from school, which might exacerbate it.

We understand that various factors may contribute to this, and we are committed to working with you to address any challenges {pupil name} may be facing. Rather than keeping {Pupil Name} away from school during this time we would much rather you encourage your child to attend school and that you let us know about your thoughts so that we can work together. It is important to us that all children feel safe and supported when attending school and we are keen to work with you to ensure that {Pupil Name} feels this way when they are here.

Please contact {pupil's tutor or staff member name and contact information} to arrange a phone call so we can assist in ensuring {child's name's} progress.

Yours sincerely

#### Anxiety 2<sup>nd</sup> letter

Dear Parent {Name}

Following my previous contact, we haven't heard from you regarding {pupil's name} absence.

{Pupil Name} has been absent for {#} days of school so far, this academic year and their attendance has dropped below the Department of Education recommended threshold of 90%.

{Pupil name} will continue to fall behind their classmates with their academic progress by not attending school. At Ashville College we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible and are concerned that they continue to miss out on their education, social development, and overall well-being.

It is important to us that all children feel safe and supported when attending school and we are keen to work with you to ensure that {Pupil Name} feels this way when they are here. We would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss the specific circumstances affecting [child's name]'s attendance to explore potential solutions together. Your active participation is important in this process and this meeting will provide an opportunity for us to better understand your needs and to identify ways in which the school can offer support.

Please call {Pupil Name}'s Head of Year to arrange a meeting to support you with {pupil's name} attendance and we look forward to working together to ensure [child's name's] continued success at Ashville College.

Yours sincerely

## Illness 1<sup>st</sup> letter

Dear Parent {Name}

{Pupil Name} has been absent for {#} days of school so far this academic year and their attendance has dropped below the Department of Education recommended threshold of 90%.

We know that sometimes pupils cannot come to school because they are unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other pupils for anything other than mild illness.

We also know that pupils fall behind in their academic progress, social development, and overall well-being when they miss school. At Ashville College we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible as we build life skills, life-long friendships and prepare your child for future success.

We would like to work with you to achieve this – please call {Pupil Name}'s class tutor if there is anything we can do to help – for example work to be sent home to catch up on missed lessons, so we can ensure {child's name's} progresses.

Yours sincerely

## Illness 2<sup>nd</sup> letter

Dear Parent {Name}

{Pupil Name} has been absent for {#} days of school so far this academic year and their attendance has dropped below the Department of Education recommended threshold of 90%.

We know that sometimes pupils cannot come to school because they are unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other pupils for anything other than mild illness.

We also know that pupils fall behind in their academic progress, social development, and overall well-being when they miss school. At Ashville College we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible as we build life skills, life-long friendships and prepare your child for future success.

We would like to work with you to achieve this – please call {Pupil Name}'s class tutor if there is anything we can do to help – for example work to be sent home to catch up on missed lessons, so we can ensure {child's name's} progresses.

Yours sincerely

### **Persistent Lateness 1<sup>st</sup> letter**

Dear {Parent name}

Re: Persistent Lateness

We have noticed that {Pupil Name} is often absent in the mornings {# of times} this academic year.

We know that mornings can be difficult for some pupils, and we are keen to help to improve {Pupil Name}'s attendance. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all our pupils in school, on time, every day. Regular and consistent school attendance is essential for their academic progress, social development, and overall well-being.

We would like to talk to you to discuss avenues for support to help {Pupil Name} attend school well. Please contact [insert staff member name and contact information] to arrange a phone call so that we can explore potential solutions.

Yours sincerely

### **Persistent Lateness 2<sup>nd</sup> letter**

Dear {Parent name}

Following my previous contact, we haven't heard from you regarding {pupil's name} absence.

{Pupil Name} continues to be absent in the mornings - {# of times} this academic year.

We would like to talk to you to discuss how we can help {Pupil Name} attend school well. Please contact [insert staff member name and contact information] to make an appointment.

This meeting will provide an opportunity for us to better understand your needs and to identify ways in which the school can offer support to ensure {pupil's name} attendance can be improved.

Yours sincerely

### Appendix 3

| Nature of absence                                                           | Who should approve                                                                               | Process                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sickness: 1 day to 5 days<br><br>Sickness Long term                         | Attendance Officer<br><br>Head of Year                                                           | Email sent to:—Attendance Officer on absence@<br><br>cc. HOY / Tutor<br><br>Email sent to: HOY<br><br>cc. Attendance Officer/ Tutor / Deputy Head<br><br>If the sickness is viral or consistent by many pupils – cc Health Centre Manager in too for tracking of any pandemics / virus passing through school. |
| 1 day or less: sickness / medical appointments                              | Attendance Officer                                                                               | Email sent to Attendance Officer on absence@<br>cc. Tutor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Family holiday term time                                                    | Head                                                                                             | Email sent to Head@<br>cc. Attendance Officer on absence@/HOY / HM / Tutor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Interview for another School / College / University                         | Head (with the exception for university interviews – to be sent to Head of 6 <sup>th</sup> Form) | Email sent to: Head @ HOY / HM / Tutor / Attendance Officer on absence@/6 <sup>th</sup> Form Co-ordinator on SixthForm@/ Admissions                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Sporting commitment – non- school related – 1 day                           | Head                                                                                             | Email sent to Head@<br>cc. HOY / HM / Tutor / Head of PE/Attendance Officer on absence@                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Visa / consulate related issues                                             | Attendance Officer                                                                               | Email sent to absence@<br>cc. HOY / HM / Tutor / Admissions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Special Event, non-school related: weddings /funerals /awards / moving home | Head                                                                                             | Email sent to Head@<br>Cc HOY / HM / Tutor/Attendance Officer on absence@                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                                                                                          |                    |                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Driving Test                                                                             | Attendance Officer | Email sent to absence@<br>cc: SixthForm@                             |
| Issues relating to well-being and bereavement more than 1 day absence or regular absence | Head of Year       | Email sent to HOY<br>cc. Attendance Officer on absence@ / HM / Tutor |

