

Student's Attendance and Absence Policy 2025/26



1. Purpose of Policy

To clarify the expectations in terms of student attendance/punctuality and the procedures to report absences. Excellent attendance is seen as central to outstanding academic performance and pastoral care be able to reach their potential

At The Sixth Form Bolton we expect all students to have 100% attendance and punctuality. Research shows poor attendance and punctuality has a seriously detrimental effect on student outcomes including results and progression to their next steps. This policy is designed to clarify expectations and establish common practice.

2. Introduction

The Sixth Form has a daily parental absence telephone call policy. Any missed lessons represent 'lost learning' which they will be expected to repay in the week immediately after their return to The Sixth Form.

Students are expected to attend all lessons and on time throughout their time at the College. A register will be taken electronically using the college's online registration system, DAVE, at the beginning of every session. This includes tutorials, one to one appointments the sessions in the professional growth programme suite.

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3. Punctuality

Punctuality is a fundamental requirement at The Sixth Form, as it allows students to not only achieve their academic potential but also demonstrate a key employability characteristic. Late arrival to class results in missing key lesson objectives and consequent lack of understanding when completing subsequent tasks. Furthermore, a lack of punctuality demonstrates a lack of respect for both teacher and fellow students. As in employment, it is a student's responsibility to make necessary arrangements to ensure excellent punctuality.

Excellent punctuality is expected for all parts of a student timetable: subject classes, tutor groups, Professional Growth Programme in addition to any support workshops they have been referred to. Staff, Students and Parents can view our data related to punctuality in real time, once the portals are operational. Poor punctuality could stop future increases (subject to The Sixth Form funds) to weekly bursary payments. All Students with poor punctuality will be dealt with using The Sixth Form's Disciplinary Policy.

Students will be marked late ('L' in the register) if they arrive after the start of the lessons, and the number of minutes late to the session will be noted at the time arrival. Both the L and the minutes can be seen on the parent/student portal.

4. Absence Procedure

It is recognised that there may be rare occasions where a student may miss lessons due to genuine illness or other extenuating circumstances. In such circumstances, students must follow the daily parental absence telephone call policy.

At The Sixth Form Bolton, we expect students to let their progress tutor and subject teachers know in advance if they are going to be absent from classes due to a scheduled appointment.

In the event of illness, The Sixth Form's absence procedures are:

- A parent/guardian must telephone The Sixth Form (01204 846215) every day, before 10am (regardless of the start time of the first lesson), that you are absent to give a reason for student absence. In certain circumstances a medical sick note may be required.
- You may also report any absence by using the Parent Portal but again this must be before 10am on the day the absence regardless of the start time of the first lesson.
- If you are aware of an absence prior to the actual date (essential medical appointments only) you must inform your Progress Tutor and also Student Information in advance. Routine dental or medical appointments should be made outside of lesson times.
- Proof of absence must be shown to the staff at student Information or to the Progress Tutor. If a student needs to leave The Sixth Form during the day they must go to Student Information and sign out. This is important in terms of Health and Safety as we need to know who is in the Sixth Form at any given time.
- Students should also email their progress tutor to advise them of the length of their absence and support needs during their absence. Also, the learner is to email their subject teachers to get details of any work missed.

In normal circumstances during a period of absence, we expect students to maintain daily email contact with their progress tutor and subject teachers to ensure the student is able to maintain learning. If the student, parent/carer does not maintain contact, they can expect to receive a phone call from the College.

Authorised absences –only where the college is notified in advance

- A hospital appointment (appointment card or appointment letter must be presented to Student Information).
- An orthodontist appointment (appointment card or appointment letter must be presented to Student Information).
- Visit to university to attend an open day/interview; a career-related interview or audition (appointment letter must be presented to Student Information).
- Attendance at court or an appointment with a legal adviser (appointment letter must be presented to Student Information).
- Practical driving test (appointment letter must be presented to Student Information).

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence

- Holidays* in term time.
- Part or full-time work that is not part of the student's programme of study
- Routine medical appointments (e.g. doctor, optician, physiotherapist and dental appointments) which can be made outside college commitments
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Driving lessons
- Driving theory test

Work Missed

Whatever the reason for an authorised absence, it is the student's responsibility to complete work missed as quickly as possible. Staff will support individuals following a period of absence to help students get back on track. However, if students do not take active steps to catch up on missed work, they may face disciplinary action in line with the positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures.

Students who feel unwell whilst in college should report to the Student Information desk where they will be asked to sit quietly whilst members of the MIS staff/progress tutor contacts parent(s)/carer(s) to decide whether or not it is appropriate to let them go home. If symptoms persist and students are permitted to leave, they will be marked absent for any sessions missed. Students who go home ill without reporting to the Student Information team will be marked as an unknown absence and may face disciplinary action.

Student illness, unless supported by a doctor's note, will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

Long-term sickness/medical conditions

The college will make reasonable adjustments to support a student to maintain learning during periods of long-term sickness or medical conditions through the Fitness to Study procedures.

5. Absence and bursary checking

The Bursary will be paid based on the previous week's attendance and a student must have zero unauthorised attendance marks to qualify for payment. It is a student's responsibility to check that their attendance records are accurate. Any attendance queries must be resolved on the Monday following the previous week's attendance. Any appeals must be directed to the progress tutor initially. If there are unauthorised absences, because the absence reporting procedure has not been complied with, this will result in bursary payments being stopped. To receive a weekly payment, the absence approval policy must be followed and academic progress must be being made/maintained. The Sixth Form has the right to stop payment for significant misconduct issues.

6. Attendance monitoring

Missing education, particularly repeatedly, can have a significant impact on students' success and also act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks. Early intervention is necessary to identify and address any underlying issues.

The College monitors student attendance through registers at every lesson and responds to poor or irregular attendance as follows:

- a) The student information team will make phone calls to chase unauthorised absences each morning and record the outcome of the phone calls on the student portal.
- b) Subject teachers will follow up absences from lessons to check the reason for absence.
- b) Progress tutors will monitor overall attendance of their cohort daily and follow up any students who have missed a full day and the reason for absence is not known within 24 hours. This follow up may involve contact with parents/carers, if appropriate.
- c) Progress tutors will check attendance on a weekly basis to identify any patterns of absence or lateness. These will be addressed in your regular one to one appointments.

7. Dealing with poor attendance and punctuality

Parents will be able to view live attendance data via the parent portal as can students. This is the data that all staff see and allows any attendance or punctuality issues arising to be dealt with quickly.

Students must repay their absences in order to make up any lost learning and will likely be directed to undertake this work in the LRC study pod where the staff here can record hours repaid. Work completed should be handed to the relevant class teacher.

Progress tutors at college will contact the parents/carers of all students whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern:

- a) Students whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern will be set clear and appropriate targets for improvement and will be supported to achieve these targets. This is likely to be via an intervention from their teachers and/or progress tutor and may be agreed in a performance contract.
- b) Disciplinary action may be taken in line with the College's Behaviour and Contracts disciplinary Policy.
- d) A student may be deemed to have left college if they have not attended classes for four consecutive weeks for any reason. This will be confirmed by a presumed left letter sent to the student and their parent(s)/carer(s).

8. Snow and adverse weather procedure

We have very occasionally had to close The Sixth Form due to severe snow. Details of closures for bad weather will be posted on The Sixth Form's website and advice for students will be emailed to their accounts which are accessible via The Sixth Form website. The Sixth Form website should be the first place to check for information. If you have examinations in periods of adverse weather conditions, it is still almost certain that the examinations will go

ahead. Exam boards will not make allowances for adverse weather. It is essential that students make every effort to get into The Sixth Form to sit their examinations as special consideration will not be made in these circumstances.

9. Absence for Religious Observance

The Sixth Form allows students to request one day off College for Religious observance. Students must telephone the College before 10am on the day in question for the absence to be marked as authorised.

**The Sixth Form believes that the allocation of 14 weeks' holiday during the year is sufficient to prevent the need for you to take holidays during the College term. Extended periods of absence undermine your performance and are not permitted. Please do not book holidays without checking The Sixth Form's holiday dates to ensure that you are not making bookings in term time.*

Name of Policy	Student Absence Policy – 2025 26
Date Reviewed	20 th August 2025
Next Review	20 th August 2026
JCC Consultation / Approval	Not required
Governing Corporation Approval	Not Required
Cross Reference to other Policies / Source Documents	Student Handbook Parents Handbook Student Behaviour and Contracts Policy Child on Child Abuse/Harassment and Sexual Abuse/Harassment Policy Positive Behaviour and Sanctions Policy